

# News Release

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## Rural Residents Supported Through Expanded Aging at Home Program

DUNDALK, ON – Rural residents of east Southgate and north Wellington will now have increased access to personal support services and other community-based programs through the expansion of an innovative initiative called the Integrated Assisted Living Program (IALP). Funded through the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network's (WWLHINs) Aging at Home initiative, the IALP is delivered by the Waterloo Wellington Community Care Access Centre (WWCCAC) to eligible adults, 65 years and older.

The goal of the Integrated Assisted Living Program is to support aging in place by preventing premature placement into long-term care, and eliminating medically unnecessary emergency department visits and hospitalizations by helping clients enhance their health status, well-being and quality of life. Through a community approach, the IALP provides personal support services to older adults with complex health needs who have limitations with activities of daily living.

The geographic area where the program is delivered is selected based on data that shows areas with high numbers of older adults making repeat visits to hospital emergency departments, and existing WWCCAC clients who have been identified as being at risk, to name a few indicators. The model to address the unique needs of the rural community was developed out of the WWLHIN's extensive 2009 community consultation process as part of the Rural Health Care Review, and out of the WWCCAC's consultation with numerous agencies this past spring and early summer to address the challenges of rural health care.

The core services of the program includes access to a personal support worker who can provide scheduled and unscheduled support 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The program also supports clients by providing linkages to health and wellness programs, including social supports, recreation, activation and education.

The implementation of the IALP is an important step forward to address two of the nine recommendations included in the Rural Health Care Review Report endorsed by the WWLHIN Board of Directors in January of this year. These recommendations focus on the availability of community support services for rural seniors and reviewing access to CCAC professional services in rural areas.

### QUOTES

"The uniqueness of this program allows care providers to address the individual needs of each IALP client," said Bruce Lauckner, Interim CEO, WWLHIN. "We know that there are specific challenges related to the delivery of rural health care. Through our partnerships, we have introduced a rural Integrated Assisted Living Program, with the residents' needs being at the forefront. IALP is a major step in improving access to care for our rural seniors."

"We know that there are challenges on many fronts to deliver effective and efficient health care services to rural residents," states Kevin Mercer, CEO for the Waterloo Wellington CCAC. "Through the Integrate Assisted Living Program, we expect that rural residents will experience an improved access to services and supports and feel a greater sense of reassurance to know that they can access help 24 hours per day, seven days per week."

**QUICK FACTS**

The WWLHIN has allocated \$4,940,853 for the IALP program for the current fiscal year, which ends March 31, 2011. Of this allocation, approximately \$765,000 will be earmarked for the rural health IALP in east Southgate and north Wellington to serve 60 clients.

In 2009 - 2010, the WWLHIN invested \$958,789 through the Aging at Home program for the IALP. The program was successfully implemented in the Langs/Eagle/King neighbourhood in Cambridge in December 2009. Three neighbourhoods in Kitchener were added in Spring 2010, including: Franklin, Wilson/Fourth and Margaret/Queen. Currently, 179 clients are receiving assistance through the IALP. Additional urban IALP neighbourhoods are being planned for 2010.

The Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network is responsible for planning, integrating, coordinating and providing funding to 79 health service providers including hospitals, long-term care homes, community support services, community health centres, the Community Care Access Centre and community mental health and addictions agencies in Waterloo Region, Wellington County and South Grey. The WWLHIN operates an annual health care budget of close to \$876 million.

The WWLHIN's Rural Health Care Lead is currently working to implement the recommendations outlined in the Rural Health Care Review Report, including the creation of a Rural Health Network. To read the report, please visit the WWLHIN website at [www.wwlhin.on.ca](http://www.wwlhin.on.ca).

The Waterloo Wellington Community Care Access Center (CCAC) is one of fourteen CCACs in the province. In 2009/10, we helped over 34,300 people access the health and support services they need to stay in their own home, return safely to home from hospital, or to prevent hospital admission. We also helped 1,600 people make the transition into long-term care. Our funding of \$100 million is provided by the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network.

**LEARN MORE**

WWLHIN website at [www.wwlhin.on.ca](http://www.wwlhin.on.ca)

Waterloo Wellington CCAC website at [www.ww.ccac-ont.ca](http://www.ww.ccac-ont.ca)

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