

MEDIA RELEASE

North East LHIN Focuses on Northerners' Housing Needs: *Call for Experts to Join a Regional Panel to Develop a Northeastern Ontario Housing Strategy*

January 27, 2016 – A new Northeastern Ontario expert panel brought together by the North East Local Health Integration Network (North East LHIN) will focus on the housing and support needs of the frail elderly, the homeless and at-risk populations, as well as people with mental illness and addiction issues.

Following the North East LHIN's first [Housing Forum - Building for the Future](#), the LHIN Board of Directors heard about next steps to improve housing and health outcomes for Northerners at its January 26th Board meeting.

"Why housing?" asked Senior Director Catherine Matheson. "The World Health Organization has recognized housing as a social determinant of health. Studies have also shown that securing stable housing for an individual is as important as the treatment program itself when it comes to mental health and addictions issues."

The North East LHIN's soon to be released Strategic Plan, 2016-2019, also identifies housing as a key area to support health care transformation.

"The North East LHIN appreciates how important housing is for the health and well-being of Northerners," said Louise Paquette, CEO of the North East LHIN. "We need solutions that will meet the needs of the people living in Northeastern Ontario today and into the future."

The Expert Panel – A Call to Northerners

The North East LHIN Expert Panel on Housing will be representative of Northerners, including Francophone and First Nations populations, and the region's urban and rural geography.



Adam Jagelewski, Associate Director Centre for Impact Investing, MaRS Discovery District, chats with Catherine Matheson, Senior Director, Health System Transformation & Implementation, NE LHIN, at the NE LHIN's first forum on housing, Building for the Future – Meeting the North East's Housing Needs.

The LHIN is looking for panelists, working at a senior level, in the following sectors: housing, health care, private, public, and economic development. To apply to be a panelist, fill out this short survey [here](#) or visit the North East LHIN website www.nelhin.on.ca . Deadline closes: Wednesday, February 10, 2016.

North East LHIN Housing Strategy

The North East LHIN has engaged Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) to assist in the development of a strategy that focuses on innovative housing and health models for Northeastern Ontario. NOSDA is an incorporated body that brings together service managers in the North East region who are responsible for the planning, coordination and delivery of a range of community health and social services, including social housing.

The strategy will include an inventory of supportive housing projects across the region, compile and analyze surveys which identify perceived barriers and opportunities, and gather best practices. The strategy will also examine the supports needs for vulnerable populations living in the region – looking at capacity and any gaps. The LHIN Board will receive this strategy in the fall of 2016, using it as a blueprint for future investments and partnerships to better meet the health and wellness needs of Northerners.

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Background:

- 20%, or 1 in 5 Northerners are 65 or older -- climbing to 1 in 4 by 2025 - a 5% increase.
- Assisted living for seniors has grown from 530 units (2008) to 1,700+ (2015).
- Long-term care has increased by 280 beds since 2008 to 5,048 (Spring 2015).
- Convalescent care has grown from 30 (2008) to 44 beds (2015) with a goal of 96 beds by 2031.
- It costs \$486 a day to keep a person in hospital, compared to \$72 per to care for a person in the community with supports.