

NEWS

REGIONAL CONSUMER SURVIVOR INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE SERVICES THROUGH INTEGRATION

March 13, 2009

At a special Board meeting this week, the South East Local Health Integration Network approved a facilitated integration decision for Consumer Survivor Initiative (CSI) services that will see the Mental Health Support Network (MHSN) taking on responsibility for CSI services across the entire region.

This is the second integration involving CSI services in the region – the first occurred in February 2008, integrating services in Hastings, Prince Edward and Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington under the MHSN-Hastings Prince Edward as the administering agency. Until now, CSI services provided to residents in the easternmost part of the South East LHIN were provided through Lanark Health and Community Services (LHCS is located within the Champlain LHIN). Today's decision means consumer survivors in the Leeds and South Grenville areas can now expect the same level and quality of services as other consumer survivors in the South East region.

A CSI working group and officials from the various partners have worked closely to ensure a smooth integration of services across the South East. It is expected that service levels for local CSI programs will be strengthened through this integration which was made possible through significant cooperation between MHSN, LHCS and the Champlain LHIN.

QUOTES

"Together, we are truly transforming the delivery of health care in our region, not only to provide excellent quality to accessible services today, but to ensure those services are available in the future," says Georgina Thompson, Chair, South East LHIN. "In talking about how services are delivered, we need to keep costs in mind, but we must also focus on why the system exists – to help people live more fulfilling lives.

"The South East LHIN believes in the importance of putting consumers at the centre of the mental health system. We embrace the importance of consumer/survivor initiatives, in that their design is to ensure consumers are active and valued participants in the planning, management, evaluation and governance of mental health services," Thompson says.

"The Board of the Mental Health Support Network recognizes the challenge of providing comprehensive and equitable CSI services across southeastern Ontario and, with the support of its staff and community partners, is confident that this integration will result in significant benefit for consumer/survivors throughout the region," says Selma Bochner, Chair, Mental Health Support Network.

QUICK FACTS

- In 2007, the LHIN first brought together CSI organizations from across the region to talk about how CSI services could be best delivered. In the past, CSI services have been designed and delivered by different organizations, creating a varied array of services and variations in access to services by the public.
- The LHIN issued a decision in February 2008 for a facilitated integration to integrate services in Kingston and Napanee with the Mental Health Support Network in Belleville, serving Hastings and Prince Edward which restructured to become a regional service provider.
- Benefits include having one regional consumer board accountable for equity across the region, a strong consumer presence within the mental health services sector and improved financial sustainability.
- Another benefit of integration is ensuring consumers have access to the same high quality and kind of resources across the region. The LHIN Board expects the new model will continue to build more integration and collaboration, as the experience has been with the streamlining of services in the past several months elsewhere in the region.
- Consumer Survivor Initiatives are defined by the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care as “supports planned and run by consumer/survivors as alternatives to the formal mental health system.” A consumer/survivor is “a person with direct personal experience of the mental health system and/or with a significant mental health problem.”

LEARN MORE

For more information about the South East LHIN, visit www.southeastlhinc.on.ca . For further details about MHSN, visit www.mhsn.ca .

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