

## **New Northumberland Ontario Health Team to Provide Better Connected Care for Patients**

*Ontario Health Teams Part of Province's Plan to End Hallway Health Care*

### **NEWS**

December 6, 2019

COLBORNE — Ontario is delivering on its commitment to end hallway health care and build a connected and sustainable health care system centred around the needs of patients. The province is introducing Ontario Health Teams, a new model of care that brings together health care providers to work as one team.

Today, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, visited the Emergency Services Base in Colborne to announce the Northumberland Ontario Health Team as one of the first 24 teams in the province to implement a new model of organizing and delivering health care that better connects patients and providers in their communities to improve patient outcomes.

Through an Ontario Health Team, patients will experience easier transitions from one provider to another, including, for example, between hospitals and home care providers, with one patient story, one patient record and one care plan.

“This is an exciting time for health care in Ontario as we finally break down the long-standing barriers that have prevented care providers from working directly with each other to support patients throughout their health care journey,” said Elliott. “Together with our health care partners, the Northumberland Ontario Health Team will play an essential role in delivering on our commitment to end hallway health care and building a connected and sustainable public health care system centred around the needs of patients.”

The Northumberland Ontario Health Team, known as Ontario Health Team – Northumberland, includes patient, caregiver and Alderville First Nation representatives, as well as representatives from both county hospitals, primary care providers, community health centres, family health teams, long-term care, home and community care support services, emergency medicine services, hospice palliative care, housing and mental health. By working together, the team’s vision is to provide a more equitable and seamless continuum of care to the residents of Northumberland, improving population health as well as individual patient, caregiver and provider experience.

“With our new Northumberland Ontario Health Team, patients will benefit from better integrated health care, with a seamless experience when moving between different health care services, providers and settings,” said Elliott. “I would like to thank all the health care providers and organizations that helped plan the Northumberland Ontario Health Team; there is lots of work to be done, but with their dedication and hard work, we will continue to improve health care in our communities and ensure Ontarians get the care they deserve”.

To begin, the Northumberland team will focus on enhancing the coordination of health care services for rural populations – specifically those who experience significant barriers to care. Year one projects include: volunteer peer support initiatives; community paramedicine; and rural outreach

clinics. A fourth project team will focus on digital health. The population served, as well as the scope of services provided, will expand over time.

“We want to thank the government for granting local teams the opportunity to co-design solutions that will work best for our communities,” said Linda Davis, spokesperson for the Collaborative Planning Table of the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland. “We are very pleased to be among the first wave of Ontario Health Teams. Northumberland has learned first-hand that the most creative and most sustainable thinking evolves when those directly affected are part of the decision-making process. As Minister Elliott stated, there is much work to do, and we are just at the beginning. The enthusiasm, creativity and energy at our planning table is unlike anything we have seen before and we are committed to seeing the Ontario Health Team vision become a reality for our region, with the patients and caregivers we serve, and the providers who deliver care.”

The [Northumberland Ontario Health Team](#) will begin implementing some of their proposed programs and services in 2020. A patient / caregiver partnership and engagement framework combining local expertise with international best practises and The Patient Declaration of Values for Ontario will guide ongoing community engagement. A county-wide patient and family advisory committee is planned, as well as a cross-organizational clinical advisory committee. Together with the project teams, these committees will help identify future priorities based on the services and supports patients and caregivers need most.

Ontario has a comprehensive plan to end hallway health care, which includes making investments and advancing new initiatives across four pillars:

1. **Prevention and health promotion:** keeping patients as healthy as possible in their communities and out of hospitals.
2. **Providing the right care in the right place:** when patients need care, ensure that they receive it in the most appropriate setting, not always the hospital.
3. **Integration and improved patient flow:** better integrate care providers to ensure patients spend less time waiting in hospitals when they are ready to be discharged. Ontario Health Teams will play a critical role in connecting care providers and, in doing so, helping to end hallway health care.
4. **Building capacity:** build new hospital and long-term care beds while increasing community-based services across Ontario.

### Quick Facts

- An Ontario Health Team will be responsible for delivering care for their patients, understanding their health care history, directly connecting them to the different types of care they need, and providing 24/7 help in navigating the health care system.
- Ontarians can be confident that they can continue to contact their health care providers as they always have to access the health care they need.
- The first wave of Ontario Health Teams are being approved after an extensive readiness assessment process, which involved significant time, collaboration, research and effort from partners across the health care sector.
- The government will continue working with its partners to review their applications to become an Ontario Health Team.

### Additional Resources

- [Ontario Taking Next Step in Building a Connected Public Health Care System for Patients](#)
- [Ontario's Government for the People to Break Down Barriers to Better Patient Care](#)
- [Building a Connected Public Health Care System for the Patient](#)

For public inquiries call ServiceOntario, INFOLine at 1-866-532-3161 (Toll-free in Ontario only)

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