

# PRINCE EDWARD HEALTH ALLIANCE

## Newsletter #2

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September 14, 2009

Dear Friends of the Prince Edward Health Alliance:

I am writing this to bring you up to date on developments over the Summer and opportunities for the Fall. Inevitably, the pace of events slowed down over the summer and many of us have been distracted by other things (in my case by two new grandchildren!). But events have not stood still and prospects look good for the Fall.

### **Background**

As many of you are aware, a small group has been working since early in the year to develop a proposal for integrating health services in Prince Edward County. This group included members from the County Health Advisory Committee, community organizations and agencies and several expert advisors.

The proposal which was developed in the Spring has now been formally established as the Prince Edward Health Alliance (the "Alliance"), a not-for-profit corporation whose purpose is to support the development of sustainable community-based health services in the County by integrating operational planning and supplying providers with common support services. Its primary initial task is to oversee the development of a comprehensive business and implementation plan to achieve this purpose.

In establishing the Alliance, it is important to acknowledge the encouragement and support of the Family Health Team, Municipality of Prince Edward, the PELA Community Futures Development Corporation and Quinte Healthcare. Special thanks are due to Graham Scott the Supervisor of QHC for his encouragement and support. The founding partners of the Alliance include: the physicians of Prince Edward County (who serve their patients both in their own offices and in the hospital); the members of the Family Health Team that support and extend the services provided by these doctors; Quinte Healthcare Corporation; the three County-based community health service agencies (Community Care for Seniors, Hospice Prince Edward, and the Prince Edward Alzheimer's Society); and the Municipality of Prince Edward County. As we go forward, our hope is to expand the number of partners to include all of the organizations who have participated in the development of the Alliance proposal and as many as possible of the regional agencies providing or supporting the provision of health services in the County

Founding Alliance Board members and Officers are,

- Mark Larratt-Smith, President
- Dr. Greg Higgins, Vice President
- Duff Sprague, Secretary and Treasurer
- Dr. Cliff Rice, Family Health Team
- Councillor Sandy Latchford, Municipality of Prince Edward
- Debbie MacDonald Moynes, Community health services sector
- Katherine Stansfield, Quinte Healthcare Corporation

### **Phase One**

The first phase of Alliance activity is to secure the necessary understanding, policy approvals and the funding support required to develop a full-scale business model and master implementation plan. With the assistance of health policy advisors, the PEHA is preparing a short proposal

outlining:

- the challenge facing the County;
- the foundations for collaborative action; and
- an outline of the components which will need to be addressed in detail in the preparation of a business case and implementation plan

This plan will be submitted to the South East LHIN and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care in the next few weeks.

To fund this first phase, funding and in kind contributions have been pledged by:

- the Prince Edward Family Health Team;
- Quinte Healthcare Corporation;
- The Municipality of Prince Edward County; and
- The Prince Edward, Lennox and Addington Community Futures Development Corporation

During Phase One, administrative and accounting support is being provided by the PE Family Health Team.

We are deeply appreciative of these indications of support and of the volunteer efforts of so many individuals. Their contributions demonstrate the commitment and the capacity of this community to play an active and constructive role in our own health services.

## **Phase Two**

Once policy approvals and funding for the planning phase have been received, the Board will establish a small project Secretariat to lead and to coordinate the work of preparing a full-scale business model and master implementation plan.

Our aim is to begin to implement the business plan and its main elements in the Spring of 2010.

## **LHIN Integrated Health Services Plan 2010 – 2013**

The South East Ontario LHIN has just recently released a draft of its second “Integrated Health Services Plan” for this region of Ontario. From its inception, the Alliance has been committed to working closely with the LHIN to implement its plan in Prince Edward County (which the LHIN has identified as one of its “sub-planning areas”). A preliminary review of the LHIN draft document reveals the complementary nature of the two initiatives. The IHSP provides an overall strategic framework and list of priorities for South East Ontario. The Alliance initiative focuses on integrating services at a community level in ways which will contribute to and complement the LHIN objectives. In particular, the Alliance initiative will provide a concrete way of moving forward to achieve the LHIN’s objectives of developing a system of Primary Health Care to enhance the reality of patient centred care. Through its commitment to establishing an integrated health services management system, the Alliance will also provide a tangible opportunity to demonstrate the potential for using the Provincial commitment to e-health to improve health care delivery at the community level. Effective development of information tools will contribute to the achievement of every one of the LHIN priorities and will also provide evidence to encourage similar developments by other communities in the South East. In summary, we believe that the South East Integrated Health Services Plan provides a strong and supportive framework for the development of community based integrated care by the Alliance.

## **Community Relations**

Throughout these planning phases, a key element to success will be to create a way of hearing

from and speaking with the people of the County about the development of new ways of providing sustainable health services from “prevention to palliation”.

The proposed community relations strategy being developed by PEHA will need to engage the community by:

- Improving general knowledge of the way the health care system works and can be improved
- Explaining the objectives and the priorities of the Alliance
- Keeping information flowing about progress (or lack of it) with next steps clearly enunciated,
- Finding and encouraging respected and knowledgeable 'champions' among the community to help explain complex issues,
- Fostering open and straightforward communications to discourage rumours and unfortunate speculation.

Building an effective communications strategy will take time, creative effort and patience by all involved. Some of the ideas so far include:

- Newsletters (like this) on a regular - maybe quarterly basis - or when there is new information or tangible progress. These can be distributed by e-mail, copies in physician's offices, social service agencies, the hospital waiting rooms, etc.
- Commissioning a video clip to graphically demonstrate how an integrated health care system will affect patient care.
- Articles prepared for local newspapers and magazines.
- A website connected to partner providers can maintain useful information and current updates. (The Alliance has just secured rights to the domain “[peha.ca](http://peha.ca)” for eventual development as an information tool).

Over the next few months it will be important to assess these ideas and others. They will take time, money and active community participation to implement. As a first step, we would welcome your suggestions both as to what information would be most helpful and how we can access the community resources and creative energy needed to establish good two way communication. The very first use of our embryo website is an email feedback address for those who want to provide comments to the Alliance Board. It is: [feedback@peha.ca](mailto:feedback@peha.ca).

We are looking forward to hearing from you and to a productive - and healthy - Fall.

Mark Larratt-Smith  
President, Prince Edward Health Alliance