

LHIN residents notice improvements to their health care

An increasing number of Central West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) residents believe their health care has improved, including access to and quality of local services.

"The health needs of local communities are best understood by those who live in them," said LHIN Board Chair Maria Britto. "This makes our local residents the best source to tell us if we are on the right track, and these results help to confirm that our planning and investments in high quality, patient-centred care are on the right track."

According to results of the LHIN's latest public poll, there has been a steady increase, over the past seven years, with the number of residents who are satisfied with accessibility to their local health care programs and services. Noticeably, 88 per cent of residents indicated satisfaction with the quality of their local health care in the LHIN, an 11 per cent improvement over the previous public poll conducted in 2009.

In collaboration with health service providers and community partners, the LHIN stated these results reflect valuable work being done to improve the local health care system and provide important insights regarding areas for continued improvement.

Conducted by an independent social research firm, 600 randomly selected local residents were surveyed by phone in October.

This was the third such poll in seven years, an indication of the importance placed by the LHIN on the ongoing assessment of local resident satisfaction with their health services, their confidence in the health care system and their views of local health priorities.

Over the years, LHIN decisions regarding the planning, funding and integration of local health care services have been formed by the voices of patients, family caregivers, residents, local health service providers and those organizations not funded by the LHIN, but who play an important role in the design and integration of their local health care system. Ongoing community engagement will continue to be a LHIN priority to ensure the health care needs of local residents are being met.

A detailed copy of poll results can be found on the Central West LHIN website, where there are also public poll results for 2006 and 2009.

The LHIN plans, funds and integrates health care services for Caledon, as well as Dufferin County, Brampton, Malton, north Etobicoke and west Woodbridge.

Among the highlights of the survey, in terms of better quality and improved accessibility, respondents revealed directional improvement with respect to the quality of and access to their local health care system was a priority. In collaboration with health service providers and community partners, the system providing better access to care; improved transitions between health service providers; shorter wait times; a stronger focus on seniors' care and chronic disease management; improved linkages with primary care; and more integrated approaches to care were important.

In the area of equity and diversity, 78 per cent of respondents were very or somewhat satisfied with the health care system's ability to provide services that are fair and equitable to all. Meanwhile, 82 per cent were very or somewhat satisfied with the system's capacity to accommodate the needs of the LHINs highly diverse population.

When it comes to the most important health care services, primary care, care for seniors and cancer care were cited as being the most important overall for LHIN residents.