

NE LHIN Supports Working Group Efforts to Achieve More Patient-Focused Transfers



January 17, 2015 -- Efforts continue to improve the transportation of non-urgent patients across our vast North East region, with a permanent non-ambulance solution in the works for long-distance inter-hospital transfers. A North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN) supported project has people working together from the region's four large hospitals, referring community hospitals, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Central Ambulance Communication Centres, as well as the NE LHIN. The project, with a three-year implementation plan, has looked at options to take the emphasis off of EMS, and ensure patients get better coordinated care. Strategies include coordinating non-urgent transfers through one central booking service, having dedicated routes and vehicles driving between communities, and improving hospital processes to support non-urgent patient transfers.

A review and restructuring plan has shown that one-third of the EMS patient transfers in and out of main transfer centres in the region account for two-thirds of the hours expended. These "long-haul" transfer hours could be replaced with a restructured non-urgent system of transportation.

The needs of patients remain at the centre of this North East LHIN review which will lead to a more coordinated manner to more quickly, safely and efficiently transfer patients between hospitals. A working group is now planning a tender process for the transportation routes included in the restructuring plan, which will define the vehicles and the staff required for each route, and recommend the ongoing operating model.

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