Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

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HLTC5865IT-2017-25

Ms. Joan Fisk
Board Chair
Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network
50 Sportsworld Crossing Road, Suite 220
Kitchener ON N2P 0A4

Dear Ms. Fisk:

I am pleased to write you in your capacity as Chair of the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). As per the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, this letter sets out my expectations for the Waterloo Wellington LHIN for the 2017-18 fiscal year. Moving forward, I will be issuing a mandate letter every fiscal year.

First, thank you for your extensive efforts during this period of transition. Without your continued leadership and support, we would not be at the state of readiness for transition that we are today. With a strong team behind you, I have no doubt that your LHIN will see a successful transition.

While transition is important for the implementation of the Patients First Act, the opportunity for transformation is paramount, and expected by patients and caregivers, health care partners and the broader public in an effort to build a more sustainable, efficient and accessible health care system for future generations. With the foundation that has been created with the Patients First legislation, this is our opportunity to ensure patients are truly at the centre of the health care system. With this in mind, I believe our collective key priorities as we embark on this transformation phase are to:

- Improve the patient experience by putting the patient voice at the centre of health care planning and by delivering care that is responsive to patients' needs, values and preferences.
- Address the root causes of health inequities by strengthening the social determinants of health, investing in health promotion, and reducing the burden of disease and chronic illness.
- Create healthy communities by improving access to primary care and reducing wait times for specialist care, mental health & addictions services, home and community care and acute care for patients when they need it, which will reduce variation in access across the province.
- Break down the silos between our health care sectors and providers to ensure seamless transitions for patients, and to ensure that providers work together to provide patient-centred care.

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- Support innovation by delivering new models of care and digital solutions to make accessing care easier for patients and more efficient for health care providers.

Transformation will occur for many years beyond this mandate letter, but these priorities are important to consider when planning for 2017-18.

Integrated Health Care Planning and Responsible Fiscal Management

With your new mandate, you will be responsible for creating an integrated service delivery network that includes primary care providers, inter-professional health care teams, hospitals, public health, mental health and addictions and home and community care to ensure a more seamless patient experience.

While undergoing this work, it is also expected that you will remain fiscally responsible but manage your budget in a prudent manner to ensure programs and services are effective, efficient, and sustainable into the future. I also expect the LHIN to further streamline and increase the efficiency of administration and ensure savings are reinvested into front-line patient care.

As a reflection of these responsibilities in 2017-18, the Waterloo Wellington LHIN is asked to make progress on the following priorities:

Transparency and Public Accountability

- Continue to be accountable for outcomes and report on your progress toward achieving health system performance targets.
- Collaborate with the Ministry to develop performance targets to measure the success of transformational activities and publicly report on progress and outcomes.
- Effectively manage all operational, strategic, and financial risks encountered by the LHIN while ensuring alignment with government priorities and achievement of business objectives.

Improve the Patient Experience

- Establish and engage your Patient and Family Advisory Committee(s) to ensure patients and families are involved in health care system decision-making.
- Work towards improving transitions for patients between different health sectors so that patients receive seamless, coordinated care and only tell their story once.
- Support patients and families by implementing initiatives that reduce caregiver distress.

Build Healthy Communities Informed by Population Health Planning

- With input from patients, caregivers and partners, assess local population health needs, patient access and wait times and the capacity of health providers to serve the community.
- Through sub-regional (community level) planning, identify how providers will collaborate to address health gaps, and improve patient experience and outcomes.

Equity, Quality Improvement, Consistency and Outcomes-Based Delivery

- Work with the sector to both enhance existing and develop new performance and quality measurement frameworks that are consistent and flexible to address regional priorities.
- Work with local clinicians at a community level to support implementation of quality standards in partnership with Health Quality Ontario.
- Promote health equity and recognize the impact of social determinants of health to reduce or eliminate health disparities and inequities in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of services by:
    - Identifying high-risk populations and working with public health and local community partners on targeted interventions to improve access to appropriate and culturally sensitive care, and improve health outcomes, including through sub-region planning.
    - Ensuring engagement with Indigenous leaders, providers and patients to guide investments and initiatives.
    - Assessing the capacity of health service providers within LHIN sub-regions and the extent to which Francophone citizens are provided with an active offer of health services in French, and develop a plan to strengthen health services in French.

Primary Care

- Continue to build primary care as the foundation of the health care system and work with health care providers to develop sub-region plans that:
    - Use an equity lens to assess the number and proportion of primary care providers based on the needs of the local population.
    - Improve access to primary care providers, including family doctors and nurse practitioners.
    - Facilitate effective and seamless transitions between primary care and other health and social services.
    - Improve access to inter-professional health care providers to ensure comprehensive care.
- As a priority, develop and implement a plan with input from primary care providers, patients, caregivers and partners that embeds care coordinators and system navigators in primary care to ensure smooth transitions of care between home and community care and other health and social services as required.
- Support the integration of Health Links into sub-regional planning with input from primary care providers.

Hospitals and Partners

- Work with system partners to improve how people move through the health system to avoid unnecessary hospital stays, reduce the length of time people must spend in hospital, including the emergency room, and reduce the number of people who are waiting in a hospital bed for the right level of care.
- Support hospitals to enable the adoption of innovations in patient care, like bundled care.

Specialist Care

- To improve access to specialty care, work with providers to further reduce wait times and drive appropriate care utilization starting with people suffering from musculoskeletal (MSK) pain, and those suffering from mood disorders.
- Support enhanced connections and communications across networks of providers to drive more effective and appropriate specialist referrals.

Home and Community Care

- With input from patients, caregivers and partners:
    - Reduce wait times and improve coordination and consistency of home and community care so that clients and caregivers know what to expect.
    - Continue to implement the initiatives in Patients First: A Roadmap to Strengthen Home and Community Care.
- A key priority for 2017-18 is the completion and consolidation of the transition.

Mental Health and Addictions

- Based on the advice from Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council, work with local partners and other sectors to expand access to mental health and addictions services that:
    - Expand access to structured psychotherapy and supportive housing.
    - Establish referral networks with primary care providers.
    - Make access to community mental health services a priority for sub-region planning, in collaboration with community and social service providers and partners.
- Support the provincial opioid strategy, and provide support to connect patients with high quality addictions treatment.

Innovation, Health Technologies and Digital Health

- Champion Ontario as a leading ecosystem to adopt and scale new and innovative health technologies and value-based processes.
- Support the ministry's Digital Health Strategy, once published, including but not limited to:
    - Ensuring that any hospital information system (HIS) renewal decisions are consistent with HIS Renewal Advisory Panel clustering recommendations and reflect a commitment to reduce the overall number of HIS instances in the province.
    - Implementing or expanding existing virtual models of care or digital self-care models that are consistent with existing provincial initiatives.
    - Supporting the delivery of digital solutions to improve patient access and navigation as well as referrals to specialists, and further expand online consultation between primary care providers and specialists.

Ms. Joan Fisk

As you deliver on your new mandate, I expect the LHIN to ensure the following key pillars are maintained and strengthened:

- Promote health equity, and reduce health disparities and inequities.
- Respect the diversity of communities in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of services, including culturally safe care for Indigenous people and meeting the requirements of the French Language Services Act.
- Continue to strengthen local engagement with Francophone and Indigenous communities.
- Work with health service providers and communities to plan and deliver health services.

Ontario's board-governed provincial agencies are vital partners in ensuring the delivery of high quality services to Ontarians. The people of Ontario depend on you to provide leadership to your agency's board, management and staff. Together with your fellow board members, the people of Ontario rely on you to establish the goals, objectives and strategic direction for the agency consistent with your agency's mandate, government policies, and my directions, where appropriate.

I thank you for your willingness to serve, as we work together to put patients at the centre of a high performing health care system that is accessible, equitable and integrated, and one that will be there for generations to come.

Yours sincerely,

Original signed by the Minister

Dr. Eric Hoskins
Minister

c: Mr. Bruce Lauckner, Chief Executive Officer, Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network
Dr. Bob Bell, Deputy Minister, MOHLTC
Ms. Nancy Naylor, Associate Deputy Minister, Delivery and Implementation, MOHLTC
Mr. Tim Hadwen, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health System Accountability and Performance Division, MOHLTC