

Local Seniors Help Shape Central West LHIN's Aging at Home Strategy

The planning behind a \$21.5 million three-year investment in an Aging at Home Strategy designed to help seniors stay healthy and live more independent lives in their homes has received an added boost thanks to the enthusiastic input of local seniors.

On October 31st, the Central West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) submitted a high level Directional Plan to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care that outlines how the LHIN plans to fulfill its mandate to support seniors to live in their own homes as long as possible.

Driving the content for this plan was the insight provided by hundreds of seniors through a series of Public Forums hosted by the Central West LHIN Board of Directors during the month of October. Forums held in Shelburne, Orangeville, Bolton, Malton, Brampton and Etobicoke and culminating in an Aging at Home Symposium divulged important information about the services that seniors felt would best help them to manage their health needs at home and allow them to continue living independently.

“There’s no better way to plan health services than to hear firsthand from the people who will be using them,” says Joe McReynolds, Central West LHIN Board Chair. “Talking directly to seniors gave us good ideas about what services would most help them out and also generated a number of innovative approaches that would support them in their homes.”

Among the services seniors identified as being important were a central point of contact for seniors’ services, professional home care support, support with activities of daily living, homemaking and home maintenance, transportation assistance, and preventative health care programs. Seniors and their family members often spoke to the need for all these services to be connected into a coordinated system.

The Directional Plan highlights the types of services the LHIN plans to develop or expand in 2008/2009 and beyond to support seniors to age at home. The Central West LHIN anticipates implementation of the Aging at Home Strategy will ultimately help prevent unnecessary emergency room visits and inappropriate hospital and long-term care admissions by identifying seniors who are at high risk of institutionalization and connecting them with the right services in their communities to address their needs.

“We’re confident these directions reflect the needs of local seniors and we look forward to working together with our community and with local health service providers to bring our planning efforts to life over the next three years,” says Mimi Lowi-Young, CEO, Central West LHIN.

A more detailed plan for supporting seniors to live independent lives at home will be developed by January 2008, with services expected to start rolling out in phases beginning in April.

Aging at Home is the name given to the planning being done both provincially and locally to help seniors manage their continuing health needs within the comfort and surroundings of their own homes. In the fall of 2006, the Central West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) identified Services to Seniors as one of its leading priorities for local health system change.

Local Aging at Home Initiatives

Interested agencies and organizations are encouraged to submit initiatives that would support the local Aging at Home Directional Plan by filling out the [Health System Improvement Pre-proposal](#) form located on the Central West LHIN website.

The HSIP forms to be submitted no later than December 7th 2007 to:

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To view a copy of the Central West LHIN's Aging at Home Strategy Directional Plan, please visit the [Aging at Home Strategy](#) section on our website.