

CHAIR's *Report* Kathy Durst

WWLHIN Board Meeting – February 26, 2009

The major challenge facing our health care system transformation is designing a high quality, affordable delivery system that is focused on the best interests of patients/clients/customers, who are also owners of this system. The good news for the owners of the health care system in Waterloo Wellington is that there is a critical mass of health service providers that are well down that path of transformation and performance improvement.

Health care in Ontario is changing, and as a LHIN, we are here to work with our partners to develop a system-wide plan, lead and support coordination and transformation and, yes, provide funding. We want to clearly state at this time, while funding is important and that we must use those limited resources as efficiently as possible, I know that all of us are here first and foremost to support a system that provides quality health care.

It is important that all leaders in health care recognize that health service providers can no longer assume that deficits will be covered by additional funding or, that funding will be provided without demonstrable accountability targets.

In light of Cambridge Memorial Hospital's indication that it is anticipating a \$3.5 deficit this fiscal year and up to \$3 million deficit in the next fiscal period, we must support their efforts in achieving a strong operating position. This will enable the doctors, nurses and all the hospital staff to continue to provide high quality care for Cambridge and area residents. This fiscal stability, in turn, will help sustain the community hospital through fiscal challenges.

We want to clearly state that there are no predetermined assumptions for, or outcomes of, the Operational Review for Cambridge.

Review Teams have provided assistance to many Ontario hospitals. This assistance is provided by peers and offers a fresh set of eyes for the organization.

Tonight, we heard from the Lead of the Coaching Team that has been working with Guelph General Hospital. While the Coaching Team for Guelph is a different level of assistance, it again provides additional support for this viable community hospital as it continues to offer strong programs and services for the residents they serve. Indicative of system leadership is Guelph General Hospital, whose staff worked with a coaching team to identify

opportunities for improvement focusing on performance and effective utilization of resources. By welcoming a coaching team, Guelph General is evidence that system change can produce wins for everyone. Through creativity and innovation, lots of trust and a real sense of purpose, GGH has achieved outcomes required for an interdependent health system where all partners are held accountable for performance.

Everyone is counting on our health care leaders to submerge their organizational self interests and to provide leadership, wisdom, and stewardship of precious health care resources. By engaging in this focused and productive coaching process, GGH has further developed their strategic capacity and, their capability to identify, implement and institutionalize best practices.

We are pleased to hear from Julia Dumanian, CEO of Cambridge Memorial Hospital, that the Board of Governors and the hospital staff welcome the opportunity to work with the external Operational Review Team on creative ways to provide quality patient care and address their fiscal responsibilities. It is this collaborative approach that will ensure Cambridge Memorial Hospital will be successful in developing a plan using the recommendations from the Operational Review. At the end of the review, Cambridge Memorial Hospital will have developed a plan, one that they can support and implement.

As governance leaders, we have also formally communicated with the Cambridge Memorial Hospital Board of Governors that we are dedicated to working together as system leaders to build a sustainable health care system and improve services to the residents of our LHIN.

During this time of change, it is important that we all deal with facts. The facts are clear; the Operational Review Team will assist Cambridge Memorial Hospital to achieve our mutual goal of a strong and sustainable hospital for Cambridge and area residents within the human and fiscal resources available.

This Operational Review focuses on one goal - planning for the future and having a sustainable health care system for the residents of Cambridge.

At this time, we also want to recognize Guelph General Hospital and congratulate them on the recent provincial announcement that they will become a bariatric centre of excellence. This designation acknowledges the existing surgical expertise, facilities and resources already in place. Through increased provincial funding, Guelph General Hospital will be able to provide 240 surgeries a year. This is good news for the entire Waterloo Wellington area. Our region will have an outstanding bariatric program, which will help more Ontarians receive this highly specialized surgery closer to home. It is important to note that Guelph was one of four hospitals to receive increased funding for this specialized service. Congratulations to Board Chair Peter Ferraro and the entire team at the hospital for this recent designation.

Both of the items I spoke to tonight clearly demonstrate how our local health care system is transforming. As leaders in our system, we will continue to support our colleagues in governance and provide assistance as they work to transform their governance and operations and, together we will champion changes and improvements in our local health care system. A system that will proudly serve the residents of Waterloo Region, the County of Wellington and the southern Grey County.

Thank you.

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