



## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release  
April 3, 2014

Peterborough/Durham, ON (April 3, 2014) – The Canadian Hearing Society (CHS) is continuing to assist frail seniors with hearing loss and individuals who have complex medical conditions with counselling and support so they can safely remain in their homes after receiving additional funding from the Central East Local Health Integration Network (Central East LHIN).

The funding will support CHS's Hearing Care Counselling Program (HCCP) to better identify seniors who may be at risk of unnecessary hospital stays or premature admission to long-term care facilities by collaborating with healthcare providers who support frail seniors and those with complex health issues such as cancer, diabetes and dementia.

“The key to this program is counselling and support, identifying the specific need and working with the senior and their healthcare provider to provide the best services possible to meet their needs,” said Maggie Doherty-Gilbert, Regional Director, and Canadian Hearing Society.

In addition the counsellor will explore options for technology and equipment that will allow frail seniors and their caregivers to remain safely in their homes.

Using visual or touch signalling devices, seniors with hearing loss can remain safely at home without fear of missing important alerts like smoke detectors, doorbells or telephone calls. For caregivers who themselves have hearing loss and care for someone with dementia, they can utilize an electronic mat that sends them a signal if the senior they are caring for starts to wander, reducing the fear of not hearing them leave. With the support of the Central East LHIN, CHS can now loan these devices and equipment to those who could not otherwise afford them – a fundamental aspect of the program.

As noted in the Central East LHIN's “Community First” Integrated Health Service Plan, improving healthcare for seniors is a top priority for the region's healthcare providers.

The Central East LHIN has set a Seniors Aim for the healthcare system to help local residents spend more time in their homes and in their communities specifically by reducing the demand for long-term care so that seniors spend 320,000 more days at home in their communities by 2016.

“At the LHIN we recognize that with the population of seniors continuing to grow, there will be increased pressure on caregivers, communities and the healthcare system to attend to their often complex healthcare needs,” said Deborah Hammons, CEO, Central East Local Health Integration Network. “By working in partnership, we can make significant improvements in the healthcare experience of patients and their caregivers, and in the overall quality and sustainability of the healthcare system in the Central East LHIN.”

Doherty-Gilbert added that front-line healthcare providers play a vital role in educating patients about the importance of their hearing healthcare. Healthcare professionals can refer anyone over 55 years with a hearing loss for a home assessment by CHS professionals.

Outreach has already begun with the GAIN (Geriatric Assessment and Intervention Network) Teams at Lakeridge Health and Peterborough Regional Health Centre.

“We were thrilled with HCCP Counsellor Anna McIntosh’s recent presentation to our team and will continue to send referrals her way and work with her around new technologies,” said Julie Valentine, GAIN Team at Lakeridge Health.

“The GAIN team is very excited about their new partnership with the Canadian Hearing Society. This collaboration ensures that our clients and their families have the education, support and communication devices necessary to maximize their independence, function and safety at home,” added Kasia Luebke, GAIN Team PHRC.

“Whether individuals with a hearing loss need support accessing services or hard of hearing adults need help coping with hearing loss, CHS can offer support,” added Doherty-Gilbert. “We will continue to work with older adults and their health care providers offering counselling, coping strategies and adaptive technology to assist with life’s challenges”.

For more information on the Hearing Care Counselling Program, contact the CHS Peterborough office at 705-743-1573 or email [amcintosh@chs.ca](mailto:amcintosh@chs.ca) and visit [www.chs.ca](http://www.chs.ca).

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### **About the Canadian Hearing Society**

The Canadian Hearing Society (CHS) was incorporated in 1940 to provide services, products and information to culturally Deaf, oral deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing people and to educate the hearing public. CHS is governed by a board of directors, the majority of whom are Deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing. The organization is funded by government, grants, membership and various fundraising activities. For more information or to find your regional office, visit [www.chs.ca](http://www.chs.ca).

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