

# April Fool's Day sees implementation of LHINs

By JERRY FORD

April 1 was the day the fourteen Local Health Integration Networks technically assumed responsibility for coordinating healthcare delivery in Ontario, with a final takeover to be effective in the fall. In the meantime a number of issues such as staffing and service agency integration will be resolved.

Many of the service agencies had historically been organized around municipal boundaries while the new LHIN structure has been built around medical service patterns of the past decade.

The LHIN boundaries sever Halton Region into three sections:

- Burlington - included in the LHIN centred in Hamilton
- Oakville and Milton - included in the Mississauga LHIN
- Halton Hills - part of the Central West LHIN along with parts of Toronto, Vaughan and Mississauga, and all of Brampton, Caledon and Orangeville

The Region's senior medical officer, Dr. Bob Nosal made an assessment of the present and future needs of Halton Region and developed an approach that would leave Halton Region as a single medical unit (LHIN). The Province clearly listened to a great deal of the input and made a number of changes to the original plan.

On April 1 the final boundaries were announced. The case for Burlington not being included in the Hamilton dominated

LHIN was totally rejected, Burlington remains as part of the 3rd largest LHIN in the province, LHIN #4, Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant.

Oakville and Milton will remain in LHIN # 6 with Mississauga, and will be joined by Halton Hills. The newly named Mississauga Halton LHIN will include Credit Valley and Trillium hospital sites as well as those in the three Halton towns. Of greatest concern is the Georgetown hospital that is currently part of the Brampton based

William Osler Health Centre, which is the core hospital for the redefined Central West LHIN, LNIN 5.

The whole transformation is predicated on accountability to communities. With management of the Georgetown hospital in the hands of persons not resident in Halton and accountable for performance to a different authority than the people of Halton Hills, how can it be accountable to the community in which it resides?

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