

WATERLOO WELLINGTON GERIATRIC SERVICES NETWORK

~ An overview on establishing a Network to improve care and support for older adults across the health care continuum in the WW LHIN area ~

Background and Rationale

The aging population will continue to have a major impact on the demand for health care services over the next three decades. All agencies that provide care and support to older adults have a stake in working together to find ways of improving services to better meet the needs of older adults and their families. With the creation of the Waterloo Wellington LHIN and the impetus for greater service integration, there is recognition that considerable work has already been undertaken by committed service providers. This work can form a foundation for collaboration and advancing high quality, evidence-based service improvements. However, there is a need to create a mechanism to provide leadership for relationship building, setting common goals and priorities, facilitating coordinated, action-oriented strategies and monitoring progress. As a result, the formation of a Waterloo Wellington Geriatric Services Network (WW GSN) that is inclusive of the health care continuum has been proposed.

Summary of Activities to Support WW GSN Formation

- Small group met with WW LHIN leadership in January 2006 to discuss importance of continued attention to needs of older adults
- Initial planning session held on June 7, 2006 with representatives from Waterloo and Wellington health care organizations to discuss concept of WW GSN
- Participants endorsed value of network and affirmed the existence of many shared issues and service gaps that continue to require service planning and development
- Participants identified a series of longer term objectives for a WW GSN and requested a further meeting with more time devoted to identifying strategies
- Recommended completion of a background report to support WW GSN including review of past work (i.e., specialized geriatric services planning) and development of a draft framework for network activities (i.e., vision, mission, principles and structure)
- Small working group struck to continue to guide work on background framework and to help plan fall invitational forum
- Consultants hired to complete background work in July/August and plan and facilitate September forum

Next Steps

- Selected group of senior managers, clinical resource staff and physicians representing health care continuum for older adults invited to participate in forum on WW GSN strategic directions and structure on September 15, 2006
- On-going leadership for WW GSN will be selected at forum
- Strategies for action to be advanced in next 12 – 24 months will be identified
- Report and terms of reference for WW GSN will be completed based on forum input
- Resources to support Network activities will be identified and sought