



Partners Advancing
Transitions in Healthcare
A first with Ontario patients

The Change Foundation awards Northumberland Community Partnership \$3-million project to improve seniors' healthcare transitions & use patient input to drive redesign

Groundbreaking approach holds promise for provincial game-change

Cobourg, ON (June 5, 2012) – After a rigorous, year-long selection process, [The Change Foundation](#) today announced the Northumberland Community Partnership as the winner of its \$3-million investment in a trail-blazing project: [PATH](#) – Partners Advancing Transitions in Healthcare (PATH): a first *with* Ontario patients.

The [Northumberland Community Partnership](#) unites 12 health and social care organizations with patients and caregivers who will identify healthcare transition problems across Central East Ontario and work with a full range of service providers to redesign care and improve experiences. [The Northumberland PATH](#), led by Northumberland Hills Hospital, is the first system-wide patient/caregiver/provider co-design venture of its kind in Ontario. The two-year project aligns well with the patient-centred care emphasis in Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care and with the region's priority to build excellence in seniors' care.

PATH is the centerpiece of The Change Foundation's [strategic plan, Hearing the story, changing the stories](#). The Foundation is putting most of its money and might into PATH to deliver on the plan's goal: to improve people's healthcare experience as they move in, out of, and across Ontario's healthcare system. The Foundation targeted seniors with chronic health conditions and their caregivers because they frequently navigate a wide range of services. PATH puts them at the table as partners, using their experience to help identify and address transition problems--redesigning services with providers from across the whole system.

The Change Foundation CEO Cathy Fooks says Northumberland was chosen from a roster of other quality proposals because its winning set of strengths set it apart. "Northumberland had an acknowledged need to improve transitions for one of the country's largest concentrations of seniors with chronic health conditions. They assembled a wide cross-sector community partnership, with a strong primary care presence, and an innovative technology component; they involved seniors and caregivers from the get-go and have an enviable track record of meaningful public engagement," she said. "In short, they showed the smarts, the heart, the team, the ideas, and the experience. We're confident that they can meet their community's objectives and help the Foundation further its wider goal of changing the healthcare debate, practice, and experience in Ontario," said Fooks.

Gayle Einarsson is one of those caregivers involved right from the start, and helped shape the Northumberland Community Partnership's proposal to the Foundation. "When a loved one is sick, we're at our most vulnerable and need the right information and support. PATH puts seniors and caregivers at the center of change and redesign; with PATH we will ensure that patients and caregivers are respected, informed, supported, and empowered ...when they need it the most!" she said.

The service providers in the Northumberland PATH all recognized that people were getting stuck or lost in transitions; they have all committed their time and resources to create smoother, more user-friendly connections to care.

"Given patient feedback, improving the transitions of care in our community has been one of our quality improvement goals. We know we can and must do better in this regard. Our Partnership represents a shared vision and commitment to improving patient and caregiver experiences in their transitions. On behalf of our Partnership, we extend our appreciation for the Foundation's generous support to make this a reality," said Northumberland Hills Hospital CEO Robert Biron.

The Partnership, which includes seniors and caregivers, is also committed to real and meaningful engagement from the people who have a lot of experience to share moving between and among services.

"The CECCAC, like all the community partners engaged in this exciting initiative, is committed to improving the patient experience in and with the health system striving to achieve the best possible outcomes, with the patient and their caregivers at the centre of the care team," said Don Ford, CEO of the Central East Community Care Access Centre.

The Foundation plans to funnel all that it learns from the Northumberland PATH and related research and public engagement into a capstone Summit in 2015 that will result in key recommendations for change. Stay tuned for regular updates and milestones as the Northumberland Community Partnership paves a new PATH in Ontario healthcare.

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Learn more: [PATH backgrounder](#); Video: [Who is The Change Foundation?](#); [Loud & Clear: Seniors and caregivers speak out about navigating Ontario's Health System](#); www.changefoundation.com.

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