

Local Health Integration Networks: Building a True System

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Long-Term Care – Compliance, Contacts, and Incident Reporting

Compliance

As health service providers begin to settle into the new world that emerged April 1st with the transition to LHINs, they continue to receive help and support from the ministry to ensure that transition is as smooth and painless as possible.

Long-Term Care homes are in a somewhat unusual position. Like other providers, they are now the responsibility of LHINs, but in the critical area of LTC Compliance, their relationship continues to be with the ministry.

The new Performance Improvement and Compliance Branch has been created within the ministry to manage the development and implementation of performance improvement initiatives. Under the leadership of Acting Director Tim Burns, it is also responsible for ensuring that health facilities are in compliance with legislation.

Because Long-Term Care Home Compliance Management Programs are so clearly a critical part of this mandate, Compliance Staff have joined the new branch effective April 3rd. Compliance staff assignments, portfolios, contact numbers and e-mail addresses remain unchanged, as do after-hours emergency numbers and the Action Line number which is posted in LTC homes.

Contacts

In order to ensure that there is effective leadership through the transition period, an interim management team for long-term care home compliance has been established, with Sandy Knipfel acting as Senior Manager, Compliance and Enforcement, and Acting Managers representing different areas of the province.

They are as follows:

- Rosemary Lam – Toronto
- Karin Fairchild – Hamilton
- Carole Comeau – Ottawa
- Linda Toner – Sudbury
- Cathy Crane – London.

In addition, Sue Guinard is the Acting Manager Licensing, Education and Appeals (new unit).

LTC Interim Protocol for Incident Reporting

The sharing of information amongst health system partners (LHINs, long-term care homes, ministry) is critical to the smooth functioning of the system, and to the resident care that results. This is particularly true with respect to information about health care incidents whose impact might be felt across providers, across LHIN borders, or even province-wide. These incidents might include:

- Facility incidents or breakdowns
- Disruptions to emergency room services
- Infectious disease outbreaks, and
- Emergencies that are anticipated to overwhelm local capacity.

With the post-April 1st wind down of Regional Offices, a new protocol has been developed regarding local incident reporting for long-term care homes. Where Regional Offices once dealt with LTC incidents, it will now be the responsibility of the LHINs to do so, with temporary assistance during this transition period from the ministry in after-hours (evenings and weekends) emergency situations.

The protocol to which long-term care home administrators have been asked to adhere is as follows:

- If a significant incident is identified during regular business hours, they are asked to phone their LHIN in order to report the incident. They are also asked to then follow up that phone call

with an email message to the LHIN contact confirming details of the incident.

- For emergency situations that arise after regular hours, LTC administrators have been given two ministry phone numbers, one to be used for emergencies that cannot be handled in the home, and another for specifically reporting incidents that require a provincial response or have the potential to escalate into a provincial emergency.
- This protocol complements, but does not replace, current LTC home reporting requirements for unusual occurrences, outbreaks, etc.

New and updated transition and contact information is available on the LTC website at www.ltchomes.net

Anyone is welcome to submit questions about LHINs and the ongoing health care transformation in email form to transforminghealth@moh.gov.on.ca. They will be answered directly in as timely a manner as possible.