

Primary Health Care Task Group Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the Primary Health Care Task Group?

In general terms the Primary Health Care Task Group will provide advice to the ESC LHIN on enhancing access to primary health care and maximizing existing services. Ultimately the goal is to increase the availability of primary health care options, provide greater equity of service and improve health outcomes. The role of the LHIN is to ensure access to the best possible care and improve the patient experience.

Why are you focusing on primary health care?

Based on our work from the Small Community Hospital Emergency Department Study the LHIN analysis revealed that challenges in local Primary Health Care is the real issue we need to focus on. Key stakeholder consultations, analysis of utilization data and researchers' reports all point to the same issue – we have a challenged primary health care system.

The reality is, we need more family physicians, nurse practitioners, clinics and after hours access to care. We also need creative and effective solutions to make the system work.

What is primary health care?

Primary Health Care is often the first level of contact a patient has with the health care system. Primary Health Care services promote health and wellness, prevent illness, care for common and often acute illnesses, and manage ongoing health problems. Primary health care is most often provided by a family doctor or nurse practitioner.

What will the Task Group actually do?

The Task Group will take an inventory of the primary health care services currently available, look at patterns of use, and consider health care needs based on demographics and prevalence of

health issues/chronic disease. It will examine LHIN/Ministry targets and best practices regarding the services and look at the causes for the gap between the target and the reality.

The Task Group will determine what services should be available, where they should be located and who should provide the service. Prioritized recommendations on how services need to be realigned and /or enhanced will all be presented back to the ESC LHIN board for decisions and action.

How long is the project going to take?

We are moving quickly to establish the Task Group and get it going. At this early stage it is impossible to predict an end date but our hope is that the task group would present their report to the ESC LHIN Board by the end of the year.

Who will be on the Primary Health Care Task Group?

The Task Group will be comprised of both health care professionals and community members representing a mix of skills and perspectives.

Membership may include:

- Community members (3)
- Community Health Centre / Family Health Team representative
- Emergency Medical Services representative
- Long-Term Care sector representative
- Mental Health Sector representative
- Nurse Practitioner
- Pharmacist
- Physician
- Registered Nurse
- Social Worker
- Community Health Centre / Family Health Team representative
- Others (determined by the PHCTG as necessary)

How do I apply?

- Online application form will be posted on the ESC LHIN website, www.eriesclairhin.on.ca, on Friday, February 26, 2010
- Hard copies and faxed copies are available by request by calling 519-351-5677 x225 or by emailing shannon.sasseville@lhins.on.ca
- Application deadline is Friday, March 19, 2010, 4:30 p.m. Applications received after such time will not be considered for membership Successful applicants will be contacted by telephone or email the week of March 31, 2010

How are members selected?

All applications received by the deadline will be forwarded to the ESC LHIN Board for selection of the Primary Health Care Task Group members. Applicants will be selected based on an overall skill mix matrix for the committee versus individual skill level.

How long are members on the Task Group?

Membership terms will be determined by the Terms of Reference that will be created by the Task Group members

Do I get paid to be a member of the Task Group?

No, members are not paid. This is a volunteer opportunity.

Does the ESC LHIN pay for my travel and meal expenses?

- No. Travel and meal expenses are the responsibility of the Task Group member. Exceptional circumstances may be presented to the ESC LHIN for consideration.
- Toll free teleconference lines will be provided for meetings that do not require in-person attendance

Who does the Task Group report to?

- The work and members are accountable to the ESC LHIN Board of Directors through ESC LHIN staff
- ESC LHIN staff will provide support to the Primary Health Care Task Group, as required
- Interim and final work of the Primary Health Care Task Group will be presented to the ESC Board for approval

Is there geographical representation?

Consideration will be given to geographical representation on the Primary Health Care Task Group once the skill mix criterion has been met.

The Task Group may choose to convene three additional sub-committees to provide geographical input specific to the deliverables. Should the Primary Health Care Task Group convene geographical committees, the selection process and Terms of Reference will be determined by the Task Group and communicated through the ESC LHIN website

Will the Task Group be conducting community engagement?

Yes. The Task Group is responsible for conducting appropriate and focused community engagement. The Task Group will determine how and when to engage the public in the consultation process.

What is the role of the Rural and Northern Health Care Panel in the Primary Health Care Task Group?

Once the work of the Rural and Northern Health Care Panel is completed the Task Group will review the proposed guidelines/recommendations and consider their implications within the scope and deliverables of the Primary Health Care project.



Who is funding the Task Group?

The ESC LHIN is funding the Primary Health Care project and Task Group

Why is the ESC LHIN using a consultant to assist with this project?

- The LHIN does not have the adequate in-house staffing resources to be able to manage an initiative of this size and scope, in addition to the many other projects the LHIN is undertaking.
- By using a consultant project manager the LHIN can ensure the project will get the dedicated staffing, expertise and resources needed to complete a practical and actionable report.
- By using a competitive process to determine a vendor the LHIN can ensure that we are getting the best value for our investment.

Will the consultant be a vendor of record?

Yes. The ESC LHIN follows the procurement directives set out by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care which stipulates all consultants must be a vendor of record. The LHIN will be conducting a Request for Proposal (RFP) process

How can I get updates on the work of the Task Group?

The Task Group will be providing update reports to the ESC LHIN Board at key milestones during the process. Information will be posted to the ESC LHIN website at www.eriestclairlhin.on.ca

Who can I contact for more information?

- Shannon Sasseville, Senior Community Engagement Consultant at 519-351-5677 x 225 or shannon.sasseville@lhins.on.ca