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McGUINTY GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES LEADERSHIP OF HAMILTON NIAGARA HALDIMAND BRANT LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORK

LHINs Will Allow Greater Community Involvement In Local Health Care Decisions

GRIMSBY – Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman today named the three founding board members of the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network who will lead the start up of the network in their community. Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) will be responsible for planning, integrating and funding local health services to make it easier for patients to access the care they need.

“We are creating LHINs because local health services are best planned at the local level, by people familiar with the needs of a community,” Smitherman said. “You can’t micromanage a \$33 billion health care system from an office in Toronto. We need local expertise from right across Ontario to help plan and co-ordinate health care services that are right for people in different communities.”

Smitherman today announced that Grimsby will be the location of the headquarters for the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network. The LHIN includes the Niagara Region, Haldimand County, Brant County and the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth. It also covers part of Halton Region, specifically Burlington, and roughly half of Norfolk County, which is shared with the Southwest LHIN. The office is expected to open later this summer.

The Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN is one of 14 being created in Ontario. LHINs are local entities designed to plan integrate and fund local health – including hospitals, community care access centres, home care, long-term care, mental health, community health centres, as well as addiction and community support services – within a specific geographic area.

Smitherman announced that Juanita Gledhill of Hamilton will be the LHIN board chair, with Jack Brewer of Burlington and Kim Stasiak of Thorold serving as founding board members. The government proposes that each LHIN board would have a full complement of nine board members by the end of the year.

“Leadership is the key to making any significant system change work,” Smitherman said. “The founding board members for our LHINs have impressive records of service in their communities. They bring diverse leadership experience in the private and public sectors to the task of improving the way we manage our health care system.”

In her first official duty as chair, Gledhill announced that Pat Mandy has been selected as the CEO.

“Pat is respected health care leader with more than 25 years of experience in a variety of roles,” Gledhill said. “Her experience in change management will be vital as we establish the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network.”

“I am pleased to have been chosen as the first CEO of the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network,” Mandy said. “I look forward to the challenge of bringing my years of health care experience into the launching of this new local health organization.”

The roles of LHINs will be phased in over time. Subject to the passing of legislation, they would begin by working with the local community and health care providers to set priorities and plan health services in their area. They would then move to integrating and co-ordinating local health services, and eventually, to determining and providing funding and resources.

“LHINs will make it easier for patients to access all of the different health services they need in their own communities, because these services will be co-ordinated in those communities,” said Smitherman.

This initiative is part of the McGuinty government’s plan to build a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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