

NEWS RELEASE

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CENTRAL EAST LHIN ANNOUNCES MEMBERSHIP ON TASK GROUPS AND NEW NETWORK

Front line health care workers actively involved in improving the system

The Central East LHIN is proud to announce the formation of six new Task Groups and a renewed Mental Health and Addictions Network.

Physicians, nurses, paramedics, pharmacists, consumers, mental health and addiction survivors and community leaders from across Central East continue to be actively involved in improving the health care system for people living in Scarborough, Durham Region, Northumberland, Peterborough, Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton,

“The level of knowledge and experience that has been brought together to create a more accessible, safer and higher quality health care system in Central East is outstanding,” said Foster Loucks, Chair of the Central East LHIN Board of Directors. “It is this kind of partnership and commitment to change that is going to benefit everyone who lives and works in the Central East LHIN.”

Dr. Peter Prendergast from Whitby Mental Health Centre is the chair of the renewed **Mental Health and Addictions Network Steering Committee**. The Steering Committee will provide leadership to the **Central East LHIN Mental Health and Addictions Network** which includes consumers, families, caregivers and health care professionals.

Dr. Christopher Jyu from Scarborough and **Dr. Kim Ferguson** from Port Perry are co-chairs of the **Primary Care Working Group**. This group of Primary Care providers will provide expert advice on how to improve access to an integrated Primary Care system.

Sheila Neuburger from Whitby Mental Health Centre is chairing the **Alternate Level of Care (ALC) Task Group**. Many hospitals are experiencing growing pressures related to alternate level of care (ALC) patients, hospital patients who are no longer in the acute phase of their illness but still occupy an acute care bed. The Task Group will work together to review existing pressures and policies and prepare a Central East LHIN ALC Action Plan.

Dr. Tom Stavro-Sholdoff from Rouge Valley Health System and **Debbie Watson** from Haliburton Highlands Health Services are co-chairs of the **Emergency Department Task Group** which will look at internal hospital practices and strategies that will improve ED efficiency and reduce wait times. The ED Task Group will also support the **Geriatric Expertise in Emergency Department Project Team** chaired by **Dr. David Ryan** of the Regional Geriatric Program. This \$1.35 million project will result in the recruitment and training of nurses to care for frail seniors in five of the Central East LHIN emergency departments.

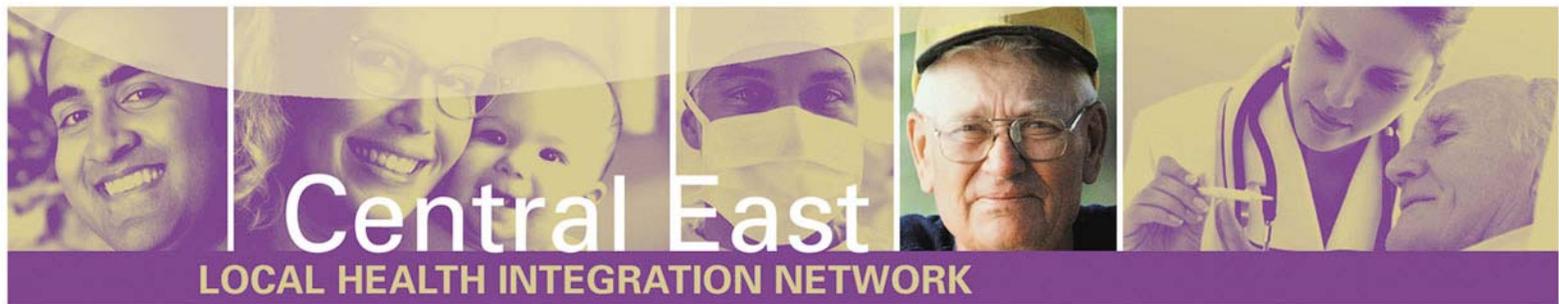
Lewis Hooper, e-Health Lead for the Central East LHIN chairs the **E-health Steering Committee**, a group which will provide active leadership in developing and implementing the LHIN wide eHealth strategy and tactical plan.

With the current capacity pressures on the system including emergency room over-crowding and large numbers of people waiting for discharge from the hospital setting, there is a need to better understand the role that rehabilitation can play in easing these pressures and ensuring individuals are receiving the right care at the right time. **Heather Reid** from Rouge Valley Health System and **Shelly Santerre** from Lakeridge Health Corporation are the co-chairs of the **Rehabilitation Task Group**.

“Twenty six nurses, thirteen physicians, three social workers, three paramedics, two pharmacists, seven allied health therapists and other dedicated individuals from across Central East are volunteering their time on these new Task Groups,” said James Meloche, Senior Director, Planning, Integration and Community Engagement. “This is in addition to the other health care professionals and community leaders who are currently members of the **Seamless Care for Seniors Network Steering Committee**, the **Chronic Disease Prevention and Management Network Steering Committee** and our nine local advisory teams or **Collaboratives**.”

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Since the Spring of 2006, the board and staff of the Central East LHIN have been actively working with their communities to understand the challenges and opportunities to create a stronger, more integrated public health care system.

“The hundreds of people who have joined the networks, the collaboratives and the task groups clearly shows the overwhelming desire and commitment to improve the current health care system,” continued Loucks. “The plans we put forth today will make a difference for our children and our grandchildren.”

To find out how you can get involved and for a complete listing of the membership of all Steering Committees, Collaboratives and Task Groups, including biographies, please visit the Central East LHIN website at www.centraleastlhin.on.ca or call 1-866-804-5446.

The Central East LHIN also has a Speakers' Bureau. Community groups that are interested in booking a speaker can call Karen O'Brien-Monaghan, Community Engagement Consultant, at 1-866-804-5446 ext. 212 or email at karen.obrienmonaghan@lhins.on.ca.

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The Central East LHIN, which released its first Integrated Health Service Plan in November 2006, is one of 14 not-for-profit organizations, created by the provincial government to be responsible for planning, integrating and funding local health services - hospitals, long term care facilities, community care access centres, community health centres, community support services and mental health and addictions agencies.

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