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New Report supports the need for Community-based Seniors' Care
Number of Seniors Living in Ontario's Central East Expected to Double in Next 20 Years

News:

Recognizing that over the next 20 years, the Central East Local Health Integration Network's (Central East LHIN) senior population is forecast to double, there is an increasing need to expand access to specialized geriatric services outside long term care homes and hospitals, including seniors' own homes, in retirement homes or Assisted Living in Supportive Housing. Early access to these interventions in the community is critical for delaying or avoiding frail seniors' need for institutional care.

These findings are included in a new report commissioned by Central East Regional Specialized Geriatric Services (CE RSGS) that shows that 15% of the Central East LHIN's 1.6 million residents are seniors. Among seniors, over 96,000 people are experiencing health challenges that increase their risk of worsening health. Most of these older people live outside of institutions and prefer to remain so.

The "Need for Specialized Geriatric Services in the Central East LHIN" report also shows of seniors admitted to hospitals in the Central East LHIN in 2011/12, roughly half of these admissions, costing approximately \$158 million, were potentially avoidable hospitalizations, called so because the problems identified might have been addressed through earlier access to specialized geriatric or other services.

CE RSGS was formed by the Central East LHIN to improve the organization, coordination and governance of specialized geriatric services for all frail seniors in Scarborough, Durham Region, Northumberland County, Peterborough City and County, City of Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton County.

Earlier this year, the RSGS Governance Authority commissioned Preya Solutions Group (PSG) to:

- Assess the current and future specialized geriatric service needs of the CE LHIN population
- Assess the capacity of specialized geriatric services in the CE LHIN
- Examine the gaps between needs and capacity for different sectors that provide specialized geriatric services
- Suggest services, subpopulations, and activities that should be prioritized for system reconfigurations
- Identify system reconfigurations and resource redistributions to achieve an integrated system of specialized geriatric services.

According to the report, specialized geriatric services in both institutions and the community will need to increase in the future as the population ages. How this is done will affect the whole health care system.

Essential components of a system of specialized geriatric care include:

- Providing services to those seniors that would benefit most
- Ensuring coordinated specialized geriatric services are available in the community with the goal to reduce specific health risks such as injuries, muscle weakening, infections and exacerbation of chronic conditions
- Ensuring service is continuously evaluated for quality, access and effectiveness.

Quotes:

“We know the sustainability of our health care system requires us to rethink how we keep people healthy and well in the community to prevent avoidable hospitalization and the need for long-term care. As the RSGS report indicates, achieving the LHIN’s strategic aim of helping Central East LHIN residents spend more time in their homes and their communities requires providing alternatives to long-term care homes and hospital-based care. This report is helping the LHIN and its Board to make strategic investments in integrated initiatives that are making a difference in the lives of local residents.”

Deborah Hammons, Chief Executive Officer, Central East Local Health Integration Network

“RSGS’s Mission is to create a high quality, integrated, person-centered system of care that supports the best quality of life for frail seniors and their families. Hospital days, Emergency Department visits and Long Term Care days could be reduced with earlier access to geriatric services in the community. Community-based specialized geriatric services could delay and reduce the need for long-term care days, while reducing seniors’ health risks. The RSGS Capacity and Needs Assessment Report provides a strong platform upon which to build our regional action plans and health policy input for the foreseeable future to provide the best health experience for frail seniors living in the Central East. ”

Kelly Kay, Executive Director, Central East Regional Specialized Geriatric Services

Quick Facts:

- The Central East LHIN covers 17,000 square kilometers of mostly rural geography. Only 11% of residents live in rural regions while 80% of residents are concentrated in Scarborough and Durham. Some communities are growing faster than others and meeting the needs of Specialized Geriatric Services will require different approaches for rural and dense urban areas.
- RSGS serves as a catalyst for the integration of clinical and service delivery intended to build better health outcomes for frail seniors across the Central East LHIN. It builds on investments the Central East LHIN has already made in specialized geriatric services.
- Regional Specialized Geriatric Services are those services focused on frail seniors, requiring greater specialization and the use of inter-professional and organizational collaboration and multi-disciplinary teams in its delivery, increasing customization of care to respond to patient and client needs, and the use of standardized best practices and outcomes. Services that could fall under the scope of Specialized Geriatric care include: specialized geriatric assessment, consultation, short-term treatment, rehabilitation, and short-term specialty case management. They also include both the specialties of geriatric medicine and geriatric psychiatry.

Learn More:

- For a full copy of the Central East RSGS Capacity and Needs Assessment Report, please visit the Central East LHIN website at www.centraleastlhin.on.ca and click on "[Resource Documents – Planning - Regional Specialized Geriatric Services](#)".