

## MEDIA ADVISORY

### **And the Winner is ... Northeastern Ontario Health Care Innovation that Benefits Fellow Northerners**

**October 14, 2015** – “Leadership in the North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN) is being recognized for its innovation in health care with three significant awards this week,” said Louise Paquette, CEO, NE LHIN.

The real winners, of course, are Northerners who are benefiting from these innovations, she added.

Three health-care projects supported by the NE LHIN were honoured in provincial competitions – including one that took top prize with a **Minister of Health’s Medal**.

The award-winning efforts included a Virtual Critical Care Unit, the first of its kind in Canada; Northern Postpartum Mood Disorder Strategy; and a team of partners in Temiskaming District who are working to prevent falls among older adults.

The **North East LHIN Virtual Critical Care Unit** was awarded the top prize – a Minister of Health’s Medal- for team effort. While **Linda Rankin, Project Director of the Northern Ontario Postpartum Mood Disorder (PPMD) Strategy**, received an individual champion award for her work in designing and implementing the strategy.

Provincially, there were 85 Minister’s Medal applications this year. Submissions underwent a rigorous process involving initial review by the NE LHIN and then by an expert selection committee.

The Minister’s Medal awards were presented at the Health Quality Transformation conference in Toronto on October 14.

The night before, a partnership of Temiskaming District care providers won an IDEAS award, which recognizes quality improvement, change management and leadership, for its project ***Falls Prevention in Primary Care- Assessment to Intervention***.

Shirley Watchorn, executive director of the Great Northern Family Health Team (FHT) in New Liskeard accepted the award for a project based on fall-risk factor assessment work. Shirley is also chair of the NE LHIN’s Stay on Your Feet Regional Steering Committee.

“With much thanks to Dr. Derek Manchuk, Linda Rankin, and Shirley Watchorn, Northeastern Ontario’s innovative approaches to delivering health care have been brought to the provincial stage,” said Louise Paquette, CEO of the NE LHIN. “Hats off to our fine fellow Northerners for their collective work in making patient-centred care a reality in our LHIN.”

### Descriptions of the Award-Winning NE LHIN Projects:

- **Virtual Critical Care Unit:** ([link to video](#)) Through the leadership of Dr. Derek Manchuk, the NE LHIN's Critical Care Lead, a unique made-in-the-North solution, known as Virtual Critical Care (VCC) is increasing access for critically ill patients to a team of intensive care physicians, specially trained nurses and ICU respiratory therapists. The VCC unit is the first of its kind in Canada. It is based out of Health Sciences North and was launched in May 2014 with four hospitals participating. One year later, 23 of our region's 25 hospitals had joined on. To date, the VCC has been used for 214 patients with an additional 347 follow-up visits totalling over 19,000 VCC care minutes. In addition, 76 patients have avoided a medical transfer by air ambulance due to the care they received through the VCC. The NE LHIN has supported this project's start-up through annual investments.
- **Northern Postpartum Mood Disorder (PPMD) Strategy:** This strategy is helping Ontarians experiencing postpartum mood disorders after a baby's birth or the adoption of a child. Linda Rankin, Director of the Northern Ontario PPMD Project; Alan McQuarrie, Executive Director of Community Counselling Centre Nipissing; and Jennifer Gordon, Coordinator of the project; have recently also been recognized as Healthy Change Champions by the LHIN for their efforts to raise awareness of postpartum mood disorders -- a mental illness known to be one of the most debilitating for women in their childbearing years. The NE LHIN has supported the project by sponsoring two educational videos on the strategy.
- **Falls Prevention in Primary Care- Assessment to Intervention:** This Temiskaming District project aims to have a fall risk assessment tool incorporated into the electronic medical records of all Family Health Teams in Northeastern Ontario. It also supports the primary care provider to link older adults to preventative programs in the community such as those offered as part of Stay on Your Feet (SOYF) -- our NE LHIN region-wide approach to keeping older adults healthy and well. The award includes up to \$25,000 to be used to sustain and spread project change ideas and learnings across the NE LHIN region. Along with Shirley Watchorn (Great Northern Family Health Team) and Wendy Carew, the NE LHIN Regional Coordinator of the SOYF strategy, members of the award-winning team include: Ellen Ibey (Temagami FHT); Lorna Desmarais and Kerry Schubert-Mackey (Temiskaming Health Unit); Janet McDowell (physiotherapist at Temiskaming Hospital); Lorie Montgomery (North East Community Care Access Centre); Dawn Olsen (Great Northern FHT); Dr. Jean Marc Corbin and Dr. Glenn Corneil (family physicians with Great Northern FHT); Diane Morin (volunteer, New Liskeard); Lise Anne Boissonneault (NE LHIN); and Alice Strachan (Health Quality Ontario). To help older adults remain healthy and independent, the NE LHIN invests annually in the SOYF strategy over three years.

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### FACTS:

- **The Minister's Medal Honouring Excellence in Health Quality and Safety** recognizes the excellent work done by health care providers across the province. The competitive annual program provides an opportunity to recognize system champions who place the patient at the centre of the circle of care and have demonstrated exceptional work in collaboration and achieved sustainable results, while promoting system value and quality in the health care system.

- **IDEAS** is funded by the MOH and intended to enhance Ontario's health system performance by increasing quality improvement, leadership and change management capacity across all health care sectors.

**Winners of the Minister's Medal:** Shown are Dr. Derek Manchuk, NE LHIN Critical Care Lead, with Renée Fillier, RN, Coordinator, NE LHIN Virtual Critical Care Program.



**Minister's Medal Honour Roll Winner Linda Rankin:** Individual champion honoured as Project Director of the Northern Ontario Postpartum Mood Disorder (PPMD) Strategy.

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