

June 28, 2005
2005/nr-061

McGUINTY GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES LEADERSHIP OF TORONTO CENTRAL LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORK

LHINs Will Allow Greater Community Involvement In Local Health Care Decisions

TORONTO – Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman today named the three founding board members of the Toronto Central 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 the health care services that are right for people in different communities.”

Smitherman today announced that Toronto will be the location of the headquarters for the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network. The LHIN, which includes most of the City of Toronto, is expected to open later this summer.

The Toronto Central LHIN is one of 14 being created in Ontario. LHINs are local entities designed to plan, integrate and fund local health services – 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 Penny Thomsen will be the LHIN board chair, with Daniel Sullivan and Harley Nott serving as founding board members. The government proposes that each LHIN board would have a full complement of nine 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, Thomsen named Barry Monaghan as the CEO.

“Barry is an outstanding leader who has more than 30 years of experience in the health care field,” Thomsen said. “His experience will be vital as we establish the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network.”

“I am delighted to have been chosen as the first CEO of the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network,” Monaghan said. “I am looking forward to the challenge of bringing my years of experience in health leadership and strategic change management to the launching of this new local health organization.”

The roles of LHINs will be phased in over time. Subject to the passage 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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