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Community Engagement Framework Waterloo Wellington LHIN

January 2006

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Background

The mandate of Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) is to improve access to, and the quality of, health services for residents of Ontario through strengthened integration and coordination of health services. To achieve this mandate, LHINs will actively engage local communities in open communication and broad, inclusive consultation.

LHINs will provide leadership for Community Engagement locally in keeping with the government's broader commitment to be responsive to health needs at the local level. LHINs aim to keep all community groups informed, engaged, and working together to strengthen our local health services. In this way, we will build community acceptance and commitment to common goals, respective responsibilities, and mutual accountability.

The Purpose of Community Engagement

Community engagement is a set of processes and activities that provide an opportunity for members of the community to be involved in identifying local health service priorities and the subsequent design and implementation of alignment and integration related activities that create a responsive citizen-centered system. The process is designed to create transparency, increase buy-in, promote responsibility for priority-setting and encourage involvement with subsequent change related activities. Ultimately, members of the community will share in the challenges of "building a true system" and take pride in the successful results achieved through engagement.

Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network's (WWLHIN) Community Engagement Framework is intended to serve as a road map to help interested parties understand the WWLHIN's approach to community engagement. The Community Engagement Framework is supported by a set of guiding principles and defined by a number of processes, tools and techniques. Community participants are identified by their level of involvement, types of activities and information to be exchanged. The framework will clarify the most appropriate level of community engagement to achieve well defined objectives and outcomes.

WWLHIN Community Engagement Framework Assumptions

This document represents a first attempt at developing a framework for Community Engagement. As such the following assumptions have been made:

- That the WWLHIN Community Engagement Framework is a living document and that changes to it will be ongoing, in response to input from all Communities of Interest.
- Planning will occur at micro (community), meso (local LHIN) and macro-levels (with other LHINs or province-wide). It would also include those who provide services to people who live in the LHIN.
- Different levels and approaches of engagement are appropriate for different Community groups.
 - At the levels closest to Communities of Interest, engagement activities will involve the highest degree of participation in service planning, implementation and evaluation.
 - Communities that are not directly affected by LHIN decisions will have a lesser degree of involvement than those directly affected.

- We will continue to work with Communities of Interest to gather materials or bring relevant information to our attention.
- Communities of Interest will be committed to the Community Engagement process, and will actively participate in Community Engagement activities.
- The Community Engagement Framework will reflect the ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of the community.

Proposed Community Engagement Framework

The Waterloo Wellington LHIN (WWLHIN) recognizes Community Engagement is one of the cornerstones to building a true health care system. Utilizing Community Engagement as a change management approach will encourage members of the community to accept responsibility for and become invested in, the identification and implementation of health services priorities identified for our area. We are committed to working with members of the communities we serve to cultivate positive community relationships and create a collaborative and inclusive process leading to partnerships and best practices. This initial Community Engagement Framework is based on best practices and is subject to refinement pending final LHIN legislation, regulations and community input.

The Community Engagement Framework consists of three components.

1. Communication Strategy

WWLHIN will achieve engagement with community members by creating an inbound and outbound exchange of information. As a communication strategy, outbound information activities are focused on providing timely and relevant information aimed at keeping the communities informed of WWLHIN and ministry related initiatives. Inbound information activities will focus on the acquisition of information to meet the needs of the WWLHIN. Such information will be used for planning, integration, contract management, performance monitoring, allocation, evaluation and decision-making.

2. Knowledge Sharing & Decision Making

WWLHIN will play a key role in facilitating knowledge sharing for the purpose of developing innovative solutions to local health service delivery needs. WWLHIN will develop Communities of Interest to promote dialogue and decision-making regarding system planning, capacity management and performance issues as they relate to integration opportunities and the development of a local Integrated Health Service Plan (IHSP). Communities of Interest will be multidisciplinary in representation, geographic specific and/or across geographic boundaries.

3. Maintenance

Maintaining the Community Engagement Framework will be achieved by using a continuous improvement best practice approach to ongoing engagement with those who will either have a stake in, or be impacted by the outcomes of WWLHIN activities. This process will include: regular community feedback, assessment of current practices and processes, and the development and implementation of more effective tools and techniques.

Outcome and Objectives

The primary goal of WWLHIN's Community Engagement Framework is to engage the community on an ongoing basis in the design, delivery and accountability for local health system planning and integration. Community Engagement is pivotal to transformation. It serves as the cornerstone to achieving the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care's (MOHLTC) vision for a system where all providers speak to one another in the same language, where there are no longer impenetrable and artificial walls between providers and service, a system driven by the needs of citizens and not of the providers.

The outcome of this collaborative approach will be:

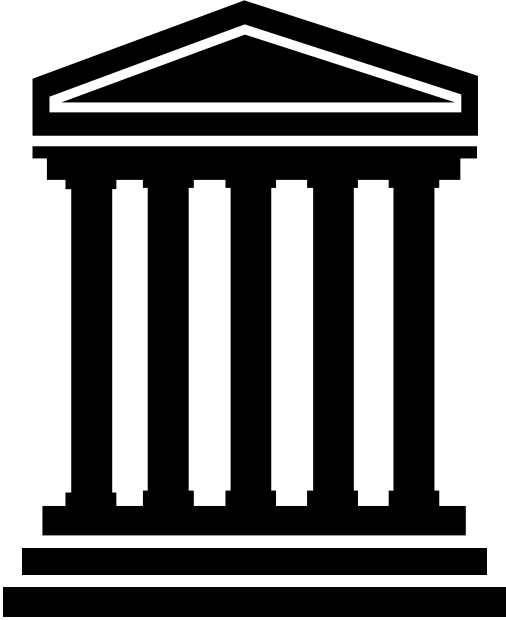
- A user-friendly, citizen focused system that achieves region specific priorities.
- Increased learning opportunities that create an inclusive regeneration of Waterloo Wellington's health system.
- Shared responsibility and increased accountability.
- Innovation that increases system capacity and achieves sustainability.

Specific objectives of the Community Engagement Framework are:

- To provide communities with balanced and objective information to assist in understanding the role and mandate of WWLHIN and the expectations of each Community.
- To obtain feedback and make recommendations on service gaps and opportunities for service coordination and integration in WWLHIN.
- To work directly with communities throughout the process to ensure that all community concerns are consistently understood and considered.
- To partner and build relationships at each level in the WWLHIN Community Engagement process including the identification and development of preferred integrated service delivery solutions.

Principles of Engagement

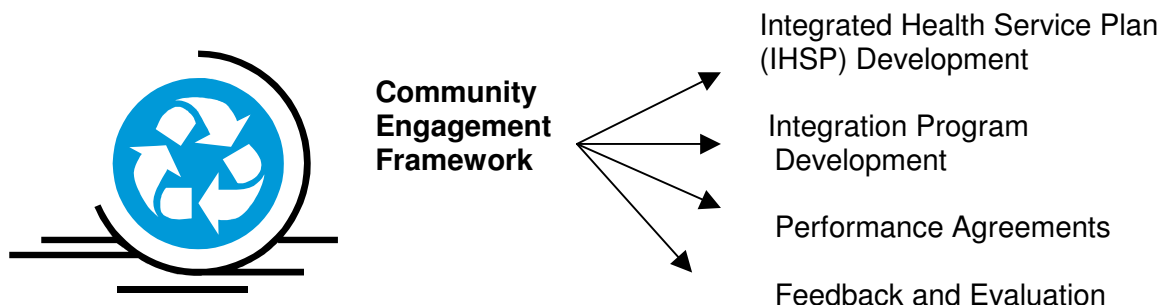
WWLHIN is committed to engaging our community based on five basic principles.

	<p>Shared Vision – We will work with the community to develop and implement plans that are citizen centred, focused on population health and consistent with legislative and regulatory requirements.</p>
	<p>Mutual Respect – We will build relationships and deliver Community Engagement program initiatives that are balanced, utilize levels and methods of engagement appropriate to the group being consulted in a manner that engenders respect and is inclusive of the Communities of Interest.</p>
	<p>Accountability – We will engage with and foster a Community Engagement system that is accountable to one another for the outcomes associated with health system change activities as well as timely, meaningful dialogue, consultation and plan modifications.</p>
	<p>Transparency – We will utilize an open process. It will clearly state the purpose, goals, accountabilities, expectations, constraints and the manner that Community Engagement will be used in decision-making.</p>
	<p>Commitment – We are dedicated to working with the community members of the Waterloo Wellington areas towards the achievement of a citizen centered sustainable health care system.</p>

5 Pillars of Engagement

Strategic Approach

The process of engagement is a dynamic and iterative one. It involves a series of process and engagement activities and is not be construed as an entity unto itself. Activities such as planning, integration and performance management will all be achieved through utilizing a Community Engagement approach.



To support this comprehensive and multi-faceted engagement strategy, we propose establishing groups that are either geographically based or interest based, focusing on a specific service delivery issue. We will refer to the interest based groups as **Communities of Interest**. These groups will help facilitate the engagement process and assist in the design and implementation of an effective community consultation process.

Geographic Approach

WWHLIN proposes using the following six geographic planning areas as an initial planning approach. Please refer to Appendix A and B.

Area	Geographic Planning Area	Municipal Entities within Geographic Planning Area
1	Urban Waterloo & Rural Waterloo South	City of Waterloo, City of Kitchener, City of Cambridge, Township of North Dumfries
2	Urban- Guelph	City of Guelph, Township of Guelph/Eramosa, Township of Puslinch
3	Rural –Waterloo	Townships of Woolwich, Wellesley, Wilmot
4	Rural – South Grey & North Wellington	Town of Minto, Township of Wellington North, Township of Southgate
5	Rural Wellington	Townships of Mapleton, Centre Wellington, Town of Erin

In addition to Community Engagement activities within the six proposed geographic planning areas, WWLHIN will also engage with communities across planning areas in order to facilitate integration, break down silos, and foster culture and orientation towards “Health System” thinking.

Communities of Interest

WWLHIN's community includes any individual or group with an interest in the success and outcomes of new health care service delivery initiatives. These community members and/or groups will be referred to as Communities of Interest.

Communities of Interest are made up of individuals and /or organizations that directly or indirectly influence or impact program or service delivery outcomes or who are impacted by such outcomes. Communities of Interest within WWLHIN include, citizens of the Waterloo Region, Wellington County and the southern region of Grey County, service providers (both funded and non-funded) special interest and community groups, labour and professional associations and others.

Levels of Engagement

The approach taken and levels of engagement used will differ based on the goals and objectives of the activities, the extent of the system change and resourcing requirements. The following five (5) levels of engagement will be used strategically to achieve service delivery transformation consistent with the overall goals of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and the WWLHIN.

Level of Engagement	Level of Involvement – Purpose
1. Inform & Educate	Provided with information and announcements.
2. Involve	Provided with change strategy, project plans or system change decisions. Communities of Interest participate in implementation planning.
3. Empower	Consulted early on in the engagement process and provided with the opportunity to identify issues, provide/suggest solutions, and recommend actions – system supports.
4. Advise	Advise on system changes and implementation strategies. Final plans are reviewed with the participants prior to formal announcements and/or implementation. Feedback may affect the final plan.
5. Collaborate	Actively involved at all levels of the change initiative. From inception of the concept right through planning and implementation. Decision-making and accountability for results are shared among those involved. Note: the overall system will define the limitations

Evaluation and Input

WWLHIN will evaluate the success of our Community Engagement Framework throughout the Community Engagement process. The Community Engagement Framework will continue to evolve with the development of initiatives such as performance plans, and the development of the IHSP.

Community feedback will be solicited on the Community Engagement Framework proposal via a feedback form included with this document.

Timelines

Time Frame	Activity	Communities of Interest	Purpose
Sept – Dec 2005	Individual/Group meetings	Provider, Community Groups	Information Sharing and Gathering Validation of priorities
Jan 31, 2006	Send out CEF	Diverse Client Groups and WWLHIN Board	To receive feedback on the CEF.
Jan 31 – Feb17,2006	Feedback Period	All Communities of Interest who received CEF Packages	Provide a reasonable period for timely feedback
Feb 23, 2006	Final CEF Doc to WWLHIN Board	Board of Directors WWLHIN	Provide members of the board with the final document incorporating CE feedback
Feb 27– Mar31,2006	Town Halls	General Public and Community Interest Groups	Communicate the final CEF and introduce the IHSP
Jan – June 2006	Focus Groups Town Halls Advisory Teams Task Groups	Consumers, General Public	Consultation Active Participation Development of IHSP
July – Sept 2006	Town Halls	Everyone	Confirmation of Draft – IHSP

Next Steps

- Incorporate Community Engagement feedback into the Community Engagement Framework and submit the final document for approval by the WWLHIN Board of Directors.
- Launch the final Community Engagement Framework to the public via Town Hall meeting within Geographical areas and provide a copy of the document on the WWLHIN website.
- Development of a Community Engagement Plan to support the Development of the Integrated Health Services Plan.

Note: This document is a first draft and will be reviewed by Communities of Interest for input. Such input may result in changes to the final Community Engagement Framework for the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network.

List of Appendix

GLOSSARY OF TERMS.....

APPENDIX A REGIONAL POPULATION DISTRIBUTION & SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

APPENDIX B PROPOSED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AREAS FOR WWLHIN.....

APPENDIX C APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Engagement: refers to a continuum of activities and processes that support and enhance two-way interaction between WWLHIN and the Communities of Interest of Waterloo Region and Wellington County. The methods of engagement will vary based on the desired objectives and outcomes of the particular initiative and will include all levels of engagement through mutual collaboration and partnerships.

Community Engagement: is a term used to refer to the spectrum of activities that support the two-way interaction process between WWLHIN and its communities. Consultation, involvement and participation are all terms that may be used interchangeably to describe community engagement activities. However, each term refers to intrinsically different forms of engagement which are dependent on the overall objectives

Public: denotes the general group of individuals who though interested in health and health services do not have the same level of involvement in health care decision making as Communities of Interest, patients, residents, consumers, their families, advocates etc.

Communities of Interest: refers to a group of individuals who share common interests, needs and goals. The groups may share knowledge, expertise and learning. Communities of Interest may be active at any of the five levels of Community Engagement. Communities of Interest may be “virtual communities”.

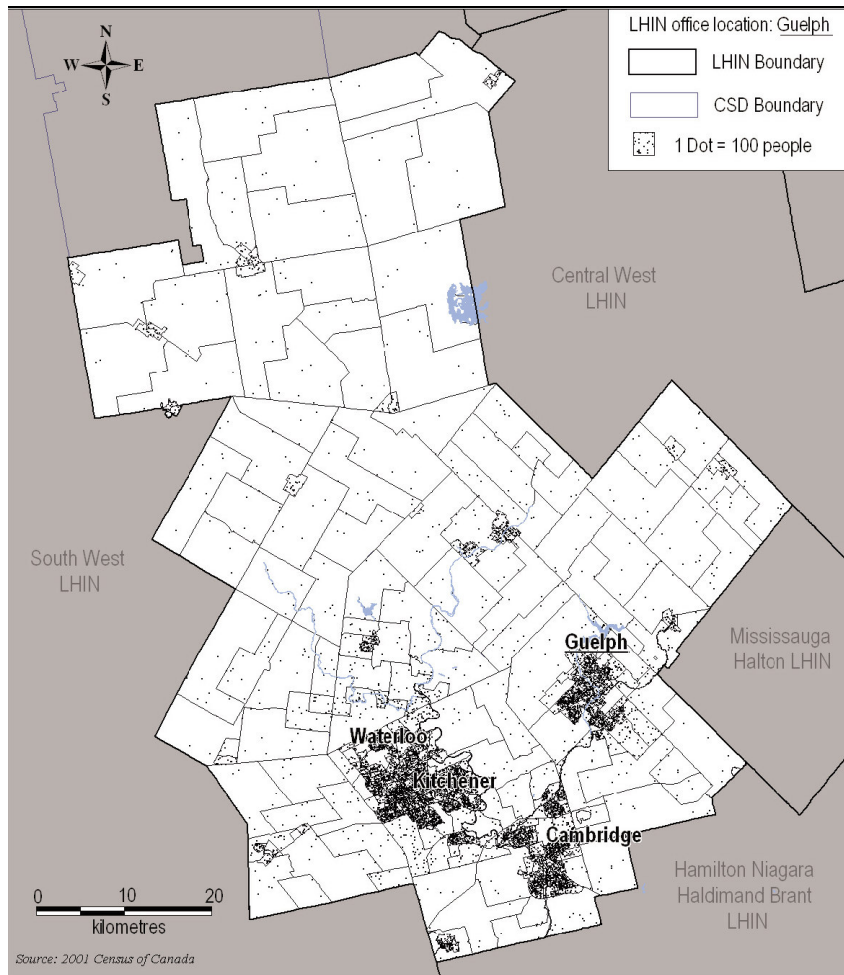
Examples of WWLHIN Communities include:

- Members of the public
- Citizens, Communities of Interest, consumers
- Service providers
- Special interest groups
- Professional associations
- Long term care homes
- Academic and health research institutions
- Local networks, provincial networks such as the End of Life Network, or Mental Health Network
- Cross-LHIN initiative teams
- Communities outside the LHIN geographic boundaries
- Ministry of Health and Long Term Care
- Others to be developed

Virtual Communities: are based on a shared purpose not geography. With the use of technology people can come together from almost anywhere. Virtual communities are separated by space, but not time, as communication can be facilitated by technology in real time, partially overcoming geographical inhibitions.

Appendix A Regional Population Distribution & Social Characteristics

The Waterloo Wellington LHIN is home to approximately 750,000 people representing 5% of Ontario's population. During the period between 1994 and 2004 the Waterloo and Wellington increased on an average of 1.7%, a .2% level higher than the overall provincial growth. Almost 20% of the region's population is immigrants with 9.3% as visible minorities. Only .5% of the population is Francophone claiming French as their mother tongue.



The population distribution for the Waterloo Wellington area is: Kitchener (190,400) representing 30% of the region, Cambridge (110,400), Guelph (160,200) and Waterloo (86,500) represents an additional 48%. The remainder is made of rural communities ranging from 5,900 to approximately 24,300 people. Over all Waterloo Wellington has a high proportion of the population who say their health is excellent or very good, a relatively young population with high labour force population, low unemployment and health outcomes similar to that of the province.

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* Population Health Profile – Waterloo Wellington LHIN

Appendix B Proposed Community Engagement Areas for WWLHIN

Waterloo Wellington
LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORK

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

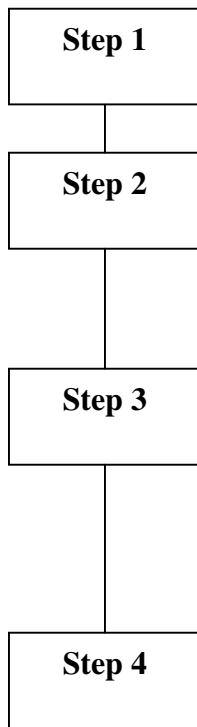


Area	Geographic Planning Area	Municipal Entities within Geographic Planning Area
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2	Urban Guelph	City of Guelph, Township of Guelph/Eramosa, Township of Puslinch
3	Rural Waterloo	Townships of Woolwich, Wellesley, Wilmot, North Dumfries
4	Rural - South Grey & North Wellington	Town of Minto, Township of Mt. Forest-Arthur-West Luther-Arthur
5	Rural Wellington	Townships of Mapleton, Centre Wellington, Town of Erin

Appendix C Approaches to Community Engagement

Community Engagement involves a wide range of techniques. Experience has shown that there is no one right method to meet the variety of situations that may occur. Choosing the appropriate method depends on the context of the situation. In some instances, more than one method may be needed to accommodate the range of interests in a community and to enhance community expression. The following chart illustrates some potential methods for engaging the community.

Engagement Level	Communities of Interest	Engagement Approaches
Inform and Educate	All Groups	Fact/Information Sheets Newsletters/brochures Open House Websites Open Forums or Town Hall meetings Public Service Announcements Paid advertising Media Publicity
Involve	Clients/ Citizens/ Consumers/ Advocacy Groups Transfer/Non Transfer Payment Agencies Other Service Providers	Facilitated planning workshops Task Groups Expert/Advisory Panels Surveys Focus Groups Action Planning Events IHSP Planning Forums
Empower	Clients/ Citizens/ Consumers/ Advocacy Groups Transfer/Non Transfer Payment Agencies Other Service Providers	Facilitated planning workshops Task Groups Expert/Advisory Panels Surveys Focus Groups Action Planning Events IHSP Planning Forums
Advise	All Groups	Facilitated planning workshops Task Groups Expert/Advisory Panels Surveys Focus Groups Action Planning Events IHSP Planning Forums
Collaborate	Clients/ Citizens/ Consumers/ Advocacy Groups Transfer/Non Transfer Payment Agencies Other Service Providers	Facilitated planning workshops Task Groups Expert/Advisory Panels Surveys Focus Groups Action Planning Events IHSP Planning Forums



Describe the decision or issue involved

Determine whether to involve the community

- Has a decision already been made that needs to be communicated?
- Is there a decision to be made that will benefit from community involvement?
- Is there a community interested in becoming involved?

Determine how to involve the community

- What is the intent/purpose of involving the community?
- What are the goals and objectives of community involvement?
- What are the timelines for decision-making?
- What are the needs of stakeholders?
- What resources are available to support community involvement?

Implement appropriate community engagement method