

Report to Liaison Committee for Nov 7 2023 Meeting

Isobel Boyle and I attended two sessions put on by Rideau Community Health Services since we last met.

Community Initiatives regarding Social Prescribing

The first was Oct 25th, 2023, a lunch and an afternoon of information regarding Social Prescribing.

Our current Healthcare system has long utilized a 'medical prescription', most often in the form of a pharmaceutical to address an illness or condition. Sometimes other physical treatments or services.

Over time we have come to accept that loneliness, lack of personal interaction, community engagement or personal contribution play a significant role in normalizing and optimizing personal health and wellbeing.

There has been a significant effort extended in the last 2years by the Alliance of Community Health Centres of Ontario to promote and enable Social Prescribing among its membership to address this challenge.

Both Rideau Community Health Services and Connectwell Community Health have been extended funding to initiate the practice in our healthcare community. (I stand to be corrected but believe CWCH are delivering to their central Renfrew primary care service and RCHS will be initiating in LL&G)

This first initiative is focused on Socialization and building resources and services in our particular communities to support and give life to Social Prescribing. They are wanting/needing to identify individuals, groups or organizations who could volunteer in support.

As you probably have no trouble identifying there is a broad spectrum of contributing conditions or life experience that leaves/necessitates an opportunity for everything from casual visits, a sunny afternoon drive, to group meals, card parties, craft groups etc. There are many services existing in our catchment area currently, RCHS hope to facilitate a service to identify and coordinate access to these services to facilitate 'Prescribing' these services.

Sam Nicholson at RCHS is the Program Director and would welcome ideas or opportunities that would help them engage organizations or individuals to advance their ambitions.

A personal observation is that Socialization is but scratching the surface of the potential of/for Social Prescribing. We learned from our involvement and engagement in/with our (RCHS/PSFDH Initiated) Rideau Tay Health Link, that Health Services and Social Services are attached at the hip. Each has a direct influence on the other. When we analyzed our intake data from the 3-5% of our community that account for 65-75% of our healthcare expenditures, the hierarchy of chronic poor health exacerbations, Income Insecurity and Housing vulnerability were the #1 and #2 contributors. The result of this finding was direct engagement of LL&G Social Services who house these services in addressing affective Coordinated Care Plans. (RTHL operations ceased a few years ago)

In 2021 the UK NHS announced funding for 1000 comprehensive Social Prescribing positions in the development of Coordinated Care Plans.

It is my personal intuition that a comprehensive Social Prescribing resource would positively impact our ALC challenges.

Hospice and Palliative Care

On November 1st, a morning session addressed Hospice and Palliative Care in our area.

Isobel and I were joined by our CEO who actively participated.

There is a significant engagement in our catchment area and in our neighboring LL&G regarding advancing and realizing a coordinated Hospice and Palliative Care support service.

There is the well-established North Lanark Palliative Care Network, The Beth Donovan Hospice (a six bed facility) in North Grenville, Brockville General Hospital Palliative Care Program and the fledgling Hospice Hub intended to serve the PSFDH catchment area.

The Hospice Hub has an impressive cadre of volunteers willing to support a service in the community. They have incorporated and are currently seeking organizational funding. They would like to enable a +/- 6 bed residential facility in addition to providing home and caregiver support and resources for end of life care.

There has also been an unrealized resource potential regarding Funding for 4 Palliative Care Beds in the 'Smiths Falls Area'. Michelle Bellows reported that pre Covid she was approached, when she was a V.P. at PSFDH with an offer to fund nursing services for 4 Palliative Care beds. The funding amounts to \$156K per bed for each of three years and access to one time Capital funding of up to \$200k per bed. At the end of three years the nursing care funding reduces to \$126K and the funding is only accessible by a recognized Incorporated HSP.

This sounds enabling but it is challenging and difficult in reality.

There is no operational funding (heat, light, power, administration, food service, drugs, repairs, maintenance etc.)

Michelle suggests that a service provider would incur an operating deficit of +\$500K per year, that would have to be covered/supported by other operations or dedicated fundraising.

The funder suggests that there is a, use it or lose it reality at play, given the high demand for Hospice Palliative services across the province and limited 100 bed funding capacity

Toni Surko, board chair of North Lanark was in attendance and suggested that we may benefit from a Lanark County coordinated response. They also are operating without care beds and suggested that perhaps Fairview in Almonte or the new Stonebridge facility in Carleton Place Long Term Care facilities might have the ability to respond.

Michael advised the group that the Hospital is sympathetic to the ambitions and the cause and will cooperate in the best manner possible.

In essence there are two issues for which to respond.

Can we (the community HSPs) take advantage of the residential bed, nursing care funding?
Is there a role for PSFDH?

Secondly how does the catchment area support a volunteer led, home hospice and palliative care service.

Is there a PSFDH role to play?

It is my personal intuition that hospice beds and a Hospice Palliative care service would have positive impact on our ALC challenge.

Additional Community Representation on our Liaison Committee

I was not successful in adding Peter McKenna or Marti Crapper to our committee. They extended their best wishes and appreciation of/for our task.

Meeting with RCHS Board

A meeting has been scheduled for Nov 10th, at 1:30.

PSFDH Chair and Committee Chairs will meet with the Exec of RCHS

Collaborative Governance information and education potential is on the agenda.

I will report back.