

## **ACCESS TO THE BEST CARE PLAN MOVES FORWARD**

### **HNHB LHIN Board of Directors allows integrations within Hamilton Health Sciences' plan**

September 29 2008

#### **NEWS**

The Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network (HNHB LHIN) has allowed the Hamilton Health Sciences' *Access to the Best Care* plan to move forward.

At its September 29 meeting, the HNHB LHIN Board of Directors passed the following motion:

Pursuant to subsection 27(4) of the Local Health System Integration Act, 2006 (LHSIA), the LHIN finds that it is in the public interest not to issue a decision ordering the parties not to proceed with the integration.

Specifically, this applies to features of the integration:

- a) the transfer of clinical services from Hamilton Health Sciences to St. Joseph's Healthcare and from St. Joseph's Healthcare to Hamilton Health Sciences;
- b) the new Urgent Care Centre; and,
- c) the site of the new Urgent Care Centre.

Commensurate with this decision the parties are directed that:

- a) the LHIN create a working group of staff and Board Members that provides advisor review with the transition planning and reports back to the Board; and,
- b) the local providers work with the community to create an education plan on the transition process and that the provider groups would consult with the working group of the LHIN as the plan is developed.

While approving for the proposed integrations, the HNHB LHIN Board reconfirmed its ongoing monitoring role as the *Access to the Best Care* plan unfolds in the coming years. In its motion, the Board also clearly outlined expectations for transition planning including clear, timely and transparent communication and information for the community as the transition and implementation process moves forward.

The Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS) proposal presents a 3-5 year plan that describes service alignments among the three acute care sites of HHS and the transfer of some services to St. Joseph's Healthcare, and proposes a new Urgent Care site in Hamilton.

Approximately 60% of patients now using the MUMC Emergency Department could be more appropriately cared for at an urgent care centre and as part of the *Access to the Best Care* plan, HHS will be establishing an Urgent Care Centre in west Hamilton. This addition to health services for the citizens of Hamilton is slated to open in late 2009/early 2010.

The *Access to the Best Care* plan focuses emergency care provided at the McMaster University Medical Centre (MUMC) on the paediatric population. Once transitioned to a full paediatric Emergency Department in 2011, adult emergency care will be provided at three hospitals across Hamilton – Hamilton General Hospital, Henderson General Hospital and St. Joseph's Healthcare. The change to a paediatric Emergency Department at MUMC will be made once the new, expanded Henderson Emergency Department opens, the redevelopment of the General Emergency Department is complete, and the new Urgent Care Centre in west Hamilton is open.

## QUOTES

"The HNHB LHIN Board reviewed the Access to the Best Care plan from a number of perspectives before reaching its decision," explained Juanita Gledhill, HNHB LHIN Board chair. "While there were many factors that informed our decision, ultimately we saw a plan that supports access and quality patient services, the plan is consistent with the LHIN's goals for health improvement and it ensures appropriate, coordinated, effective and efficient health services for the citizens of our communities."

"The HNHB LHIN Board recognizes the critical role Hamilton plays as a regional referral centre for patients from across the province," said Ms. Gledhill. "While the Board's priority is certainly the health care needs of citizens in our LHIN, we are aware that this plan must allow HHS to meet its responsibilities to the people of Ontario."

## QUICK FACTS

The Access to the Best Care plan addresses three key challenges:

1. Critical mass requirements for quality adult hospital-based services
2. A large number of people with less urgent and non-urgent health care needs presenting at Emergency Departments
3. Unmet needs of approximately 600,000 children and youth for whom McMaster Children's Hospital has responsibility

### **QUICK FACTS cont'd**

The *Access to the Best Care* plan proposes:

- aligning available and anticipated resources for quality adult hospital-based care;
- enhancing access to appropriate less urgent and non-urgent care in the community; and,
- improving access to health care for children and youth in the HNHB LHIN, also serving Burlington and Norfolk, the Waterloo Wellington LHIN, and beyond.

In addition to a dedicated paediatric Emergency Department and the new McMaster Child Health Research Institute, future services at the MUMC site will include: a paediatric Critical Care Unit, inpatient mental health unit, obstetrics – including high risk obstetrics, gynaecology and other women's health services, adult ambulatory services and same-day surgery, and an expanded endoscopy suite to enhance the Digestive Diseases program.

### **LEARN MORE**

For more information on the HNHB LHIN, visit [www.hnhblhin.on.ca](http://www.hnhblhin.on.ca).

For more information on the Access to the Best Care plan, visit [www.hamiltonhealthsciences.ca](http://www.hamiltonhealthsciences.ca).

For more information, please call:

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