

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
JOINT
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
AND
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES COMMITTEE**

REPORT CSC 2/PHSC 3-2005

Minutes of a meeting of the Joint Community Services and Public Health Services Committees held in Committee Room 4, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on January 24, 2005, commencing at 2:25 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Committee: Councillors Hildreth, Co-Chair; Timms, Co-Chair; Partington, Regional Chair; Almas; Bailey; Baty; Brock; Casselman; Goulbourne; Harry.

Staff: Mr. Trojan, Chief Administrative Officer; Dr. Sider, Associate Medical Officer of Health; Mr. Ventresca, Acting Commissioner, Community Services; Ms. Reilly, Legislative Assistant.

**UPDATE ON THE LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORKS
(LHINS)**

1. Mr. Gary Zalot, Executive Director, together with Shirley Stewart, Senior Health Planner, attended to apprise committee members of the Stakeholder meeting that was held with Barbara Hall on Wednesday, January 19th, 2005. The Director commented that the Niagara District Health Council's Integrated Planning Network and other local health service networks currently perform a vital role in the planning, coordination and integration of services within the local health care system. He expressed his concerns on how that will continue, given the Province's plan to close District Health Councils as of March 31, 2005. Mr. Zalot commented that given the perceived funding inequities between regions, districts and health agencies, how will the Ministry ensure a more equitable distribution of health care resources across the province.

Ms. Stewart advised that the purpose of the stakeholders meeting was to foster a common understanding of local Niagara health care issues; to initiate a dialogue between Niagara and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care regarding the implementation of Local Health Integration Networks (LHINS) and to collectively develop strategies for addressing local, priority health issues.

Ms. Stewart provided a copy of the Niagara District Health Council “Profile of Niagara” – an overview of local population and health system characteristics and key local health issues which was presented at the meeting. Ms. Stewart highlighted Barbara Hall’s initial comments and responses to questions, both the pre-circulated questions and those brought forward at the meeting. Group discussions were also around common themes and key issues with respect to hospital restructuring in Niagara; Status of local cardiac catheterization lab – approval as part of new St. Catharines General site; Niagara as a sub-LHIN entity and evaluation model for the province and Input on revised funding formulas.

Members of Committee reiterated the concerns related to Niagara as being historically under-serviced and under-funded and what criteria will be used to guide resource allocation across the province and within the LHINs. Also, given the expansive geographic area and large population included in LHIN 4, how will the Ministry structure the LHIN 4 Board in order to ensure that Niagara’s needs are heard.

A discussion ensued on whether LHIN boards will be required to develop local advisory boards to facilitate the communication of local issues. Also, what relations are being proposed between the LHIN and local planning and provider organizations, including Community Care Access Centre, Hospitals and Public Health Departments.

NEXT STEPS

2. Upon review of the next steps presented by Ms. Stewart, Committee identified the following:
 - Promote the establishment of a Niagara LHIN
 - Identify the key elements of local advisory bodies which will inform LHIN 4.
 - Draft letter to Minister Smitherman from Chairs of Niagara DHC and Regional Municipality of Niagara, to convey key issues/concerns/requests described above. CC: Health Results Team, MPPs, IPN, DHC, Regional Councillors, etc. Attach profile of Niagara and briefing paper.
 - Meet with MPPs to convey key issues/concerns as per the letter to the Minister.
 - Meet with LHIN 4 Board and CEO to convey Niagara’s issues/concerns/requests.
 - Develop a partnership agreement and identify a location to host/support functions of Niagara’s Integrated Planning Network.

Moved by Councillor Baty
Seconded by Councillor Brock

That the Niagara District Health Council present to Regional Council at its meeting of February 3, 2005, the impacts of what the changes will be relative to Local Health Integrated Network (LHINs); and

That Regional Council be asked to support the recommendations contained within the next steps and to forward those recommendations to the Province; and

That the Regional Chairman express the Region's appreciation in a letter to the Niagara District Health Council Board and staff for its fine work over the past thirty years.

Carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Committee adjourned at 3:25 p.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair.

Jill Hildreth
Co-Chair

Gail Reilly
Legislative Assistant

Bruce Timms
Co-chair

Pam Gilroy
Regional Clerk/
Associate Director of Corporate Strategy