

MEDIA RELEASE

Local Physician Joins North East LHIN Team

Dr. Alan McLean of Sault Ste. Marie named NE LHIN Primary Care Lead

November 9, 2012 – A program that will give you faster access to your family physician and help “orphan” patients access care are among some of the priorities Dr. Alan McLean will be working as the new Primary Care Lead for the North East region.

A long-standing family physician in Sault Ste. Marie, Dr. McLean has been selected as the Primary Care Lead for the North East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). He will work closely with the North East LHIN to strengthen and align primary care planning and help build a more accessible system of care for Northerners.

Dr. McLean will continue his responsibilities as Lead Physician for The Superior Family Health Team and Sault Family Health Organization, and Preceptor with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine.

“Dr. McLean is a great addition to our team,” said Louise Paquette, CEO of the North East LHIN. “Primary care is the first point of contact people have with the health care system and Dr. McLean’s extensive experience will help us strengthen primary care services in Northeastern Ontario.”

Primary care options in the North East include: 27 family health teams, 538 family physicians, one group health centre in Sault Ste Marie (34 family physicians), six community health centres, six nurse practitioner-led clinics, 16 nursing stations, and three Aboriginal health centres.

“My goal is to increase local access to primary care services,” said Dr. McLean. “I look forward to meeting with fellow physicians, nurse practitioners, and other primary care providers to focus planning for the people and patients who need them most.”

Supporting his work will be Jennifer Wallenius, Sault Ste Marie primary care officer with the NE LHIN. Jennifer has been meeting with physicians, nurse practitioners, pharmacists and other primary care providers over the past five months, developing a clear picture of the current state of primary care in the North East and goals that the NE LHIN can focus on over the next three years.

Across the province, LHINs have been building partnerships with local primary care providers. The introduction of a Primary Care Lead in each of the province’s 14 LHINs in 2011 was endorsed by both the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ontario Medical Association. It is also in line with the government’s Action Plan for Health Care commitment to bring planning for the full patient journey under the LHINs. Through this collaborative work, local primary care providers are strengthening partnerships and focusing on system initiatives identified by the LHIN through extensive community engagement to address local health care challenges.

QUICK FACTS:

- Dr. Alan McLean is the Lead Physician for The Superior Family Health Team and the Sault Family Health Organization. He is also a Preceptor/Family Medicine Teacher for the Northeastern Ontario

Family Medicine Program (Northern Ontario School of Medicine) teaching medical students and family medicine residents the art and science of family and emergency medicine.

- Dr. McLean also served as the Chief of Staff for the Sault Area Hospital from 2006-2012.
- In the past year alone, the North East LHIN has engaged with more than 500 primary care providers including physicians, nurse practitioners, pharmacists and others in order to seek input on how to best strengthen primary care access in Northeastern Ontario.
- As a health-focused organization, the North East LHIN works to improve local access to health care and create a more patient-focused system. The North East LHIN makes decisions about regional health care integration, funding and planning. It oversees \$1.4 billion in local health care investments working with 186 health providers including 25 hospitals, 42 long term care homes, mental health and addiction providers, community health centres and community service support organizations. To find out more, visit nelhin.on.ca or call 1-866-906-5446.

For more information:

Contact Cynthia Stables, North East LHIN Director of Communications and Community Engagement at 705-845-1887 or Cynthia.stables@lhins.on.ca

LHINs are the only organizations in Ontario that bring together health care partners from the following sectors - hospitals, community care, community support services, community mental health and addictions, community health centres and long-term care - to develop innovative, collaborative solutions leading to more timely access to high quality services for local residents. By supporting these important partnerships, LHINs are ensuring that Ontarians have access to an effective and efficient health care system that delivers improved health care results and a better patient experience.