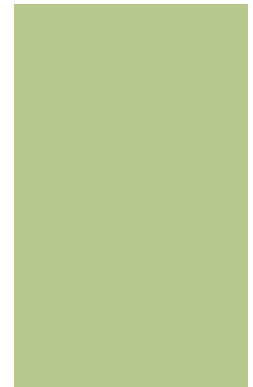


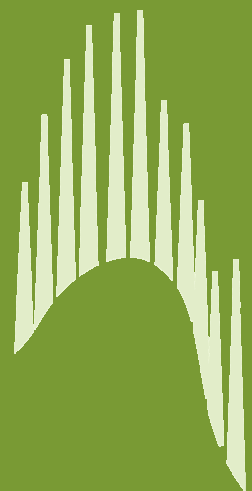


Labrador - Grenfell Health

Community Consultations (2005) *A Progress Report*



November 2007



About the Community Consultations Process

In 2005, the Board of Directors for Labrador-Grenfell Health decided that it would carry out a community consultation process on health care service delivery throughout the region. The Board engaged the services of a facilitator to carry out this process. In June and July, 2005, Patty Way visited the communities to gather both public and staff opinions on health and community services, particularly medical and specialty services.



The resulting report was completed later that year and since then, the Board and staff of Labrador-Grenfell Health have been working hard to address the key issues that were brought forward. This progress report provides an overview of the issues and concerns raised and the steps the health authority has taken to improve health and community services, based on the information collected. The most common themes included the following:

- Specialist Services
- Allied Health and Rehabilitation Services
- Recruitment and Retention
- Child, Youth and Family Services
- Transportation
- Senior's Issues
- Mental Health and Addictions
- Vision/Eye Care
- Dental Care
- Telehealth/Telemedicine
- Pharmacy/Prescription Drug Issues
- Advocacy and Communications
- Health Promotion
- Service Enhancements
- Workplace Issues

Specialist Services

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Access to Specialist Services
- Other Specialist Services

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- Labrador-Grenfell Health continues to extensively recruit for vacant specialty services.
- Labrador-Grenfell Health increased the visiting specialist rotational system in selected locations. In 2006-07, visiting specialty services were provided by 37 specialists, including Ear, Nose and Throat, Orthopedics, Psychiatry and Audiology.
- A Regional Waitlist Committee is currently working on a strategy for specialty services, in addition to addressing wait times for key national priority areas.



Allied Health and Rehabilitation Services

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Lack of clerical supports for professional staff
- Travel demands on solo practitioners
- Low numbers of professional staff in relation to the population and geography covered

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- New government funding has allowed for the creation of two new Behavior Management Specialist/Child Management Specialist positions to support communities in the region.
- Speech Language Pathologists have been hired to fill the previously vacant positions in St. Anthony and Happy Valley – Goose Bay.
- Budget 2007-08 brought new funding for a Speech Language Pathologist in Labrador West – an individual has been hired.
- Clerical support has been made available for rehabilitation staff.



Recruitment and Retention

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Salary parity with other jurisdictions
- Consistency with benefits
- Turnover
- Accommodations

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- Nursing staffing has stabilized at several community clinics.
- New staff accommodations have been purchased for Cartwright, Port Hope Simpson, Charlottetown and Natuashish.
- Significant recruitment incentives for nursing and selected allied health professionals have been implemented with considerable success.
- The Health Authority is also focusing on strategies to address the recruitment of social workers and overall retention of professionals.

Child, Youth and Family Services

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Lack of space
- Heavy case load

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- A new CYFS office building has been constructed in Nain.
- St. Anthony CYFS staff have moved into the Mission Store building.
- As a result of the Deloitte Review and government enhancements, there will be an increase in social workers and support positions in the Labrador-Grenfell Health region. There have been significant enhancements in CYFS, with 20+ new positions added within the region.
- With a change in reporting structure, there will be a new leadership model, with an increase in clinical support and administrative support for front-line workers.
- The region is developing a plan for therapeutic residential options for youth with complex needs.
- A Foster Home Recruiter has been hired.
- Labrador-Grenfell Health is working closely with the province around specific initiatives such as the hiring of a lawyer to support front line workers, and also developing an alternate dispute resolution process.
- There is a plan to remove the financial assessment from social workers and appropriately place this function with a financial assessment officer.
- Appropriate vehicles have been provided for Nain, Natuashish and Hopedale.

Transportation

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Need to expand the travel voucher system to entire region
- Appropriateness and choice of escorts
- Coordination of appointments, both internal and external to the region
- Commercial and “skedevac” schedules on the coast of Labrador
- Medevacs – access to community clinics
- Ground transportation—to/from clinics and to/from St. Anthony Airport

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- A new appointment system has been introduced at the Labrador Health Centre.
- An Outpatient Department Manager has been put in place at the Labrador Health Centre to oversee the day-to-day operations in the Outpatient Department .
- Emergency/transport vehicles have been put in place in all coastal communities.
- Additional positions of Pilot and Engineer for GWT (our medevac aircraft) have been funded and filled.



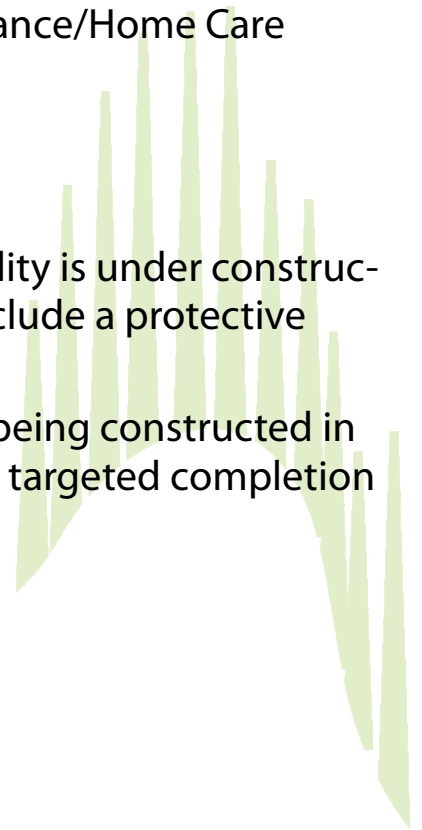
Seniors' Issues

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Dialysis services
- Appropriate long-term care planning throughout the region
- Lack of awareness/understanding of Financial Assistance/Home Care funding systems

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- With government funding, a new long term care facility is under construction for Happy Valley – Goose Bay. This facility will include a protective care unit.
- As well, with government funding, dialysis units are being constructed in both St. Anthony and Happy Valley - Goose Bay, with targeted completion by November 2007.



Mental Health and Addictions

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Care issues with scope of practice and impact of solo practitioners

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- New positions have been added in Mental Health and Addictions, including the following: a Regional Addictions Prevention Consultant, a Regional Clinical Manager, an Addictions Counselor (Labrador West), an Addictions Counselor for Southeast Labrador and two Mental Health Case Managers: one for St. Anthony and one for Happy Valley – Goose Bay.
- Labrador-Grenfell Health received approval for a “Labrador Integration Proposal” – which will focus on clarifying roles in areas such as Mental Health and Addictions, as well as creating better coordination between aboriginal programs and those provided by Labrador-Grenfell Health. The health authority is also implementing an Aboriginal Director position for health programs which will improve coordination between aboriginal programs and those provided by Labrador-Grenfell Health.



Vision/Eye Care

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Consistent access to eye care throughout the region

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- Specialist services are being provided on a visiting basis at Curtis Memorial Hospital by an Ophthalmologist based in St. John's.
- A significant emphasis is being placed on the waitlist for cataract procedures and is being supported by new equipment funding from both the Department of Health and Community Services and the International Grenfell Association.

Dental Care

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Lack of services throughout the region
- Difference in mandate/delivery method within the region

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- A Dental Hygienist/Dental Health Promoter was hired in St. Anthony.
- The Department of Health and Community Services approved new salary scales for Salaried Dentists, effective April 1, 2006. Improvements to the dental salary contract contributed largely to the recruitment of three dentists in the south, leaving five out of six positions filled – the best staffing complement in recent years.
- The development of a dental locum pool supported the continuation of services in areas where a permanent dentist appointment has not been possible.
- Labrador-Grenfell Health is evaluating its ability and the infrastructure required to provide regular dental coverage to communities where we do not have permanently staffed dentists, to determine how best we can meet the needs of these communities.

Telehealth / Telemedicine

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Low utilization of telehealth technology
- Time delays in receiving x-ray reports back to sites

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- A regional Telehealth Committee was created.
- Videoconferencing units have been purchased for all communities, funded in part by the International Grenfell Association.
- Both former computer networks were combined into one regional network and network access expanded to include all communities and facilities, improving access to information and communication throughout the region. All employees now share one regional e-mail system and one regional intranet system.
- A provincial Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS) is now in place at all three hospitals, allowing x-rays to be sent electronically to authorized health care providers throughout the province. This allows both the clinician and the referring radiologist to review the same images at the same time. Health Centres will also have PACS by March 2008.



Pharmacy/Prescription Drug Issues

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Issues with payment methods (i.e. paying up front for expensive medications)
- Delivery methods to more remote areas
- Cost and differences in dispensing fees
- Vacant positions

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:



- A Pharmacist has been hired for Curtis Hospital.
- Labrador-Grenfell Health is working on a plan to standardize dispensing fees within the region.
- The province implemented a new Low Income Drug program in 2007.

Advocacy/Communications

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Appropriate means and methods for patient enquiries

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- A new website has been developed.
- A client complaints/compliments process has been developed. This will be posted on the website in the near future.
- Labrador-Grenfell Health has two newsletters for communications purposes - one for staff issues (the *Labrador-Grenfell Notes*) and one for the public (*Along the Coast to Labrador*).

Health Promotion

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Need for smoking cessation programs (this was high on the list in several communities, especially coastal areas).
- Gynecological issues in Labrador West (annual checks are said to be needed and yet they are hard to get).
- Recognition of role of Nurse Practitioners

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- Smoking cessation training is being organized for the region, in conjunction with the Lung Association.
- A Smoke-Free Premises Policy will be rolled out in January 2008.
- There have been enhancements in Mental Health and Addictions staff.
- The class action lawsuit in Labrador West was settled. With regard to sterilization procedures at the gynecological clinic in Labrador West, there have been changes to staffing, policies and procedures put in place. These have been advertised in local papers and on our website.
- A permanent Nurse Practitioner position has been established in Labrador West to help assist with Well Woman Clinics, etc.
- A Regional Cervical Screening Coordinator has been hired.



Service Enhancements

Your Concerns/Issues:

- MRI within the region
- Planning and coordination of community health services
- Improvements in communicating patient test results
- Consistency in collecting patient statistics

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- Government funding will allow for a new facility in Labrador West.
- A Regional Nutritionist and a part-time Dietitian position were added in Labrador West. Clinical Dietitian services were expanded to include Pad-don Home. A Community Dietitian was hired in St. Anthony.
- A new Respiratory Therapist position has been established, based at Curtis Hospital, and with some travel to provide services in Labrador West.

Workplace Issues

Your Concerns/Issues:

- Lack of communication, involvement in decision making, perceived inequalities, etc.

Our Steps to Address Your Concerns/Issues:

- Recruitment and retention focus groups held with nurses throughout the region and strategies are being developed to address the suggestions that arose.

Future Plans

The overall impression of the community consultation process is that it was indeed a good process and a necessary one. There were many people who said “Thank you” just for hearing them and their issues.

Labrador-Grenfell Health thanks our facilitator, Patti Way, and most importantly, thanks you for sharing your ideas, opinions, concerns and experiences with us.

It is our intent to hold similar community consultations in the future. Your input is very important, as we continue to develop programs and services to better meet your needs.



Labrador - Grenfell
Health

The vision of Labrador - Grenfell Health is of healthy people living in healthy communities.

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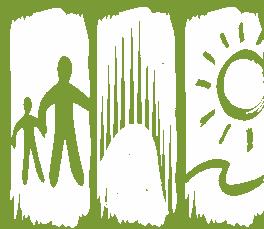
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Do you have questions about this progress report, require additional copies, or more information?

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