



# Choices for Seniors

*Addressing the Needs of Seniors Through the  
CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR INTEGRATED SENIORS' SERVICES*

## Progressive Seniors' Project in Thunder Bay a Model for Ontario

An exciting project is underway for seniors in Thunder Bay and the northwest region that will see seniors getting the healthcare they need, in the most appropriate way, and in the most appropriate setting.

The Centre of Excellence for Integrated Seniors' Services (CEISS) will be rolling out support services and facilities over the next three years tailored to seniors, from those living independently with mild or moderate support needs to the frail elderly who require 24-hour care.



Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, the Honourable George Smitherman came to the city to announce the CEISS project personally. "We need to offer more choices to seniors that will promote their independence, so they can continue to live with dignity and respect." said Smitherman. "This project represents a new option for seniors that will better respond to their needs, so they can remain in the community."

CEISS's options include:

- Community support services for an additional 150 clients
- Enhanced services for existing supportive housing units.
- 336 new long term care beds including 64 specialized behavioral beds to serve the northwest region
- 132 new supportive housing units

The project developed following a decision by the City of Thunder Bay to return 300 of its municipally run long-term care beds to the province in January 2009.

This progressive seniors' project is the first of its kind in Ontario and is likely to become a model for the rest of the province, as integration of services - looking at the big picture as a whole rather than in parts - is the way to go for health care.

Overall the CEISS has the potential to create an additional 107 full time jobs in the community. Seniors will benefit from the added support services this year (2008), which will be provided by the North West Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) and community support service agencies. The new supportive housing and long-term care facilities will be built at St. Joseph's Care Group's Hogarth Riverview Manor site, with construction to be complete in 2011.

## The "CE" in CEISS

"Centre of Excellence" was built right into the name of this project because of the potential it holds to integrate approaches to care for our seniors and build our knowledge economy.

The CEISS supportive housing and long-term care facilities will be home to many seniors with varying needs for health care, which will bring expert providers together at one site. This will create an ideal setting for a Centre of Excellence in regional geriatric care.

Links with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Confederation College and Lakehead University will lead to opportunities for training and placement of health care students, the development of new research initiatives and industry best practices in gerontology.

This critical mass of seniors' health and wellness related facilities and the continuum of services will enhance our region's ability to attract and retain a well-educated workforce to care for our seniors.

## It Takes a Community

The Centre of Excellence for Integrated Seniors' Services project is a collaborative project involving the participation and input of many community partners. Its development is being planned and facilitated through a Steering Committee involving health and government partners committed to excellent care for Thunder Bay's seniors.

### Committee's Activities

The CEISS concept came about through many conversations with seniors in and around Thunder Bay. Seniors continue to be involved in the development of the project. We want the CEISS to be shaped by seniors; their needs; their wants.

On November 21, 2007, seniors, caregivers and health service providers participated in a CEISS visioning exercise. Dr. Paul Williams from the University of Toronto shared best practices and models of care with the attendees as well as his research on the Balance of Care. The North West CCAC is participating in this research, which will help our region understand the options of care that are required for seniors to safely age at home.

The outcomes of this visioning exercise now help frame the Steering Committee's discussions.

The Committee has established working groups to individually concentrate on three key parts of the CEISS project:

- **Community Supports Working Group** to examine and recommend a basket of services to assist seniors to remain independent and age at home with services in place.
- **Supportive Housing Working Group** to develop a template for an agreement framework that addresses the needs of the various parties involved in the CEISS.
- **Communication Working Group** to communicate to key stakeholders and audiences on the progress of the CEISS project's progress.

In May of this year, a Behavioural Health Program Working Group will be established to provide advice on operational issues related to access, service, care delivery, team resources and outreach services.

The work of these groups is ongoing and several other community engagement sessions with stakeholder groups are being organized.

## CEISS Steering Committee Members

### Co-Chairs

Tracy Buckler President & CEO  
St. Joseph's Care Group

Gwen DuBois-Wing CEO  
North West Local Health  
Integration Network

### Members

Greg Alexander City of Thunder Bay  
Wendy Kirkpatrick Thunder Bay Homes for the Aged  
Paula Donylyk Community Care Access Centre  
Tuija Puiras Community Care Access Centre  
Mary Lucas District Social Services Administration  
Board

Peter Boban Ministry of Municipal Affairs and  
Housing

Kelly Arnold North West LHIN  
Susan Pilatzke North West LHIN  
Liisa Simi North West LHIN  
Barry Potter St. Joseph's Care Group  
Paulina Chow St. Joseph's Care Group  
Sharron Owen St. Joseph's Care Group  
Carol Neff Thunder Bay Community  
Support Services Network

### Executive Assistant

Lisa Niccoli North West LHIN

## Visual Concept of CEISS Soon

An Economic Impact Study commissioned by the North West LHIN estimates that the design and construction of the CEISS long-term care and supportive housing facilities will create 695 jobs. St. Joseph's Care Group has hired a project manager and architectural firm for the project. An artist's rendering of the CEISS facilities is currently being drafted and will be released soon.

## Regional CEISS Benefit for Seniors

The CEISS project will be a valuable resource to seniors with responsive behaviours from across the northwest region. With the growing number of people with dementia, the importance of the 64 specialized behavioural beds included in the CEISS project was evident. During this part of Minister Smitherman's announcement, people spontaneously rose to their feet in a standing ovation. The beds will be dedicated to seniors who require specialized behavioural health program services in a safe and therapeutic environment.



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*Choices for Seniors* is produced by the Steering Committee for the Centre of Excellence for Integrated Seniors' Services to inform stakeholders on the progress of this innovative seniors' project. If you would like more information about this publication please contact Sharron Owen, Manager, Community Relations, St. Joseph's Care Group at 768-4440 or by email [owens@tbh.net](mailto:owens@tbh.net).