

North East LHIN Releases Peer Review Report for Health Sciences North

October 9, 2012 --- In July 2012, the NE LHIN appointed Mr. Murray Martin, President and CEO of Hamilton Health Sciences, as Peer Reviewer of Health Sciences North (HSN).

Ongoing high rates of Alternate Level of Care (ALC) patients, challenges in moving patients from the emergency room through to discharge, and the overall impact of hospital operations on the community, were among the concerns prompting the North East LHIN's decision to call a review process.

Last Tuesday, Mr. Martin and his team, as well as the NE LHIN Chair, Elaine Pitcher, and CEO, Louise Paquette, briefed the Board Directors and senior teams of HSN, the North East CCAC and St. Joseph's Continuing Care Centre on the report's findings.

Today, the NE LHIN released the final Peer Review Report which contains 55 recommendations and can be accessed at <http://nelhin.on.ca/WorkArea/showcontent.aspx?id=13352&langtype=4105>.

Many of the recommendations are focused on Alternate Level of Care (ALC). The report notes that only 30% of the existing bed pressures at HSN are related to ALC and that solutions can be found by HSN taking a leadership role in working with community partners to help address the challenge.

The report also notes that 70% of the ALC pressures are internal and must be managed by HSN. "HSN needs to focus on internal issues such as decreasing admission rates and making discharge processes more efficient," said Louise Paquette, CEO, NE LHIN. Currently, admission rates from HSN's emergency department are the third highest in the province.

Report recommendations also focus on the need for HSN governance and management to ensure stronger accountability for the hospital's performance. North East LHIN Board Chair Elaine Pitcher notes, "As recommended, HSN must align themselves with the priorities of the NE LHIN and develop a plan with clear goals and measures for success. HSN Board of Directors must measure the hospital's performance on an ongoing basis."

Ms. Pitcher was Chair of the Sault Area Hospital Board when it underwent a peer review in 2011 and noted, "I have witnessed first-hand, the value of a review. HSN must act on the Peer Reviewer's recommendations and the NE LHIN Board of Directors will support them in their efforts."

Every year, the NE LHIN provides close to \$300 million to HSN to operate 454 beds (429 at the Ramsey site and 25 at the Kirkwood Site). HSN ended 2012 with a deficit of \$3.3 million and is currently operating under a NE LHIN approved Hospital Improvement plan. The report concluded that a balanced budget can be achieved with consistent execution and clear accountability structures in place.

"I hope this report will be beneficial to HSN in dealing with their challenges," said Murray Martin, President and CEO of Hamilton Health Science and Peer Reviewer of HSN. "It is imperative that HSN move towards a more disciplined goal-oriented environment that aligns the organizational priorities and expectations with both the Ministry of Health and the NE LHIN. Seventy percent of the wait times in the emergency department result from variables that are influenced and controlled by HSN. These are opportunities for HSN to effectively reduce the wait time for admitted patients being held in the Emergency Department."

LEARN MORE -- Read the HSN Peer Review Report at www.nelhin.on.ca; Contact: Cynthia Stables, 705-845-1887 or cynthia.stables@lhins.on.ca, NE LHIN Director of Communications and Community Engagement