

LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORKS (LHINs)

The Provincial Government in Ontario has taken steps to deal with the rising health care problem in this province by reorganizing the province into 14 Local Health Integration Networks.

The Role

"LHINs have been established with the intent of changing the fragmented approach to health service delivery and create an integrated and coordinated local health care system. LHINs are expected to reduce duplication." The LHINs have been given the authority to effectively plan, coordinate, and fund their local health systems to make it easier for patients to access the care they need.

RTO/ERO recognizes the Government's attempt to deal with the health care issues affecting our province, and will cautiously monitor the development of the LHINs across the Province. The process has been set up so the communities have input into the process. We see that as a good step, as our RTO/ERO Districts will be able to monitor the LHIN boards, attend board meetings and discuss concerns with board members from their community.

We believe that the accountability agreements of the LHINs should include performance goals and objectives, performance standards, targets and measurers and a plan for spending money the LHINs receive from the Ministry of Health. We expect that all reports and financial statements will be made available annually to the general public.

RTO/ERO believes that services should be fairly distributed and easy to access without long wait times. Other areas that need to be monitored closely are: Urban versus Rural, Transportation, Equitable access and Coordination. RTO/ERO anticipates services to be better linked for improved care planning particularly between hospitals and the community as well as between the LHINs themselves.

Service for Seniors (Proposed Action Plan)

RTO/ERO believes in strong community support services to enable seniors to remain in their own homes and in the community for as long as possible. The range of services must include activation and day programs, food security, psycho-geriatric support, palliative care services, transportation services, and increased respite for caregivers. It is critical that eligibility criteria and the rules and guidelines for homecare be clear and consistently interpreted.

Questions

1. How will your government/party ensure the effectiveness of the LHINs and make health care better in communities in Ontario?
2. What impact does this legislation have on French language services in the province?
3. How will your government/party ensure that communities are included in local decision making?
4. How will your government/party measure the effectiveness of LHINs?

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