

Integrating Hospice Services in Northumberland County – Q’s and A’s – July 5, 2010

Q: Why are hospice services in Northumberland County being integrated?

A: At the present time the LHIN funds two agencies to deliver hospice services in Northumberland County – Hospice Northumberland Lakeshore and Palliative Care Campbellford. These two agencies have experienced some resource and operational challenges and so have asked the LHIN to partner with them to find a solution so that the residents of Northumberland County still have access to these services.

Q: What type of resource and operational challenges are you talking about?

A: Like all health service providers funded by the LHIN, these agencies are mandated to offer services within a negotiated accountability agreement with the LHIN. Both of these agencies have been in existence for a number of years and have always provided outstanding services to their communities. Governed by committed volunteers, their services have grown to meet the client needs. A review of their current operations, management and financial situations, based on their existing accountability agreements, has identified the potential to streamline operations and rationalize costs of services. The parties have therefore initiated a facilitated integration in order to continue to meet clients’ needs and achieve greater value for the taxpayers’ dollars used to fund these services.

Q: Why was Community Care Northumberland chosen to be part of this facilitated integration?

A: The LHIN asked the Board and staff of CC Northumberland to be involved in this integration because of their local expertise in delivering community support services to the residents of Northumberland County. CC Northumberland has the necessary infrastructure including administrative services, local offices and community knowledge to deliver an integrated basket of services that would grow to include hospice services.

Q: How will this integration impact services now and in the future?

A: The facilitated integration process, which involves the LHIN and all three agencies, will be guided and motivated by a continuous focus at how to best meet client needs while minimizing the potential for service disruptions. It is expected that an integrated “basket of services” available through Community Care Northumberland will maintain access and navigation to community services for palliative and bereaved clients.

Q: What about the staff and volunteers at HNL and PCC? What does this mean to them?

A: The volunteers and employees of Hospice Northumberland Lakeshore and Palliative Care Campbellford are recognized for their high-level of commitment, training, skills and knowledge in providing services and meeting the needs of hospice clients. It is recognized that this will be a challenging time and the Integration Planning Team is committed to providing ongoing updates and to involve staff and volunteers in the process to develop a new integrated model for providing hospice services in Northumberland.

Q: What is the project timeline?

A: An Integration Planning Team, comprised of representatives from Hospice Northumberland Lakeshore, Palliative Care Campbellford, Community Care Northumberland and the LHIN has just begun meeting and will, over the summer, develop an implementation plan to be reviewed by their respective boards. The goal is to have the plan approved in early fall and to then immediately begin implementing the new integrated model for hospice services in Northumberland.