

Health Equity & Social Determinants of Health Communiqué | January 2017

HNHB LHIN Highlights

South Niagara Day Hospice Program Now Offered in French and English



A partnership between Hospice Niagara and Centre de santé enables residents of South Niagara to have access to a Day Hospice program in their preferred language (French or English). The Day Hospice Program is a person-centred program for those living with a progressive life-limiting illness while providing a day of respite for their caregivers. The program offers socialization, a gourmet meal, entertainment and opportunity to take part in comfort care therapies, such as massage and aesthetic services. It is offered bi-weekly on Thursdays from 10:30 am to 2:00 pm at Centre de Santé in Welland and every Wednesday at the Stabler Centre in St Catharines.

This initiative is a great step in building capacity to provide French Language Services and to ensure health equity for Francophones. [Learn more.](#)

De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre Expands Mental Health Services to Niagara Region

Throughout the past year, the HNHB LHIN has been actively engaging with Indigenous organizations both on and off reserve to better understand local health needs. Based on discussions with the HNHB LHIN Indigenous Health Network, expanding Indigenous mental health services in Niagara was identified as a primary area of focus.

On December 14, 2016, the HNHB LHIN Board of Directors approved De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre (DAHC) to receive an annualized \$180,915 in base funding to support both Indigenous mental health services in Niagara and an enhanced and sustained Niagara outreach program. This funding will expand DAHC's mental health program to include a mental health case manager housed at an Indigenous agency based in Niagara. Services will include one-on-one or group counselling and case management by a registered social worker for adults (over the age of 21). Counselling services provided will include grief and loss, family violence, depression and anxiety, trauma support, and referral to additional community programs as needed.

This model of care will offer patient-centred and culturally safe transitions for clients moving between friendship centre programs, Aboriginal Patient Navigator services, as well as Niagara mainstream organizations. In addition, this funding will increase access to care through coordination of health care services and serve as a foundation for future program expansions.

Implementation of the HEIA in the HNHB LHIN

The Health Equity Impact Assessment (HEIA) tool has formally been incorporated into the HNHB LHIN development and planning processes. Implementation of the HEIA tool will assist the LHIN in integrating equity considerations into planning and decision making, and will allow the LHIN to identify unintended impacts of any new or proposed service or program changes. In doing so, the tool can serve to reduce inequities that result from barriers in access to quality health services and program, and thus increase positive health outcomes by identifying and mitigating unintended impacts of an initiative prior to implementation.

In the HNHB LHIN, HEIA tool completion and equity-focused indicator development is required for Voluntary Integration Submissions and Stage 1 Proposals (capital submissions); or will be requested by the LHIN for Business Case Proposals, Service Delivery Change Forms, Capital Submissions, and formal evaluations of new programs, services and initiatives.

In addition, the HEIA Template has been modified from the original Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care template for use in the HNHB LHIN. The HNHB LHIN HEIA Template is designed to still be used alongside the accompanying HEIA Workbook, which provides definitions, examples, and more detailed instructions to help you complete this template.

Visit the [HNHB LHIN HEIA webpage](#) for more information.

Health Equity in HQO Quality Improvement Plans

Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) are a formal commitment to quality improvement that outlines issues to be addressed to improve the quality of care for patients, residents, or clients. QIPs are currently required of all hospitals and long-term care homes in Ontario. As outlined in Health Quality Ontario's (HQO) 2016 [Health Equity Plan](#), equity has been introduced as an element in the 2017-18 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) process to encourage institutions to incorporate equity as an essential element of quality.

As equity indicators are still being developed, HQO has added several sections to the QIP Narrative, where organizations will be asked to describe their work on issues that may not be associated with an indicator. New issues that will be addressed in the Narrative include population health, health equity, workplace safety, and alternate level of care. If organizations have developed custom indicators that relate to these key issues, they are encouraged to include them in the Workplan as well.

Health Quality Ontario has released annual planning materials to help support the development of the 2017/18 quality improvement plans (QIPs). The materials include an [Annual Memo](#), [Technical Specifications](#) and a [Guidance Document](#).

Improving Access to Services through eVisit



eVisit is a service provided through the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN) that allows health service providers to connect virtually with other health service providers, specialists, and patients/clients. Similar to the room based OTN unit, eVisit offers an alternative to face-to-face follow-ups with patients or consultations with specialists. However, unlike the room based OTN unit which requires dedicated hardware, eVisit allows clinicians and patients to participate in clinically secure videoconferencing from anywhere in Ontario using personal computers and devices (i.e. PCs, Macs, Windows tablets and iOS 7).

With this technology clinicians and patients will experience increased access to speciality care, decreased wait times, reduced Emergency Department (ED) visits and hospital admissions, and reduced traveling for patients and providers.

The HNHB LHIN is working with LHIN-funded health service providers to increase the adoption of OTN's eVisit feature to improve patient care, as well as, equity of access to programs and services. To learn more, please visit the [OTN webpage](#) or contact Rachele Hall (Advisor, HNHB LHIN) at rachele.hall@lhins.on.ca.

A health system with a culture of quality is . . .



Resources and Literature

[2016 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Ontario](#)

[2016 Emergency Department Performance in Ontario](#)

[211 Expanding the Circle of Care for Clients \(video\)](#)

HEIA Tips and Tricks

For webcasts, presentations and recordings to help you complete the HEIA, please visit the [CAMH website](#).

LHIN Contact Information

If you have any feedback on the bulletin or would like to make a contribution, please contact [Rachele](#) or [Kelly](#).

