

NEWS

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT INCENTIVES ANNOUNCED TO DECREASE WAIT TIMES IN SOUTH EAST

May 22, 2009

The South East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) is receiving \$942,000 to provide funding incentives to Kingston General Hospital (KGH) as part of the Pay-for-Results program. This funding incentive is targeted at hospitals facing significant emergency department challenges and is part of a province-wide strategy to address emergency room (ER) wait times. At present, KGH is the only hospital in the region qualifying for the program. The funds are provided to hospitals based on their success in meeting specific targets, reducing the amount of time patients spend in the ER.

Other ER strategy investments in South East LHIN include the continuation of an existing physician assistant position and addition of another at Brockville General Hospital and continuation of the existing physician assistant position at Quinte Health Care's Trenton site.

Today's announcement builds on the initiatives announced earlier this week to expand access to home and community-based services which will help some patients avoid unnecessary ER visits and lengthy hospital stays.

QUOTES

"We made some significant progress working with hospitals in our area to reduce the time people spend in ERs," says Paul Huras, Chief Executive Officer of the South East LHIN. "We look forward to continuing to work with hospitals to ensure the very best emergency care for patients."

"KGH is now entering the early stages of the second year of the Pay for Results initiative. The first year of these program improvements have resulted in a reduction in waiting times for all types of Emergency Department patients," says Dr. Michael O'Connor, Emergency Department Lead for the South East LHIN. "As a result of the priority that KGH has placed on these improvements for the second year, it is expected the hospital will see an improved availability of beds for inpatients, particularly in the specialized critical care areas."

QUICK FACTS

- The Pay for Results program is designed to reward hospitals for meeting specific ER wait time reduction targets. It also provides them with opportunities and funding to meet these targets. Hospitals can use the money in a variety of ways — for example, they could expand emergency department teams, reorganize how these teams interact to encourage more collaboration, or renovate an emergency room to improve patient flow.

- Physician assistants support physicians in a range of health care settings. Physician assistants might:
 - Conduct patient interviews and take medical histories
 - Perform physical examinations
 - Perform certain controlled acts delegated by a physician
 - Provide counseling on preventive health care
- In February, the government began publicly reporting the time people spend in ERs while setting targets of four hours waits for nine out of 10 patients with minor or uncomplicated conditions (which currently make up 40 per cent of patients) and eight hours for nine out of 10 patients with complex conditions (which currently make up 60 per cent of patients).

LEARN MORE

For more information about the South East LHIN, visit www.southeasthin.on.ca

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