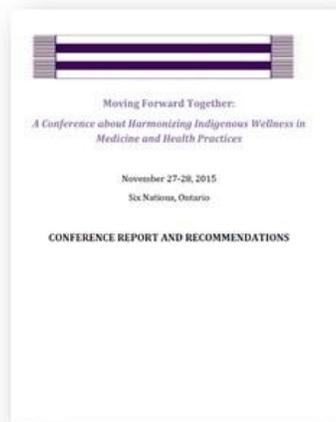


Health Equity & Social Determinants of Health Communiqué | September 2016

HNHB LHIN Highlights

Strengthening Care for Indigenous Patients and Families



On June 14, 2016, Six Nations of the Grand River Elected Council approved the release of a report aimed at strengthening the care provided for Indigenous patients and families. The report, [‘Moving Forward Together: A conference about harmonizing Indigenous wellness in medicine and health practices’](#) outlines recommendations on how to harmonize the use of Traditional medicine in the current health care system for the mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing of all Indigenous peoples.

The report is based on a November 27 and 28, 2015 conference that focused on ensuring Indigenous knowledge, medicine and healing practices are recognized by the health care system. Conference partners included Six Nations Health and Social Services, Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Ministry of Child and Youth Services and Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

Since the conference, Six Nations has continued to collaborate with Traditional medicine practitioners and local and regional health care systems to address the report’s recommendations. To help guide and support this work, a Traditional Medicine Advisory Council has been established and the HNHB LHIN Board of Directors has approved up to \$199,471 in base funding and up to \$6,200 in one-time funding to increase access to Traditional medicine resources at Six Nations of the Grand River.

The HNHB LHIN acknowledges and respects the important role of Traditional medicine and healing in the health and wellbeing of many Indigenous peoples and looks forward to sharing successes from the community.

St Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton Youth Wellness Centre

In March 2015, St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton (SJHH) opened the Youth Wellness Centre (YWC) in a welcoming community location in downtown Hamilton. The location was chosen and developed in collaboration with the YWC Youth Advisory Council and Alternatives for Youth (a Hamilton youth addictions provider). The YWC serves youth between the ages of 17-25 who are struggling with their mental health and/or substance use and also those who may be at risk of being lost in the transition from children to adult mental health and addictions services. Through co-location with Alternative for Youth, young people receive mental health and addictions services from a multidisciplinary clinical team (which includes a youth mentor). A partnership with McMaster Family Health Team has also enabled youth to receive primary care services providing truly comprehensive, wrap-around care.



In January 2015, the HNHB LHIN provided funding to SJHH to expand services through the addition of a Mobile Team. The Mobile Team provides youth-centered services where youth are including McMaster University, Mohawk College, Redeemer College, and The Living Rock (a local not-for-profit serving street-involved youth). YWC also offers mobile concurrent disorders counselling and support to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning (LGBTQ)+ youth population in Hamilton. In May of 2016, the YWC undertook a needs assessment research project to determine the needs of LGBTQ+ youth seeking mental health and addictions support across the HNHB LHIN.

Anybody can refer to the Youth Wellness Centre, and youth can refer themselves online using the [Youth Wellness Self-Referral](#). Youth with an emerging mental health or addiction concern can also be referred online by community partners using the [Early Intervention Stream Community Referral Form](#) or by medical professionals using the [Health Care Provider Referral Form \(fax referral\)](#).

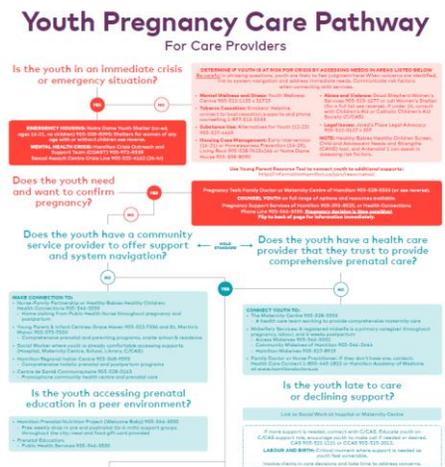
For updates on the program, follow YWC on [Twitter](#). It's never too early to #ReachOut!

Adapting the Youth Pregnancy Care Pathway for the Francophone Population

The Healthy Birthweight Coalition is a community-wide collaborative made of 30 organizations (including LHIN-funded providers) that aims to reduce the risk of low birth weight (LBW) babies in Hamilton communities. In Hamilton, the same neighbourhoods with LBW rates also have the highest rates of prenatal smoking, teen pregnancy, and low income. The City of Hamilton has a teen pregnancy rate of 4.8% which is higher than the Ontario average of 3.7%. Hamilton has sixteen neighbourhoods where the teen pregnancy rate is greater than 10%. Pregnant youth are more likely to smoke and experience multiple social risk factors and develop gestation complications that lead to low birth weight.

Pregnant and parenting youth in Hamilton are advocating for a comprehensive and youth-centred approach to help connect them to the right supports and information at the right time, no matter where they first access the system. The Coalition is developing several tools to streamline service provision and develop innovative ways to connect young parents with the services and supports they need. The [Youth Pregnancy Care Pathway](#) is a tool to help health service providers better link with community resources; develop shared processes, practices, support an integrated approach in Hamilton. (Watch video to learn more) This tool identifies high risk youth that need to be connected to immediate community supports to address social needs like housing, mental health, tobacco or other substance use, health relationships or legal issues. These factors can change quickly throughout pregnancy and early pregnancy. The Care Pathway offers a list of resources and contact information that most providers need to know; ensuring that pregnant youth are introduced to a community of care.

As this tool currently exists in English, the Hamilton Public Health Unit is working in partnership with members of the Coalition and the HNHB LHIN to adapt the Care Pathway for the francophone population. The City of Hamilton accounts for more than 10,000 French-speaking people; many of them living in neighbourhoods with high rates of teen pregnancy. As a designated area for French Languages services by the Government of Ontario, health service providers are to make services in French available to the francophone populations they serve. The adaptation will help health organizations to better link with francophone communities and ensure a care pathway in French. Watch this [video](#) to learn more about the Care Pathway.



HQO Health Equity Report



In July 2016, Health Quality Ontario (HQO) released their Health Equity Plan. The Health Equity Plan outlines a three-year plan of how HQO plans to embed equity into their work and serves to encourage providers, system leaders and planners to make equity a prominent component in their thinking, discussions and planning as they continue to build a health system that is safe, effective, patient centred, efficient, timely and equitable.

Over the next three years, HQO will focus on the following five strategic priorities:

1. Provide system-level leadership through partnerships to improve health equity in Ontario.
2. Increase availability of information to enable better decisions to achieve health equity locally and provincially.
3. Evaluate and support the uptake of promising innovations and practices to improve health equity in Ontario.
4. Engage patients, caregivers, and the public in our efforts to address health equity.
5. Ensure health equity is addressed when patients transition across different care settings.

Additional information on how HQO plans to achieve each of their strategic directions can be found in their [Health Equity Plan](#).

HEIA Immigrant Population Supplement

The Health Equity Impact Assessment (HEIA) is a decision support tool developed by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) as a way for organizations to address health inequities by considering the needs of specific populations. The HEIA can be used to identify potential unintended impacts and identify strategies to maximize the positive impacts and minimize the negative impacts of a program, policy, service or initiative.



To assist with the application of the HEIA tool, the MOHLTC recently released an [Immigrant Population Supplement](#) to be used in conjunction with the [HEIA template](#) and the [HEIA Workbook](#). The supplement outlines the unique needs of, and special considerations for immigrant populations. The supplement is useful for any provider, agency/organization, or strategic/systems planner who's work can impact immigrant health outcomes. By applying the supplement, you will be able to identify relevant immigrant populations and the barriers to accessing health and other services when planning and implementing policies, programs and initiatives.

Additional supplements include the [Public Health Supplement](#) (for Public Health Units) and the [French Language Service Supplement](#) (for MOHLTC and LHINs).

For additional resources on how to complete the HEIA, please visit the [HNHB LHIN website](#).

Effects on the Ground: Social Determinants of Health in the News

The effects of the social determinants of health and health inequities are getting noticed. Here are a few headlines, from the last few months, that highlight the importance of recognizing and addressing them.



[Ontario eyes more gender changes on government documents](#)



[Stigma, shame behind ethnic delays in seeking help for mental illness](#)



[Doctors' Notes: Thinking holistically about kids' health](#)



[To improve a child's health, follow Alberta's lead and give parents a raise](#)



[Realities of health care and homelessness](#)



[Trans health care a learning curve](#)



[Unhealthy habits are killing Canadians, study suggests](#)



[LGBT seniors face bullying and a return to the closet in Calgary nursing homes](#)



[Health-care poverty not good for Canada](#)

Events

Please see below some great learning opportunities:

[Health Equity in Action Professional Learning Event](#) – October 18 & 19, 2016

[The Immigrant Populations Supplement: New Resource for HEIA Users \(Webinar\)](#) – September 28, 2016

Resources and Literature

[The Direct Economic Burden of Socio-Economic Health Inequalities in Canada](#)

[A Roadmap to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Healthcare](#)

[Achieving Health Equity: A Guide for Health Care Organizations](#)

[Pan-Canadian Dialogue to Advance the Measurement of Equity in Health Care: Proceedings Report](#)

[Ensuring Healthy Aging For All: Home Care Access in Ontario](#)

[Reaching priority populations who experience barriers to smoking cessation supports](#)

[A New Direction: Ontario's Immigration Strategy](#)

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 [Rachelle](#) or [Kelly](#).