

What You Told Us

“I have a good feeling that something’s going to happen out of these sessions and the restructuring of health care.” – Judy Thompson, resident of Kirkland Lake who holds a coordinated care plan with the Temiskaming Health Link.

Dear Northerners,

During February, we as a LHIN were out meeting and talking with Northerners about the province’s discussion paper, *Patients First: A Proposal to Strengthen Patient-Centred Health Care in Ontario*.

Northerners never disappoint. From people like Judy, who’s quoted above, we heard thoughtful concerns, as well as helpful ideas. Health care is a topic that unites all of us in this large part of the province -- we each use the system in varying ways and have loved ones who depend on it.

Through 15 engagement sessions held in six communities, our survey, and email, we heard from more than 1,100 Northerners who provided over 5,000 comments, thoughts, and suggestions. Another, 40 people wrote comprehensive submissions providing feedback on the discussion paper.

To reduce gaps in health care and to strengthen the focus on patient-centred care, the discussion paper proposes an expanded role for Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) through the establishment of sub-regions within each LHIN. These regions would help integrate primary care with home and community care, including the services of Community Care Access Centres, as well as offering residents a more coordinated system of care at the local level through the establishment of sub-regions within each LHIN.

Additionally, the paper calls for a closer alignment between Ontario’s LHINs and Public Health Units. The ministry is currently reviewing all responses received from across Ontario.



Me, chatting with Denis Constantineau, Executive Director of the Centre de santé communautaire du grand Sudbury, and Nancy Naylor, Associate Deputy Minister, Delivery and Implementation, at an engagement in Sudbury on February 29th.

Pulling together all the materials from surveys and comments we received, 10 clear themes emerged --- a full-summary report is [on our website](#). In addition, we also undertook special engagements to ensure the health care needs of our region's culturally diverse people (Aboriginal/First Nation/Metis and Francophones) as well as vulnerable population groups, are included in all system enhancements.

The top themes expressed to us by fellow Northerners:

1. Enhance levels of service and resources for home and community care.
2. Coordinate all healthcare providers and other ministry programs within the full system of care.
3. Develop a common electronic medical record (EMR) system.
4. Improve communication/education on the types of programs and services available to Northerners.
5. Provide greater opportunities for patients and their families in the health care decision-making process.
6. Improve accountability of the system and its impact on the patient through performance metrics.
7. Enhance investments in specialized health care services like mental health and addictions, geriatric services, respite and palliative care.
8. Develop closer alignment of public health units and their population health work into the broader health care system.
9. Address concerns and limitations surrounding health human resources as a critical element for success.
10. Focus on a holistic approach to patient care which acknowledges the social determinants of health.

We have provided the province with your feedback and assure you that we will continue to use this valuable insight in making local decisions as your health care system planner. Again, I want to sincerely thank you for taking the time to express your thoughts and help us improve the delivery of health care services in the Northeastern Ontario.

Sincerely,

Louise Paquette,
CEO of the North East LHIN