

2.0 WWLHIN Context

2.1 WWLHIN Mission and Values

WWLHIN Mission

Inspiring people to improve quality of life now and in the future through collaborative relationships and health system integration.

To Live and Live Well in Waterloo Wellington is the desire of the residents who call this area home. Living well requires an economically viable and socially vibrant community supported by a wide-ranging health system that is focused on the health and well being of its population. A health system that:

- identifies and addresses the physical, psychological, and social needs of the individual,
- is focused on health rather than illness,
- is accessible and offers a full spectrum of affordable health related services, and can be depended on to be there when anyone needs it, both now and in the future,
- collaborates towards common goals, and
- includes all the components necessary for individuals and families to enjoy a happy and healthy quality of life.

WWLHIN Values

ACCOUNTABILITY	Demonstrated by follow through, evidence-based outcomes and transparency
INTEGRITY	Demonstrated by sound decision making processes and honesty
INNOVATION	Demonstrated by creativity, future focus and change
COMMUNITY	Demonstrated by respect, engagement and focus on people

To achieve this mission and fulfill these values, the WWLHIN will work with residents in local communities, health provider organizations, health care professionals and caregivers, and the government to plan, co-ordinate and in the near future, fund health services locally. The WWLHIN will help to create a “journey of care” with smooth transitions, easy to identify and accessible services for residents. People will experience tangible improvements in the delivery of care, in their own health status and that of their families.

To ensure a local focus, the Waterloo Wellington LHIN is governed by a 9-member, community-based Board of Directors. The Board sets the strategic direction of WWLHIN, monitors its progress, and ensures that its activities are aligned with the directions as set out in this IHSP.

The Board and staff of the WWLHIN recognize that integration and coordination are evolutionary and will require the active and ongoing participation and engagement of the broader community in order to succeed. To fulfill its mandate, the WWLHIN has begun a number of activities to support ongoing collaboration, consultation and dialogue that is critical to success, and ultimately to the building of the best health system possible for local residents. (Learn more about WWLHIN Community Engagement commitment and approach in Appendices B and C.)

2.2 Local Considerations for Health System Planning

Considerations for Health System Planning in Waterloo Wellington:

- WWLHIN is home to 698,900 people or 5.5% of Ontario's total population and is a rich blend of rural and urban communities.
- 85% of the population of WWLHIN residents live in the urban areas of Guelph, Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo. However, close to 100,000 individuals reside in the rural areas of the region.
- WWLHIN residents in rural communities are less likely to have access to a family physician and geographic distances make accessing hospital and community care more difficult.
- WWLHIN has a younger population than most other areas of the Province. There is a slightly higher proportion of the population in the 0-44 age group than the provincial average.
- In the next ten years, the seniors' population in the WWLHIN will grow significantly from 11.5% (80,600) of the population in 2005 to 14% (112,060) in 2015, creating a huge demand for long-term, home and community-based care.
- WWLHIN is home to several of the country's most well respected post-secondary schools including – The University of Guelph, University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University and Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning.
- 47% of adults living in the WWLHIN have attained post-secondary education credentials.
- WWLHIN residents enjoy a high prevalence of self-reported "excellent" or "very good" health.

How did WWLHIN, the public and community service providers begin to plan integrated health services for 698,900 people who live in an area covering 4,800 square kilometres? We began by gathering statistical information about the current health care services, the communities currently served and how those communities are likely to change over time. Together, we examined the key drivers that may make the planning and delivery of health care easier, and in some cases, more challenging.

But What Does All This Mean, From A Health System Planning Perspective?

This information is a very helpful supplement to our community engagement and environmental scan findings. It provides the evidence to determine and support local strategic health priorities. It also helps to identify where to focus time, energy and resources both now and in the foreseeable future.

Influencing Local Strategic Directions

This information supports the need to develop locally-based strategic directions for building a better health system. Although it is essential that health system planning complements and supports provincial directions, this information will help to design a local system that respects the unique characteristics of all communities.

2.3 Understanding Integration Within the WWLHIN Context

Local Health Integration Networks have been established by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care with a very specific mandate. This mandate involves developing an “integrated health system” within their geographic areas. An integrated health system focuses on facilitating coordination among and between health service providers and community partners for the benefit of the people who use the system.

TYPES OF INTEGRATION

- Cooperation
- Collaboration
- Coordination
- Delegation
- Transfer of responsibility
- Shared governance models
- Alliances, partnerships and mergers
- New types of organizations

While some might think that integration means consolidation and amalgamation, it is much broader, and it can include:

- removing obstacles to ensure that people experience smooth transitions between health service providers,
- establishing service delivery approaches and standards to optimize quality and efficiency for the people the system serves,
- bringing together resources including human, financial and facilities to develop areas of expertise, and
- creating alliances and partnerships.

Integration involves everything from information sharing to collaborative planning to operational coordination. Ultimately, within the WWLHIN the goal of health services integration is to ensure a sustainable health system that enhances the quality of life for all WWLHIN communities.

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