

Media Release

New Chair of North East LHIN: Elaine Pitcher

Wednesday, August 22, 2012 -- Well-respected Northern governance leader, Elaine Pitcher has been appointed the new Chair of the North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN). Ms. Pitcher, who lives in Sault Ste. Marie, has a strong background in health care issues having served for the past ten years on the Sault Area Hospital Board, five of those as Chair.

Ms. Pitcher, who was born and raised in Northern Ontario, is passionate about health care because of its impact on every person. She is a firm believer in local governance, with decisions made locally that affect the people who live in those areas.

She was recently presented with the Ontario Leading Women, Building Communities Award, from the Ontario Women's Directorate. The honour recognizes the outstanding contribution of women giving back and being leaders in their community. Her volunteer work includes serving as Chair of the Board for Sault College from 1994-1997, and being a Board member for the United Way, the Art Gallery of Algoma and Vice Chair of the Ontario Council of Regents.

Enhancing access to health care for fellow Northerners involves the commitment and collaboration of both the operational and governance level of all health service providers.

Ms. Pitcher will work with the full Board and NE LHIN staff to ensure on-going progress in achieving the Minister's Action Plan for Health Care which promotes integration and realignment that breaks down silos and ensures a more people-focused system of care and builds a stronger base of community care so that fellow Northerners can access the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

A lawyer by profession, Ms. Pitcher will continue her law practice in Sault Ste. Marie while she serves in the position of Chair of the NE LHIN Board. She succeeds the late Randy Kapashesit from Moose Factory who was a long-time NE LHIN Board member and Interim Chair when he passed away suddenly. Wally Wiwchar has been Acting Chair since Mr. Kapashesit's death.

QUOTES

"I am pleased to appoint Elaine Pitcher as the new Chair of the North East LHIN Board of Directors, and I am confident that she will build on Randy Kapashesit's excellent track record. Elaine is a recognized community leader with a history of health care stewardship, and I know she will help the LHIN to continue its progress when it comes to improving local health care delivery in North East Ontario. I also want to thank Wally Wiwchar for his service and leadership as Acting Chair over the past several months."

- *Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care*

"Our Board welcomes this appointment of a proven governance leader who is knowledgeable and passionate about our Northeastern Ontario health system, its challenges and its opportunities. We know that Elaine Pitcher will follow in the helpful footsteps of Randy Kapashesit, who made many

Page 1 of 2

significant contributions to the NE LHIN Board. He was a passionate individual, an articulate speaker, and he worked extremely hard to improve access to health care for all our region's residents. We are proud of these past Board achievements, and look forward to Elaine continuing this work."

- *Wally Wiwchar, Acting Chair, NE LHIN Board*

"This is a very important time for making healthy change happen in Northeastern Ontario – helping both those who deliver care and those who receive health services each day in the North East LHIN. I am pleased to be joining the North East LHIN Board, which is known to be committed to building a strong local health system. I look forward to contributing my knowledge, experience, and passion for local decision-making to that process."

- *Elaine Pitcher, Incoming Chair, NE LHIN Board*

QUICK FACTS

- LHIN Directors are appointed by Order-In-Council for a term of up to three years, subject to a two-term maximum. The Board of Directors is accountable, through the Chair, to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care for the LHIN's use of public funds and for its results in terms of goals and performance of the local health system. Board members reside within the LHIN region and possess relevant expertise, experience, leadership skills and have an understanding local health issues, needs and priorities.
- Elaine will be joining other North East LHIN Board members, including Wally Wiwchar, Danielle Bélanger-Corbin, Dr. Ian Cowan, Cecilia Bruno, Dr. Colin Germond and Leah Welk.
- The North East Local Health Integration Network is responsible for planning, integrating, coordinating and providing funding to 186 health service providers in Northeastern Ontario.
- The North East LHIN is helping both fellow Northerners and health care providers improve local access to health care. It oversees \$1.4-billion in local health care investments on behalf of the 555,000 residents of Northeastern Ontario.
- **Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care** calls for: *Better patient care through better value from health care dollars with a focus on: keeping Ontario healthy; faster access and a stronger link to family health care; and the right care at the right time and in the right place.*

LEARN MORE

North East LHIN website: www.nelhin.on.ca. Contact: Cynthia Stables, Director, NE LHIN Communications and Community Engagement at 705-845-1887.

-30-

Attachment: Photograph of Elaine Pitcher