

LHINfo Minute – Health Care Update from the North East LHIN

North East LHIN Works with Health Care Partners to Witness Decrease in ALC Numbers *NE LHIN support helps Timmins and District Hospital reduce ALC numbers in past six months*

July 9, 2010 – In partnership with hospital staff and community partners working to focus on finding solutions, there is some good news for the North East LHIN to report about our biggest health care challenge in Northeastern Ontario – ALC (Alternate Level of Care).

Thanks to support from the NE LHIN's *Aging at Home* strategy, one regional hospital is experiencing a reduction in the number of ALC patients. Often elderly, ALC patients stay in a hospital bed long after their acute care treatment is over because there is no place for them to go.

The NE LHIN has made ALC rate reduction a priority. It has worked with community partners and led localized ALC action plans across the region in Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, North Bay, Timmins and Parry Sound. High ALC rates (at 31% on average, our region has the highest rate of ALC patients in our hospital's acute care beds) mean the system needs realignment. And the good news is that shift is happening at Timmins and District Hospital, with about 300 fewer admissions through emergency, partly related to strategic screening of the elderly.

"Our ALC numbers are the lowest they've been in many years," reports that hospital's Director of Clinical Services, Carlo De Lorenzi. "We're certainly getting the outcomes. It's a trend we've seen for the last six months."

The North East LHIN has provided funding to get people out of regional hospitals through programs like enhanced community support services, geriatric case management, FLO Collaborative* and Home First. These efforts are part of the \$17-million NE LHIN *Aging at Home* investment aimed at keeping seniors at home and out of hospitals, or moving them back home with support.

According to Louise Paquette, CEO of the NE LHIN, programs like those being used effectively at Timmins and District Hospital are very important in Northeastern Ontario where 17% of the people are aged 65 and over. "That number goes up to 30% in 20 years, so it's vital that we work now with our Northeastern Ontario hospitals, community partners, and the North East CCAC to care for our frail and elderly patients both of today and tomorrow," says Paquette.

** The **Flo** analogy was created to tell the story of a real patient experiencing an acute event who requires care in an alternate setting following a hospital stay. Alternate settings could be rehabilitation, complex continuing care, retirement home, supportive housing, long-term care, etc. Flo is a fictitious 85-year old woman admitted to the hospital from her home with multiple co-morbidities.*