



## Jeremy's North East LHIN Blog

# Thank you! Merci! Miigwetch!

October 26, 2018

Dear Northerners,

Thank you! Merci! Miigwetch! Over the past nine months, we've heard from so many of you -- thousands of you in fact -- as part of our strategic planning process to build our Integrated Health Service Plan for 2019 to 2022.

We have gathered 4,500 of your ideas - feedback from 60 engagements, written submissions from 1,140 surveys, and many more emails and discussions.

- We've heard from caregivers about what it's like to navigate the health care system and find the right services for their loved one, as well as how hard and exhausting the job of caregiver can be.
- We've heard from families concerned about their aging parents or children with complex needs. They've told us how much they value home and community care but also how it could be improved with easier access, fewer assessments, and more flexibility.
- We've heard about duplications in services and knowing which way to turn to find the services available in our communities.
- We've heard from clients and patients about what it's like to go from hospital to home or find the right help for mental health and addictions.
- We've heard from health professionals and health providers about where they would like us to focus -- how we need more collaboration between partners and integration in the system as a whole.
- And we've heard from everyone about the need to build capacity in the North East so that we have more health care workers -- especially the backbone of our health care system - Personal Support Workers (PSWs). (By the way, if anyone is looking into getting into health care or considering a new career, let me tell you: you are guaranteed work as a PSW in Northeastern Ontario!)

Your comments and ideas have guided and inspired us. You've told us to be **bold**, to be **specific**, and to **simplify** our priorities so that we can make a real difference in how care is delivered here in the North East. While we are working to finalize the plan, I can tell you that we are aiming to focus on three specific areas over the next three years:

- **System Integration** -- Changing the way people, families and caregivers receive services by empowering and better connecting service providers so Northerners can easily navigate the health system to find services they need.
- **Home and Community Care** -- Changing the way home and community care is delivered by working at a local level to put service models in place to meet people's needs in an efficient and compassionate manner.
- **Mental Health and Addictions** -- Changing mental health and addictions care into easily accessible and appropriate supports across the continuum of care.

We can't wait to share our full plan with you. In the meantime, please accept my heartfelt thanks for filling out our surveys, coming out to focus groups, and engaging in conversation with us about how we can, together, change health care for the better in Northeastern Ontario.

Wishing you a healthy fall,

*Jeremy Stevenson*

