

Small Community Hospital Emergency Department Study

January 27, 2009



Emergency Services in Erie St. Clair

- Emergency services are a critical component of Erie St. Clair's local health care system
- As the accountable body for health care for Erie St. Clair, we are **responsible** for ensuring mechanisms are in place **through our service providers** for care delivery that is:
 - Safe, timely and equitable
 - Designed so clinical needs are met
 - Meets the population's needs, no matter where they live
 - Resourced according to guidelines, i.e. nurse/patient ratio, competency
 - Coordinated with other providers in the care delivery system
 - Linked with community services
 - Continually improving performance and performance outcomes through ongoing evaluation and measurement

Facilities Studied

- Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital Site, Bluewater Health (Petrolia)
- Leamington District Memorial Hospital
- Sydenham Campus, Chatham-Kent Health Alliance (Wallaceburg)



What is the Study About?

- It is about developing a baseline understanding of the current business operations, practices, utilization, and capacity of these Emergency Departments
- It is about providing the ESC LHIN and its Board with insight/context for consideration of future planning and delivery of quality, sustainable emergent services
- The study is also an opinion of what services could look like in the near term (one year) to the medium term (five years)

What is the Study Not About?

- It is not about cost cutting
- It is not about acting as a report card on local Emergency Departments – rather a starting point for moving forward



LHIN Perceived Challenges in ESC's EDs

- Small Community Hospital Emergency Departments in general are experiencing or will experience similar issues:
 - Recruiting and retaining well-trained emergency physicians and skilled staff
 - Variable or low volumes of patient visits specifically in high intensity complex cases
 - Challenges in operations
 - Challenges in connectivity to other services
- This study was a proactive initiative by the ESC LHIN to identify options for addressing sustainability and operating issues

Study Leads

- Dr. Isser Dubinsky, Hay Group Health Care Consulting
- Adam Topp, Hay Group Health Care Consulting



What Did the Report Tell Us?

- The report told us “We were right to look”
- The study confirms there are challenges to achieving long-term sustainability and has opened our eyes to other potential concerns
- The report indicates the need to further examine concerns with patient/staff safety, access to care, effectiveness/efficiency of care and health human resources implications

What Do We Still Need to Examine?

- A review of local EMS services capacity and its relationships to the Emergency Departments
- What is the full impact on the health care system if changes are required? For example:
 - on the larger regional hospitals
 - on local patterns of care, and
 - on local responses to care needs
- How to leverage technologies, mobile units, and new investments with partners in health care delivery so that stakeholders experience enhanced care



Next Steps

- Public availability of the report January 30th (through the ESC LHIN web site)
- Key stakeholder and community meetings are being scheduled
- Inclusion of additional data into our final report
- Impact analysis of recommended system changes and other options
- Board review of final ESC LHIN report and recommendations (expected by June, 2009)



Summary

- ESC LHIN is a custodian of the health care system and must responsibly:
 - Respect that the system is not static and continues to evolve
 - Meet the needs of our community
 - Adjust the health care system as population and needs change (prevalence of chronic disease management and an aging population)

Summary (cont'd)

- The professionals working in these organizations are intensely committed and hard working; they clearly are valued by the community and by the ESC LHIN
- This report is a first step in a comprehensive and considerate process to develop recommendations to be brought forward to the ESC LHIN Board for approval later this year (June, 2009)

