

# Cooperation Agreement



June 2013

## City of Thunder Bay IDN Health Link

### 1. Background

- In December 2012, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) launched integrated regional patient care networks called “Health Links”, placing health care providers at the centre of the system to help remove barriers to care.
- Working together in a defined geographical area, health care providers will work across teams to identify patient-centred solutions, provide individualized care plans and improve transitions in care between and among all health care providers, including family and specialist physicians, acute and long-term care facilities, home care and community support agencies.
- Health Links will initially focus on high users of the health care system, removing barriers to quality care and improving health outcomes for seniors and complex needs patients.
- The goal is to improve health outcomes for complex and senior patients, improve access to care as close to home as possible, improve quality of care and provide better value for health care dollars.
- All Health Links will have a lead agency such as a Family Health Team (FHT), Community Health Centre (CHC), Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) or hospital. Other members of the Health Link must be willing and able to collaborate in order to better and more quickly coordinate health care services for high-need patients such as seniors and others with complex conditions.



Ontario

North West Local Health  
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- In order to establish a Health Link, strong representation from local primary care providers and the CCAC is required. Joining or establishing a Health Link is voluntary.
- Both the North West LHIN Health Services Blueprint and Health Link align to the Excellent Care for All Act (ECFAA) through the focus on person-centred care and continuous quality improvement in health care delivery.
- The North West LHIN Health Services Blueprint is a 10 year plan developed by the North West LHIN for the North West LHIN to develop an integrated, person-centred health system with services delivered at the local, district and regional level.
- The goals and objectives of the North West LHIN Health Services Blueprint and Health Link are aligned as we focus on avoidable visits to hospital by providing the right care at the right place at the right time.

## 2. Health Link Model: Initial Core Features

- Health Links are an evolutionary model that will initially focus on improving patient care and outcomes for the high user population cohort through enhanced local integration among health care providers, including primary care, hospital, community care, while delivering better value for investments.
- The model will be person centred – Activities centred on the needs of the high use population cohort (1-5%) with the goal of improving their care and their experience at better value.
- Health Links aim to improve navigation and open up access to more services for better, integrated care. As a result, the health outcomes for your complex patients will be improved, by coordinating care plans at the patient level
- Health Links will be designed around, and accountable for system-level metrics established by the province. Their initial focus will be on the high users, as we know that this segment of the population uses a disproportionate amount of care at a cost which is not sustainable, nor appropriate for their needs.
- Health Links will be accountable to the LHINs. Over time, the entire province would be represented.
- Leadership, governance, composition and integration initiatives will be flexible based on local need. Robust primary care participation is a critical success factor.

LHINs will work with providers that form each Health Link to ensure they put collaborative initiatives in place that will allow for a measurable, positive impact on patient care.

There will be 5 Health Links in the North West LHIN that align to the North West LHIN's 5 Integrated District Networks as follows:

- 1) City of Thunder Bay IDN
- 2) District of Thunder Bay IDN
- 3) District of Rainy River IDN
- 4) District of Kenora IDN
- 5) Northern IDN

The City of Thunder Bay IDN will be the first Health Link in the North West LHIN.

### 3. Purpose of Cooperation Agreement

By signing this cooperation agreement, the following agencies/organizations are establishing their mutual agreement to participate in the development of the **City of Thunder Bay IDN Health Link**, as outlined above.

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Organization

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Signature

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Name/Position

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Date