



July 2019

### What we know and what we don't know

The Ontario government plans to consolidate the 14 LHINs (Local Health Integration Networks) and their CCAC (Community Care Access Centre) components. The next step will be to absorb them into Ontario Health – a new, centralized superagency. Replacing the LHINs will be 50 Ontario Health Teams – provider and organization groups accountable for delivering a full range of care to a defined geographic population. The new teams are to provide smooth transitions, better patient and family experiences, and improved patient and population health outcomes.

If you have questions about these teams, you're not alone. Care Watch and others also ask:

- How will these teams improve care, and how will we know they are improving care?
- What will the transition involve, and what happens to service during this transition?
- What will happen if a needed service is not provided by a health team partner?
- What will be the changes for individuals and families?

### A look into the future

Mary, 58, and Jill, 66, are a married couple in Toronto. Mary recently spent 18 months in Thunder Bay looking after her mother, who was declining and then passed away. Mary had to leave her job and doesn't yet have new employment. Her other concern is Jill's recent memory loss, which could mean the onset of dementia.

When Mary's mother needed help, the local LHIN's care coordinator assessed her needs and linked her with services. Now Mary needs this help for Jill, but her own local LHIN no longer exists. The government phone line message says to contact her Ontario Health Team. Teams aren't completely up and running yet, and she doesn't know much about them, so what now?

#### *What can Mary and Jill expect?*

- What services will be available? Will there be more services than before? Fewer services?
- Will Jill be eligible for in-home services? What about support services in their community?
- Will there be enough personal support workers to provide in-home care?
- Who will pay for services, and what will be the costs to Mary and Jill?
- How will Mary and Jill navigate a system that is unfamiliar to them and also new to the province?

**Care Watch advocates for high quality, affordable, and equitable access to home and community care within any structure the Province adopts.**

### What can you do?

Look behind the broad statements, and ask for specifics. For example, you may want to know:

- What's changing, and what's staying the same?
- Exactly how will the Ontario Health Teams provide better care than what we had before?
- How will the new system affect my family? How will it affect me?

You will have your own questions to add. Don't be afraid to ask them. You deserve answers

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