

Sandra's Message – February/March



“Enhancing quality of care” is one of our community’s priorities for health care. More information on this and other identified priorities can be found in [Working Together For a Healthier Future](#) – Integrated Health Service Plan 2010 - 2013

I am happy to tell you that six of our local hospitals have signed on to be part of a shared diagnostic imaging repository (DI-r) project, a step that will certainly enhance quality of care.

To explain, diagnostic imaging includes x-rays, ultra-sounds, MRIs and CT scans. An individual in the hospital may need to have one or more of these images produced. If that individual moves to a different hospital, that hospital will now be able to access the image (s) via the computer. This saves the individual the need to bring their images with them, have duplicate images taken, and gives the physician immediate information.

Previously, this could not be done; hospitals’ computers are not all on the same ‘platform’ and don’t ‘talk’ to each other. The LHIN’s DI-r project connects all the hospitals’ PACS (Picture Archive and Communication Systems) to a central image and report repository that enables access to PACS information regardless of the platform.

Lydia Chudleigh, Vice President of St. Mary’s General Hospital said, “having patients’ diagnostic image and report historical records available to our Radiologists and our referring physician specialists will enhance quality of care and patient safety. This longitudinal record will facilitate real time collaboration between clinicians and more timely decision making.”

In addition to our hospitals participating in this program, hospitals in Southern Ontario LHINs are also participating – Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN, Southwest LHIN (London area) and Erie-St.Clair LHIN (Chatham/Windsor area). An individual having images produced in any of these areas’ hospitals can know that their information is readily accessible to hospital physicians when needed. Of course, security measures are in place to protect the individual’s privacy.

This is just the beginning. The DI-r project is expected to grow throughout the province.

Congratulations to our hospitals - St. Mary’s, Grand River, Cambridge Memorial, Guelph General, North Wellington Health Care Corporation (Mount Forest and Palmerston sites) and Groves Memorial, for their forward thinking and participation in this project.