

WWLHIN*news*

WWLHIN BOARD HIGHLIGHTS – JANUARY MEETING

KITCHENER, ON - The Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network (WWLHIN) Board of Directors met on Thursday, January 26, 2012. Following are highlights from the meeting.

Report from Closed Session

Joan Fisk, Chair, Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network, reported that during the Closed Session, the Board members discussed a personnel item.

Education Session

Marianne Walker, President & CEO, St. Joseph's Health Centre, Guelph, updated the Board on the Network's [Senior Friendly Hospital](#) strategy. The 14 LHINs across the province launched this initiative to improve seniors' health and prevent their physical and mental decline in hospital. She noted that seniors are three times more likely to be hospitalized, and their length of stay is much longer. Of those seniors hospitalized, 1/3 of frail seniors lose independent function due to hospital practices and 1/2 of these seniors are unable to ever recover. Therefore, by acting together, hospitals can improve the experience and outcomes of older adults in local hospitals.

The Senior Friendly Hospital strategy aims to:

- Improve the health, wellbeing and experience of seniors in Ontario hospitals, helping them get back home sooner and healthier.
- Improve seniors' ability to live independently and stay out of hospital.
- Enhance the value of health care dollars.
- Help reduce Alternate Level of Care (ALC) through supporting people to transition to the right place of care after a hospital stay.
- Promote quality improvement initiatives that can be included in hospital Quality Improvement Plans as part of Excellent Care for All.

Walker noted that one of the first strategies that will be implemented across the WWLHIN is the Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP), with Cambridge Memorial Hospital the first to launch this program. It is designed to prevent delirium and functional decline among elderly individuals in the hospital. HELP uses a core team of interdisciplinary staff and targeted intervention protocols to improve patients' outcomes and to provide cost-effective care. She noted that the program's uniqueness includes the use of specially trained volunteers who carry out the majority of the non-clinical interventions.

Chair's Report

Joan Fisk, Chair, WWLHIN, outlined the meeting discussion on Monday, January 23, with the chairs and vice chairs of the eight hospitals in Waterloo Wellington. She noted that the meeting, which included Dale Small, Vice Chair, WWLHIN, was an opportunity to build understanding among system leaders and governors. The dashboard on hospital performance was used to identify where hospitals are performing well and where further work needs to be done to improve access to care, and what approaches can be taken to improve. In addition, the Network and hospital governors discussed opportunities to further develop a coordinated and a truly integrated system, in addition to providing value for taxpayer dollars. There will be meetings scheduled for the remainder of the year to support the joint focus of the boards.

Finance and Audit Committee Report

Dale Small, Chair, Finance and Audit Committee, Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network, reported that Deloitte & Touche will complete a financial onsite audit visit in late April. A report was received from the WWLHIN's Business Management Team outlining actions taken to date in response to recommendations made by Deloitte & Touche on specific business practices and processes in late 2011. The WWLHIN has implemented a number of risk mitigation processes and has proposed further actions to strengthen controls.

Hospital Performance Report

The WWLHIN has developed a new performance dashboard that focuses on individual hospital indicators related to emergency department (ED), surgical and diagnostic imaging wait times as well as alternate level of care (ALC) days*. The hospital dashboard expands on the Network's Integrated Health Service Plan (IHSP) performance [report](#) that is posted monthly to the website (www.wwlhin.on.ca).

The hospital dashboard provides data on 11 indicators for fiscal year-to-date and the last completed month. The dashboard reflects individual hospital's performance targets outlined in the Ministry-LHIN Performance Agreement (MLPA). The dashboard is used to regularly review hospital performance against their obligations identified in the hospital's individual service accountability agreements. The data assists in local decision making between the hospitals and the Network to support continual performance improvement and improved access to care. Through this performance accountability discussion, providers in the local health care system can work together to improve access to quality care for local residents and are held accountable for the taxpayer dollars they are given.

Hospital Service Accountability Agreements Process

The current Hospital Service Accountability Agreements (HSAAs) between Ontario's 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) and hospitals expire March 31, 2012. The LHINs and the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) have been working on updates to the HSAA for the past year. While the vision is for three-year agreements, the fiscal situation in Ontario does not support funding projections for three years; therefore, the next agreement will be for one year (2012 - 2013).

The WWLHIN's local process for HSAA outlines clear expectations for hospitals when planning, including focusing on local high priorities such as improving access to care, reducing wait times and ALC days; continue to meet Performance Standards outlined in their HSAA; achieve and maintain a balanced budget and service reductions will not be accepted, unless there is a planned and approved transition of service from one provider to another.

While Ontario's economic situation continues to be a challenge, the WWLHIN will work with local health service providers to increase their collective efforts to provide sustainable service delivery for Local residents. The WWLHIN will be meeting with each of the hospitals in February to focus on system integration opportunities and highlight key initiatives planned to support ongoing access to care, opportunities to integrate health services and achieve a balanced budget.

Waterloo Wellington Health System Decision Support Centre

The WWLHIN is working with hospitals, the Waterloo Wellington Community Care Access Centre and Community Health Centres to develop a business plan for the Waterloo Wellington Health System Decision Support Centre. Decision support is the term used to identify the process of developing, maintaining and analyzing activity data to support effective decision making.

Currently, the 77 local health service providers and the WWLHIN develop and manage data independently. Local providers also typically focus their decision support on their own organization's requirements, especially related to contractual obligations. While this internal work is very important for many reasons including accountability, and internal flow improvements, the data capturing transitions of care between providers or system-level experience of patients/clients is a gap in knowledge and analysis.

By having a systems decision support centre, this important data can be brought together and captured in one place, which could then be used to enhance local decision making to respond to local health care needs. The WWLHIN will complete the business plan being developed for the centre and bring the information forward to a future board meeting for discussion and decision.

QUICK FACTS

LHINs are the only organizations in Ontario that bring together health care partners from the following sectors - hospitals, community care, community support services, community mental health and addictions, community health centres and long-term care - to develop innovative, collaborative solutions leading to more timely access to high quality services for the residents of Waterloo Wellington and Ontario. By supporting these important partnerships, LHINs are ensuring that Ontarians have access to an effective and efficient health care system that delivers improved health care results and a better patient experience.

The Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network is responsible for planning, integrating, coordinating and providing funding to 77 health service providers in Waterloo Region, Wellington County and South Grey. The Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network operates an annual health care budget of close to \$982.6 million.

*ALC patients are those waiting in a hospital bed for care in a more appropriate place such as home with supports, long-term care, palliative care, rehabilitation, mental health care, and more. Having ALC patients wait in hospital beds can increase wait times for other patients needing a hospital bed.

LEARN MORE

The full reports, briefing notes, and presentations related to the board agenda items are posted to the WWLHIN website at www.wwlhin.on.ca, click on About Our LHIN - Board of Directors - Board Meetings [January 26](#).

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Reference Information:

Toni Adey
Senior Manager, Communications and Public Affairs
519-650-4472, Ext. 223

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