

What are Health Links?

A Health Link is a model of coordinating care for our most complex patients, including our frail elderly with multiple needs, in which providers design a care plan and work together with patients and their families to ensure the person receives the care they need. For the patient it means they will:

- Have an individualized, coordinated plan
- Have care providers who ensure the plan is being followed
- Have support to ensure they are taking the right medications
- Have a care provider they can call who knows them, is familiar with their situation and can help.

Our Objectives

- Improve delivery of care for patients, using a multidisciplinary approach to create and share coordinated care plans.
- To achieve the best possible health outcomes and enrich the patient's experience within the system by reducing wait times, visits to the ED and unnecessary hospital readmissions.

Our Goals

- On-board 40 patients to be assisted through Health Link by March 31, 2017.
- Work with partner agencies to gain access to primary care for those Health Link patients who are unattached by March 31, 2017.

Our Accomplishments to Date

- West Nipissing General Hospital is the lead agency and the Health Link includes the communities of West Nipissing, Mattawa, North Bay, and Powassan, with a number of smaller communities in the East Parry Sound area.
- 206 participants have attended Health Links awareness presentations since work began May 30, 2016, including 19 agencies/groups, nine Nurse Practitioners and 14 physicians.
- Have 29 (cumulative) Health Link Referrals to date and have begun to pilot patients through the coordinated care planning process.
- Our Health Link, along with that serving Sault Ste. Marie, was among the first Health Link cohort to graduate in early February from a provincial IDEAS (Improving & Driving Excellence Across Sectors) learning program aimed at improving patient care. IDEAS, funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, is an initiative to enhance Ontario's health system performance by increasing quality improvement, leadership and change management capacity across all health care sectors.

How Health Links is helping a Local Man

Through the Health Link model, a 45-year-old patient who was homeless, had multiple health issues, now has a Coordinated Care Plan which is shared with his care partners, including the hospital. This man arrived at a local clinic with a history of brain injury secondary to substance abuse, after his mother indicated to a social worker that he didn't have a health care provider and needed one, and was also living in his car. He's now been connected with the Ontario Disability program, is living independently in an apartment, and his mother is assured that his care is being coordinated.



Shown above are some of the health care providers who are partners of the Nipissing – East Parry Sound Health Link. Partners to date, with the potential for others to continue joining, include: West Nipissing General Hospital, North Bay Regional Health Centre, Hôpital de Mattawa Hospital, Powassan & Area Family Health Team, West Nipissing Family Health Team, North Bay Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic, West Nipissing Community Health Centre, North East Community Care Access Centre, Canadian Red Cross, Nipissing Mental Health and Housing Support Services, Société Alzheimer's Society Sudbury – Manitoulin North Bay & District, AIDS Committee of North Bay and Area, Nipissing First Nation, Indian Friendship Centre, Canadian Mental Health Association, Gateway Mobilization Hub, NELHIN, Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario and PHARA

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