



Winnipeg Regional  
Health Authority  
*Caring for Health*

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santé de Winnipeg  
*À l'écoute de notre santé*

# **“Transparency and Accountability in Healthcare: Community Perspectives”**

## **Local Health Involvement Groups**

June 2014

(Summary Report)

Compiled by: Colleen Schneider, Manager, Local Health Involvement  
Groups, WRHA

## Preface

This report contains the ideas and feedback generated by the Local Health Involvement Groups over the course of 2 meetings held from January to April 2014.

In September 2013, the Board of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) asked the Local Health Involvement Groups (LHIGs) to provide input on transparency and accountability of our health care system.

The Report includes:

- An overview of the methodology and context for the exploration of this topic, feedback on what transparency in the health care system means, feedback on what accountability in the health care system means, information about how the health care system is performing that the public wants to know, information about priorities that the region is working on that the public wants to know, communication approaches to share health system performance information with the public, and key recommendations from the report.

*Appendix A* -- Background document for the exploration of this topic

*Appendix B* – Map of the Community Areas in the Winnipeg Health Region

*Appendix C* – Acknowledgements

It is hoped that this report will be useful to the WRHA Board and Senior Leadership and will enhance understanding of public perspectives and expectations about transparency and accountability. It is also hoped that the suggestions for how the health care system can be more transparent and accountable will be considered and utilized.

This report was presented on June 4, 2014 by the Co-Chairs of the six Local Health Involvement Groups to members of the WRHA Board and Senior Leadership.

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## Executive Summary

The Local Health Involvement Groups (LHIGs) have been providing advice and their unique community perspectives on significant health issues to the WRHA Board for 12 years. They were formerly known as Community Health Advisory Councils (CHACs). In 2013, the Province of Manitoba passed Bill 6, *The Regional Health Authorities Amendment Act*, (Improved Fiscal Responsibility and Community Involvement). This Act mandated the creation of Local Health Involvement Groups (LHIGs) to strengthen local involvement in regional health authorities. The change in name did not impact the membership and role of the Councils in the Winnipeg health region.

The Local Health Involvement Groups were asked by the Board of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority in the fall of 2013 to provide input on transparency and accountability of our health care system during their January to April meetings of 2014.

The goal of having the LHIGs explore this topic is that their input will help the WRHA better understand public perspectives and expectations about transparency and accountability and provide an opportunity for the WRHA to consider and utilize suggestions for how to be more transparent and accountable to the public.

### Process of exploring the topic

Prior to the first meeting on transparency and accountability, members of the Local Health Involvement Groups received a background context paper on this topic with links to web-based information. Members of the senior leadership team were invited to attend the LHIG meetings, with one attending one of the two meetings of the Groups. Senior leadership in attendance included the CEO and President, Vice Presidents, and Chief Operating Officers. Their role was to observe the discussions and to provide their perspectives of being transparent and accountable. Numerous significant insights were shared back and forth.

### **Questions for input by the LHIGs**

At the first meeting of the LHIGs in January/February 2014, members had an opportunity to provide their thoughts and feedback on the topic of transparency and accountability of the health care system by considering what transparency meant to them and what would it look like when the WRHA is transparent, as a patient and as a member of the public. At the second meeting of the LHIGs in March/April 2014, members were asked to respond to questions, reflecting on ways to ensure the transparency and accountability of our health care system.

***Being transparent involves not giving misleading information, ensuring that the public gets the full understanding, the negatives and positives, the whole story, the full picture of what is happening.***

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

### Key Components of a Transparent Health Care System

At the first set of meetings, discussion of the topic of transparency and accountability opened by asking LHIG members to share what transparency meant to them and what their health care system would look like if it was completely transparent. Overall, LHIG members spoke of openness, sharing both positive and negative information to tell the whole story, responding quickly in the media to proactively address negative press, and having information readily available – as key components of a transparent health care system.

### **Need to Rebuild Trust**

Some LHIG members felt that trust needs to be rebuilt with the public in order for many to believe that what the WRHA is sharing was true and that rebuilding this trust should be the first step to creating a more transparent and accountable health care system.

***I don't believe that the system is being transparent. How do you persuade someone who is cynical, who doesn't believe some of the information out in the media? How can you build trust so that some people will believe it? Give me the results. Convince me that what I'm reading is true, believable.***

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

### **Need to ensure the goal of sharing information is to improve transparency**

Some LHIG members identified that in an effort to be more transparent, sometimes the WRHA creates more issues, controversy. For example, posting wait times for emergency departments.

***Sometimes there is an effort to be transparent without knowing what that really means – like posting wait times for emergency departments across the region which ended up causing problems and wasn't about being transparent.***

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

### **What patients expect from health care providers in a transparent health care system**

Members of the LHIGs shared experiences and ideas for improving communication between patients and health care providers which would be more transparent and build trust. Their ideas included sharing more information about procedures, options for treatment, and full disclosure of their health situation so that they could be better informed to make decisions about their care and treatment. All of the LHIGs recommended that patients receive written information on treatment options, updates on their health condition, and diagnostic results.

***Transparency means (health care providers) make it crystal clear with no hidden agenda, no grey areas, help me understand the system, procedures, and how things are done. Patients need to be well-informed as soon as they enter a hospital, receive care, etc.***

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

### **Example of when the WRHA was transparent to the public**

All of the Local Health Involvement Groups referred to the article in the Winnipeg Free Press (January 2014) which covered the event where Arlene Wilgosh, CEO and President of the WRHA

shared where the region was at in terms of performance measures related to patient flow and the goals that had been set. LHIG members were impressed that she publicly admitted that the region had fallen short and not met the goals stated. Members expressed that this is the best approach to being both transparent and accountable.

***I read the Free Press article about performance measures which spelled out what the WRHA promised. The region didn't meet those targets, was honest and didn't try to pass the buck. This is a good example of transparency and accountability.***

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

### Suggestions to Improve Transparency

#### **Develop Principles and Benchmarks for Transparency and Accountability**

The LHIGs offered ideas for how the WRHA could improve transparency. They felt this should begin by developing principles and benchmarks for transparency and accountability. Is transparency and accountability a value of the WRHA? If it is, LHIG members wondered what actions, policies, etc. illustrate that.

***In terms of values of the organization, if transparency is something that the WRHA values, what are the behaviours that illustrate that? Like, cameras in operating rooms, publishing safety statistics and performance ratings, and rewarding staff who speak up about patients at risk. What is in place to make the organization more transparent?***

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

#### **Considerations for building a communication strategy to improve transparency**

LHIGs recommend that the WRHA consider a number of factors when developing a communications strategy that will make the system more transparent. It will be important to share that the region is working to improve transparency and accountability and to determine what kind and amount of information the public wants access to.

***What do we mean by information? What depth/detail of information? There needs to be an understanding of the basic level of information needed. There is a huge amount of information and the WRHA can't provide all of it. The WRHA needs to understand exactly what people want to know about.***

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

#### **Share information that the public wants to know about the health care system**

- Respond to incidents shared in the media:  
***People want to be informed about what's happened and they want to know what's going to be done and how the issue is going to be addressed so that it doesn't happen again. And, there needs to be an apology.***

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

- Share information about the system so that the public can understand the big picture: ***Share successes, failures, challenges – this could be one of the best ways of making it understandable.***

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

- Share information about how budget is determined and the costs of providing services ***Would be good to know what different services, hospital stays, etc. cost. It would help the public to know this, that the system is not free. People don't know what the different services cost and might appreciate the services more if they did.***

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

### **Collaborate with the public**

Being transparent is about more than how you communicate with the public and patients. LHIG members shared that the WRHA also needs to improve their presence in communities and work more collaboratively with the public in order to work on transparency and accountability.

***There has to be collaboration with the public. So much of what is public is media-driven. This does not necessarily mean it is transparent.***

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

### Accountability of the health system

When sharing their perspectives of accountability, members of the Local Health Involvement Groups identified a strong connection between a transparent health care system and an accountable health care system. When a health care system is accountable, it is transparent in sharing information and accepts responsibility when goals are not met or for mistakes that occur.

***That's how you can improve the system -- by accepting responsibility for mistakes and by asking, "How could we have better handled that better?" Get feedback and make sure that there is good and free communication between each other to deal with issues and problems.***

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

### **Accountability from a patient perspective**

As part of their exploration and feedback on the significance of accountability, LHIG members provided their thoughts about what accountability looks like between patients and health care providers and patients and the health care system. They saw it as a two way responsibility and shared their thoughts about how providers and the system as a whole could be more accountable to patients and their families.

***When something critical happens to a patient, who is accountable to that patient – the doctor, the hospital? There doesn't seem to be real accountability when a mistake***

***is made. There needs to be advocacy to support patients in these situations, to facilitate discussion, acknowledgement, and an apology.***

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

#### Suggestions to Improve Accountability

- Improve Health Provider and Patient Communication:  
***Every provider has a responsibility to be thorough and answer the questions we have. The interaction is very important – patients asking questions, providers responding – transparency and accountability. We are accountable too. We are accountable to the system as well -- to learn about a procedure and share all of your symptoms with your doctor during a visit.***

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

- Provide services and support to patients and families after they have gone through a negative experience:  
***Services like an ombudsman and advocacy need to be available so that patients can raise issues in a clear process. The WRHA should outline what patients can expect from a health care service.***

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

- Share information about health system issues that the public would like answers to:
  - Why are those living in poverty continuing to experience challenges with the system?
  - Would like to hear more positive stories about what is going well with the system?
  - Explain the complexity of providing care, of our health care system
  - What is the WRHA vision for the future?
  - Be clear with the public about what the system can and cannot do.

***Be honest in terms of accepting the limitations, need to be clear about what the public can expect from the system and what the system cannot do, where it cannot meet expectations***

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

#### Key things about health care system performance that the public want to know about (For example, wait times for specific services, patient safety statistics, costs, etc.)

The Local Health Involvement Groups were asked what they would want to know related to how their health care system is performing. Members of all of the LHIGs were interested in getting updated information about the following:

- Budget, decision-making and priority setting
- Updates on targets and goals in key areas
- Long standing issues in the system

- Vulnerable populations and where the system is at in meeting their needs
- Wait times
- Patient flow
- Patient safety
- Access to family doctors
- How patients use the system, and
- Where the WRHA is at in planning for the future in response to changing demographics, etc.

***The WRHA should provide updates on targets, achieved or not achieved, and explain why or why not? Are these realistic and achievable goals? There needs to be more transparency around priorities. When the WRHA has been unable to achieve targets over long period of time, do we need to have a conversation about this and decide to move on or to continue?***

Members, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

Providing information to the public about priority areas that the province and the WRHA have identified (For example, doctor/"Primary Care for All", Cancer Patient Journey, continuing care, and wait times).

The Local Health Involvement Groups were asked what kind of information they would want to receive regarding the work of the region on identified priorities – like Primary Care for All, wait times, etc. They all felt that it would be important for the public to receive background information on why an initiative was chosen, the budget provided, along with regular updates on how each are progressing.

- Provide background information on how initiatives are chosen and regular updates on progress

***Are the strategies transparent and known to patients?***

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

- The LHIGs feel that the public would be interested in getting regular updates about the following strategic initiatives/priority projects underway
  - Healthy Equity Projects
  - Primary Care for All/Doc for All
  - Quick Care Clinics
  - Cancer Patient Journey
  - Access Centres
  - Home Care Program's – Effective Full Time (EFT) Project
  - Expansion of personal care homes
  - Birth Centre and Midwifery
  - My Right Care

How regularly the WRHA should communicate health system performance to the public

Overall, they felt it was important to consider the kind of information being shared – that some information on how the system was performing could be shared quarterly, while other updates on initiatives and special projects could be shared once or twice per year depending on the time line of the initiative.

***Right now, because there is a minimal sense of transparency, it would be better to receive more information, more often is better and will address this and improve overall sense of transparency.***

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

**Performance measures**

Overall, the LHIGs recommended that performance measure updates be shared with the public quarterly, every 3 months or so. Some LHIGs recommended monthly updates

**Initiatives, projects**

The LHIGs' overall recommendation for how often updates should be shared with the public about the progress of special initiatives was once or twice per year depending on the time line of the project. They recommended that at the beginning, background information on the rationale, goals, budget, etc. be shared.

***When a new strategy/initiative begins, information on it and the goals, etc. should be shared with the public. After that, reports on its progress should occur annually and could be shared on websites, provided at community health centres, community organizations, etc.***

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

**Annual Reports**

Annual reports are a good opportunity to provide updates to the public on performance measures and the progress of strategic initiatives.

***I would like real time, accurate data with benchmarks that trend over time (that could be included in a performance report).***

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

Communication approaches that the WRHA use to share health system performance with the public

Members of the Local Health Involvement Groups were asked what communication approaches they felt would be most appropriate to share health system performance and strategic initiative updates with the public.

In exploring communication approaches, LHIG members also felt that there were a number of issues to be considered when planning a communication strategy. They felt that a broad approach needed to be taken from use of websites and social media to presentations in

communities and providing phone options for those who don't have access to computers. They also encourage the WRHA to be proactive in telling their side of the story, when critical incidents are covered in the media, by providing updates when possible.

**Considerations when developing a communications strategy:**

- Take broad approach, target to different ages, cultures, etc. considering what information they would be most interested in
- Be proactive when communicating with the public about critical incidents in the media
- Make sure that issues are explained in a way that everyone can understand
- Take information and updates out to where people are
- The public also needs to learn about how to find existing information about how the system is performing

**WRHA website**

Members of all of the LHIGs feel that the WRHA website should be a hub for performance information and updates on the progress of different strategic initiatives and projects. Special effort needs to be made to ensure that the public is aware of where to find this information and that it is easy to access. They also provided ideas for how to organize key information on the website to make it connect more with different segments of the population, in a way that makes sense to people.

**Newspapers**

The LHIGs suggest that newspapers, especially the community newspapers, be a key component of a communication strategy to share performance updates with the public.

***Use community newspapers. Can also have inserts in the newspaper with statistical data, eye catching data.***

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

**Media relations**

Having a proactive approach to engaging the media and sharing information with the public is very important to LHIG members.

***Would be good to have positive media relations person that people get to know through the media.***

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

**Wave Magazine**

LHIG Members felt that the WAVE Magazine is an excellent way to share information.

***Use WAVE magazine. It is well written and can provide range of information. Could present information on how the system is performing.***

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

## Key Recommendations from the Report

1. Develop principles and benchmarks for transparency and accountability. Make those public.
2. Share with the public what the WRHA is doing to improve transparency and accountability – like getting input and ideas from the Local Health Involvement Groups.
3. Share feedback on how to improve transparency and accountability between health care providers and patients with program teams. Consider key recommendation that all treatment options are shared with patients and that all diagnostic results and key information about a patient’s health condition be provided in written reports.
4. Respond proactively and quickly to issues being discussed in the media. Use consistent media spokesperson that the public will become familiar with. Share positive stories about the system.
5. Share information about the challenging issues within the health care system so that the public can understand the big picture and the complexity of those issues.
6. Share information about the budget, how decisions are made, and how priorities are determined.
7. When a new strategic initiative or project is undertaken, share rationale, budget, goals, etc. with the public.
8. Share goals, objectives, and targets with the public, quarterly, and provide regular updates on how different strategic initiatives are progressing, like Quick Care Clinics, Access Centres, etc. twice per year or annually depending on the overall time line of the initiative. Be upfront with the public when targets are not met and why.
9. Use a variety of communication approaches with the public and target the interests of different segments of the population.
10. Enhance the website so it can be used as a hub for performance reporting information and use social media to provide quick updates and links to the website.
11. Utilize community newspapers and the WAVE magazine to periodically share health system performance updates.
12. Use WRHA staff – from senior leaders to community facilitators to share performance information with community groups and organizations that is relevant and of interest to them.
13. Use the Local Health Involvement Groups to provide initial feedback on performance reports.

# Section I

## Report Summary

## **Introduction and Methodology**

The Local Health Involvement Groups (LHIGs) have been providing advice and their unique community perspectives on significant health issues to the WRHA Board for 12 years. They were formerly known as Community Health Advisory Councils (CHACs). In 2013, the Province of Manitoba passed Bill 6, *The Regional Health Authorities Amendment Act*, (Improved Fiscal Responsibility and Community Involvement). This Act mandated the creation of Local Health Involvement Groups (LHIGs) to strengthen local involvement in regional health authorities. The change in name did not impact the membership and role of the Councils in the Winnipeg health region.

The Local Health Involvement Groups are comprised of 80-90 residents of the Winnipeg geographic community areas that each Group represents along with some representation from the Boards of health organizations also located in the community areas of the Winnipeg health region. The Groups are diverse in terms of culture, socio-economic status, professional backgrounds, work experience, age, and gender. Members of the six LHIGs participated in an orientation session prior to beginning their exploration and provision of input on strategic priorities of the health region.

## **Background/Rationale for Exploring this Topic**

The Local Health Involvement Groups were asked by the Board of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority in the fall of 2013 to provide input on transparency and accountability of our health care system during their January to April meetings of 2014.

The topic of transparency and accountability in health care comes out of the WRHA's strategic direction of fostering public engagement. Fostering public engagement means that the WRHA will work with the community to improve its health and well-being by forging partnerships and collaborating with those we serve. This topic relates directly to the priority of demonstrating public and community accountability and transparency by fostering two-way communication.

The goal of having the LHIGs explore this topic is that their input will help the WRHA better understand public perspectives and expectations about transparency and accountability and provide an opportunity for the WRHA to consider and utilize suggestions for how to be more transparent and accountable to the public.

## **Process of exploring the topic**

Prior to the first meeting on transparency and accountability, members of the Local Health Involvement Groups received a background context paper on this topic with links to web-based information.

- Accountability and Health Systems: Overview, Framework, and Strategies, January 2003. <http://www.who.int/management/partnerships/accountability/AccountabilityHealthSystemsOverview.pdf>

- *Transparency: The Most Powerful Driver of Health Care Improvement*, Health International, 2011. (This is a secure document and therefore a link cannot be provided here. You can search by Google)

The document provided background information and the rationale for this topic along with the questions that would be asked at both meetings.

Members of the senior leadership team were invited to attend the LHIG meetings, with one attending one of the two meetings of the Groups. Senior leadership in attendance included the CEO and President, Vice Presidents, and Chief Operating Officers. Their role was to observe the discussions and to provide their perspectives of being transparent and accountable. Many members of the senior leadership team along with Board Liaisons to the LHIGs participated in discussions with LHIG members; some of their comments are included in the LHIG discussion notes in the appendix of this report. This made for meaningful discussion and exploration of transparency and accountability from both the perspectives of the public and health leadership. Numerous significant insights were shared back and forth. LHIG members provided positive feedback to this process in their meeting evaluations.

### **Questions for input by the LHIGs**

At the first meeting of the LHIGs in January/February 2014, members had an opportunity to provide their thoughts and feedback on the topic of transparency and accountability of the health care system by responding to the following questions:

1. What does transparency mean to you? What would it look like when the WRHA is transparent? (as a patient, as a member of the public)
2. What does accountability mean to you? What would it look like when the WRHA is accountable? (as a patient, as a member of the public)

At the second meeting of the LHIGs in March/April 2014, members were asked to respond to the following questions, reflecting on ways to ensure the transparency and accountability of our health care system:

1. What are the key things that you would like to know related to how your health care system is performing? (For example, wait times for specific services, patient safety, costs, etc.)
2. The province and the WRHA have identified priorities that it is working on (For example, doctor/"Primary Care for All", Cancer Patient Journey, continuing care, and wait times). What kind of information would you like to know about how the work on these priorities is progressing?
3. How regularly should the WRHA communicate health system performance to the public?

4. What communication approaches would you recommend that the WRHA use to share health system performance with the public?

Full discussion notes from both sets of LHIG meetings are included in the appendix of this report.

#### **Presentation to the Board of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority**

Staff developed a draft report which was then shared with members of all of the Local Health Involvement Groups for their input and feedback. This report was presented by Co-Chairs of the Local Health Involvement Groups at the June 2014 all LHIGs meeting to the WRHA Board and members of Senior Leadership.

This report will also be shared with members of the Public Engagement Council, responsible for overseeing the strategic priority of “Fostering Public Engagement” and the Public Affairs/Communications Team. Further opportunities to share the report with all relevant areas in the region will also be sought (including sites and programs).

## **What does transparency mean to you?**

### **Key Components of a Transparent Health Care System**

At the first set of meetings, discussion of the topic of transparency and accountability opened by asking LHIG members to share what transparency meant to them and what their health care system would look like if it was completely transparent. Overall, LHIG members spoke of openness, sharing both positive and negative information to tell the whole story, responding quickly in the media to proactively address negative press, and having information readily available – as key components of a transparent health care system.

*Transparency is being open and honest when you are communicating and in a language that the public can understand using layman's terms.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*Being transparent involves not giving misleading information, ensuring that the public gets the full understanding, the negatives and positives, the whole story, the full picture of what is happening.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

*Hesitance to respond appears not to be transparent, and not as open as the public expects the system to be.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*The WRHA should follow-up with the public after issues have been resolved, like what happened at St Boniface Hospital after the operating room closures. Is care still impacted? Are people waiting for surgery? Also, the WRHA didn't communicate what a good job was done in responding to this issue – could have shared this more in the media.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

### **Need to Rebuild Trust**

Some LHIG members felt that trust needs to be rebuilt with the public in order for many to believe that what the WRHA is sharing was true and that rebuilding this trust should be the first step to creating a more transparent and accountable health care system.

*I don't believe that the system is being transparent. How do you persuade someone who is cynical, who doesn't believe some of the information out in the media? How can you build trust so that some people will believe it? Give me the results. Convince me that what I'm reading is true, believable.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

### **Need to ensure the goal of sharing information is to improve transparency**

Some LHIG members identified that in an effort to be more transparent, sometimes the WRHA creates more issues, controversy. For example, posting wait times for emergency departments.

*Sometimes there is an effort to be transparent without knowing what that really means – like posting wait times for emergency departments across the region which ended up causing problems and wasn't about being transparent.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

### **How you see transparency from a patient perspective**

Members of the Local Health Involvement Groups were asked to consider what transparency meant to them as a patient. Insights and recommendations regarding the patient experience of transparency will be shared with staff delivering health care services across the region.

*Being transparent creates stronger bonds and builds trust.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

### **What patients expect from health care providers in a transparent health care system**

Members of the LHIGs shared experiences and ideas for improving communication between patients and health care providers which would be more transparent and build trust. Their ideas included sharing more information about procedures, options for treatment, and full disclosure of their health situation so that they could be better informed to make decisions about their care and treatment. All of the LHIGs recommended that patients receive written information on treatment options, updates on their health condition, and diagnostic results.

*Transparency means (health care providers) make it crystal clear with no hidden agenda, no grey areas, help me understand the system, procedures, and how things are done. Patients need to be well-informed as soon as they enter a hospital, receive care, etc.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*As a patient, transparency means knowing about my sickness. If they can treat me right away, I would like to know about other options; to get as much information from my family doctor as possible. I don't want to get referred on without receiving any clearer information.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

*I am disappointed when I don't get full information on my health situation. I did not get the full story on consequences of treatment options. When I challenged the doctor, he did come back with more information so that I was fully informed and could make decisions on my own.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

## **How you see transparency as a member of the public**

A transparent health care system is important to members of the Local Health Involvement Groups. During their discussions, members identified what they felt the public wants to know about the system, the challenge of determining the right amount/level of information to provide the public, and ideas for how to make our system more transparent.

LHIG members encouraged the WRHA to be open and honest about issues happening within the system and the importance of sharing how decisions are made in order to build credibility and make health less political.

*Transparency means being open and honest with the public about our (the WRHA's) objectives.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Transparency will help build credibility and in some ways, make it less political.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*The public in general is tired of politics and the lack of transparency, and refusal to explain why and how decisions are made.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

## **Example of when the WRHA was transparent**

All of the Local Health Involvement Groups referred to the article in the Winnipeg Free Press (January 2014) which covered the event where Arlene Wilgosh, CEO and President of the WRHA shared where the region was at in terms of performance measures related to patient flow and the goals that had been set. LHIG members were impressed that she publicly admitted that the region had fallen short and not met the goals stated. Members expressed that this is the best approach to being both transparent and accountable.

*I read the Free Press article about performance measures which spelled out what the WRHA promised. The region didn't meet those targets, was honest and didn't try to pass the buck. This is a good example of transparency and accountability.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

## **Suggestions to Improve Transparency**

### **Develop Principles and Benchmarks for Transparency and Accountability**

The LHIGs offered ideas for how the WRHA could improve transparency. They felt this should begin by developing principles and benchmarks for transparency and accountability. Is transparency and accountability a value of the WRHA? If it is, LHIG members wondered what actions, policies, etc. illustrate that.

*There is access to information legislation – if someone asks for it – will make the data accessible/understandable. This raises the question if there should be principles of transparency that the WRHA should adopt and some protocols – how do you figure out what information to share and under what circumstances*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*In terms of values of the organization, if transparency is something that the WRHA values, what are the behaviours that illustrate that? Like, cameras in operating rooms, publishing safety statistics and performance ratings, and rewarding staff who speak up about patients at risk. What is in place to make the organization more transparent?*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

### **What to consider when building communication strategy to improve transparency**

LHIGs recommend that the WRHA consider a number of factors when developing a communications strategy that will make the system more transparent. It will be important to share that the region is working to improve transparency and accountability and to determine what kind and amount of information the public wants access to.

*How do we share what we (the Local Health Involvement Groups) are discussing, doing about transparency and accountability with the public? They don't know what is happening behind the scenes.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*What do we mean by information? What depth/detail of information? There needs to be an understanding of the basic level of information needed. There is a huge amount of information and the WRHA can't provide all of it. The WRHA needs to understand exactly what people want to know about.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*(Transparency is) not only the ability to get information, but how accessible it is. Is it difficult to actually get it? The system is not really transparent if you have to work extra hard to get information.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*(Information) should be readily available. You should not have to go searching for it.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*People remember stories much longer than statistics.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

### **Improving communication/transparency between health care provider and patients**

Members of the LHIGs shared experiences and ideas for improving communication between patients and health care providers which would be more transparent and build trust. Their ideas included sharing more information about procedures, options for treatment, and full disclosure of their health situation so that they could be better informed to make decisions about their care and treatment. All of the LHIGs recommended that patients receive written information on treatment options, updates on their health condition, and diagnostic results.

*I don't think that there is always transparency between the doctor and patient. Patients don't get written reports, and don't get results if they are good. There isn't enough documentation with information on diagnostics, etc.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*As a patient you need to feel safe to ask any questions that you want to ask and be given the time to ask and have the health provider respond to the questions. If I get information, sometimes I might not take it in. It would be good to have it written down for me.*

Members, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

### **What the public needs to know about the health care system**

#### Respond to incidents shared in the media

*People want to be informed about what's happened and they want to know what's going to be done and how the issue is going to be addressed so that it doesn't happen again. And, there needs to be an apology.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*Some people don't understand and will jump to conclusions. An example of this is coverage of the incidents involving discharge of patients at the Grace Hospital. When more information came out, this lessened.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

#### Share information about the system so that the public can understand the big picture

*As member of the public, I need to understand the big picture and that the system will be there for me when I need it.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*Make the complicated issues more understandable.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*What are some of the challenges that the health care system is facing, what are the root causes of those, and what are the plans in place to address those?*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*Share successes, failures, challenges – this could be one of the best ways of making it understandable.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

Share information about how budget is determined and the costs of providing services

*Would be good to know what different services, hospital stays, etc. cost. It would help the public to know this, that the system is not free. People don't know what the different services cost and might appreciate the services more if they did.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*The public needs to know, then they won't be so frustrated. Would like to know what the costs are. Every once in a while send out a fake bill that outlines the costs to the health care system of the care you received this year. This would build awareness.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*Knowing the costs would engage the public; people are concerned about how their money is spent. This is another way to get people engaged and encourage them to consider how we might do things differently and focus on prevention.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*Overall we see health care costs increasing. Pharmaceutical costs are behind this but the public doesn't know this. What is actually responsible for increases, for decreases? It would be good to know.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

**Being transparent means collaborating with the public**

Being transparent is about more than how you communicate with the public and patients. LHIG members shared that the WRHA also needs to improve their presence in communities and work more collaboratively with the public in order to work on transparency and accountability.

*Have a better presence in the community – tell the stories, the things that work well and the things we need to fix. Engagement is an example of this. Volunteers can be a voice in the community too.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*You have to figure out how much information to share without overwhelming people with information. You can use groups, like the LHIGs, to determine how much people want to know.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*There has to be collaboration with the public. So much of what is public is media-driven.  
This does not necessarily mean it is transparent.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

## What does accountability mean to you?

When sharing their perspectives of accountability, members of the Local Health Involvement Groups identified a strong connection between a transparent health care system and an accountable health care system. When a health care system is accountable, it is transparent in sharing information and accepts responsibility when goals are not met or for mistakes that occur.

*Answerability, responding to questions, giving answers. Accountability is a two-way street and has multiple layers to it. Accountability and responsibility go hand in hand. The system should be doing what is in the best interest of the patient and the public at large and not reacting because of fear of extreme consequences.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*Accountability --setting goals and making those goals public and reporting back on them.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*That's how you can improve the system -- by accepting responsibility for mistakes and by asking, "How could we have better handled that better?" Get feedback and make sure that there is good and free communication between each other to deal with issues and problems.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*The challenge is with so many systems working together with so many accountabilities – different professional organizations, etc. These need to be woven together, so that you integrate the sense of commitment. How do we create the best care, the right care at the right time for everyone within our budget?*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*The more involvement that we have from community, the more improvement we see in the health care system. For example, HSC ER -- I see big improvements there as a result of the Sinclair incident. LHIGs are an example of this too.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

## How you see accountability from a patient perspective

As part of their exploration and feedback on the significance of accountability, LHIG members provided their thoughts about what accountability looks like between patients and health care providers and patients and the health care system. They saw it as a two way responsibility and shared their thoughts about how providers and the system as a whole could be more accountable to patients and their families.

Much of the discussions about accountability centred on when something unexpected and critical happens to the patient and the response of providers to that.

*Accountability should mean that whenever an incident occurs people, from the patients directly involved to the general public, receive an explanation from the health authority about the incident without taking months and months to respond.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*When something critical happens to a patient, who is accountable to that patient – the doctor, the hospital? There doesn't seem to be real accountability when a mistake is made. There needs to be advocacy to support patients in these situations, to facilitate discussion, acknowledgement, and an apology.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

One LHIG member was very concerned that accountability is not connected to issues of individual staff responsibility when critical mistakes are made in caring for patients.

*People are expecting to see "accountability" tied to "responsibility" and "consequences". It is not enough to simply make excuses for erroneous behavior. It is necessary to remove unprofessional, uncaring, untrained or unthinking individuals from the health care system.....no matter where they are in the hierarchy. Without this, there can be no public trust of the Manitoba healthcare, only a healthy cynicism.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

### **How do you see accountability as a member of the public?**

LHIG members shared perspectives about what an accountable health care system would look like and what the WRHA could do to be more accountable to the public.

*Accountability equals trust.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Accountability means honesty. For example, being honest about missing the target and not making excuses.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

## **Suggestions to Improve Accountability**

### **Health Provider and Patient Communication**

*Every provider has a responsibility to be thorough and answer the questions we have. The interaction is very important – patients asking questions, providers responding – transparency and accountability. We are accountable too. We are accountable to the system as well -- to learn about a procedure and share all of your symptoms with your doctor during a visit.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

### **Patients are accountable as well and this begins with disclosing all of the facts about their health situation.**

*The provider needs to have a thorough history of my health and health conditions. The patient needs to disclose everything they can and they should ask lots of questions.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

An accountable health care system would provide services and support to patients and families after they have gone through a negative experience.

*Services like an ombudsman and advocacy need to be available so that patients can raise issues in a clear process. The WRHA should outline what patients can expect from a health care service.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*Is it clear to the public and patients what the process is for complaints and the best person to approach with their complaint?*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

### **Issues about the system that the public would like answers to**

LHIG members shared that the WRHA, in order to be more accountable, should be sharing information with the public about the following key issues -- why those living in poverty continue to experience challenges with the system, positive stories about what is going well with the system, the complexity of care, their vision for the future, and being clear with the public about what the system can and cannot do.

*From public perspective – a lot of people are feeling let down by the health system – especially those living in poverty – difficulty getting service, accessing doctors – accountability – government needs to answer to some of the issues that were never resolved – like hallway medicine*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*We don't hear from the WRHA when things are going well – get messages out on an on-going basis – will put the “negative” stories in perspective, balance out the negative*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*Complexity of care is unknown to the public*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Vision for the future, improve quality, reduce cost, better outcomes, listening to clients – private sector Need balanced discussion about what we want from our system – understanding context*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Be honest in terms of accepting the limitations, need to be clear about what the public can expect from the system and what the system cannot do, where it cannot meet expectations*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

**What are the key things that you would like to know related to how your health care system is performing? (For example, wait times for specific services, patient safety statistics, costs, etc.)**

The Local Health Involvement Groups were asked what they would want to know related to how their health care system is performing. Members of all of the LHIGs were interested in getting updated information about the following – budget, decision-making and priority setting, updates on targets and goals in key areas, long standing issues in the system, vulnerable populations and where the system is at in meeting their needs, wait times, patient flow, patient safety, access to family doctors, how patients use the system, and where the WRHA is at in planning for the future in response to changing demographics, etc.

**Budget and making decisions about using resources, setting priorities**

*How much flexibility does the region have in how it spends its money? Does it have the ability to make decisions to build more clinics, for example? The WRHA has more discretion about spending decisions than government departments have. We couldn't function as a health care system if we didn't have that flexibility and nimbleness.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*I want to know how resources are distributed between programs. This would give you an idea of how programs are prioritized – some programs are more expensive to run.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*When the WRHA says they will improve something they should provide facts -- what the change will be and when it will happen. Quality of care needs to be most important and any change should not negatively impact quality. We are going to be more efficient, and this is how we are going to do it...*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*I would like to see the budget – what was spent, where we went over and why. There is not an infinite amount of money and this is not going to get better.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*I think the public should know how the Community Health Advisory Councils/Local Health Involvement Groups have influenced priority setting. There are opportunities for using them to provide feedback on how the system is performing and priority setting. Use these groups as a living part of a two-way process.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

**Updates on targets, goals, etc.**

*The WRHA should provide updates on targets, achieved or not achieved, and explain why or why not? Are these realistic and achievable goals? There needs to be more transparency around priorities. When the WRHA has been unable to achieve targets over*

*long period of time, do we need to have a conversation about this and decide to move on or to continue?*

Members, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*What are the goals, are they being achieved, how are they being achieved? If they are not being achieved, why not, and what is the plan?*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*When the goals are set but then not met, why not? Want to know this.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

**Long standing issues in the health care system – where are they at now? (Hallway Medicine, Infection Control, Nurse Practitioners,**

*We have been talking about the same issues for so long; maybe some of these things are not achievable.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*Would be good to get an update on use of nurse practitioners. Many people are not comfortable getting care from them (as comfortable as getting care from doctors). Should get feedback from patients to find out how they feel about receiving care from them versus from doctors.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*Is there an opportunity to share more positive information? Changes in behaviour, changes in wait times, successes, etc. like the Mental Health Crisis Response Centre.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

**Vulnerable Populations and how the system is addressing their needs**

*Would be interested in the health equity document and how it is directed towards programming. <http://www.wrha.mb.ca/about/healthequity/HealthEquityActionPlan.php>*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

**Wait Times**

LHIGs are interested in receiving wait time updates about continuing care, emergency departments, specialists, and specific surgeries. They suggest that more information be provided to the public about specific wait time challenges and work being done to improve.

*Wait times strategy for continuing care, the wait to get into personal care homes, etc. What are the opportunities and options for people? This information should be more readily available through home care program, etc.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*The WRHA needs to get better at educating the public about wait times so that they can better understand the flow and other issues that are impacting the flow, wait times at emergency rooms, etc.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*The public wants wait time information for emergency services at different sites with up to date information.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*I think that there should be updates on wait times for specific surgeries and information about what a reasonable wait time is and what should you do if your wait is long.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

*Wait times to see a specialist.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Wait times are listed at the Manitoba Health website, but didn't know about that.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

### **Patient Flow Strategy**

*I would like to know how the patient flow strategy is going, have times been reduced, like, discharge from hospital to other care? Would like to know what strategies have been developed to address discharge waits.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*The WRHA should track the numbers of people getting care at emergency departments when they could have received care for their health issue at urgent care, quick care, family doctor, etc. They should also track other inappropriate use of the system, like, the inappropriate use of beds in hospitals. The first issue shows the choice an individual made in terms of getting care versus a system problem – someone waiting in a hospital bed for a personal care home.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*The WRHA should share information about the continuum of care. For example, someone is admitted to emergency department for a fall and then goes back to community and is connected with a seniors' health resource team, etc.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

*It is important to get the big picture – how wait times in emergency departments are connected to few beds available, difficulty in getting space in personal care homes, etc. It is important to know how these issues connect to one another.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

## **Patient Safety Statistics**

All of the LHIGs suggested that it would be important for the public to receive updates on patient safety issues and statistics.

*Patient safety statistics, like hospital acquired infections, slip and fall in hospitals, wound care for bed sores/skin ulcers, would be important to know about. If my parent is going into a hospital, it would be good to know which hospital has the lowest rates for these things.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Hand-washing as a requirement was promoted to staff, patients, and the public. Do we know if this has improved overall?*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*Would be important to get information on overall patient safety statistics and how incidents are handled?*

Members, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

## **Access to Family Physicians, Primary Care**

*It is important to get information on access to family physicians --how many people have access and how many people don't.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

## **Use of system – statistics**

*The WRHA could share generic information about your average knee replacement, doctor's visit, etc. It gives people an idea of how much the services cost.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Would be important to know how many people get vaccinated in the general population.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Would like to know statistics on repeat medical procedures because the procedure didn't go as planned/outcomes not met.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*Numbers of repeat diagnostic tests being done would highlight inefficiency/ lack of communication between physicians/providers.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*Knowing how much it costs for a check-up, blood samples, etc. and compare to other jurisdictions as well.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*Readmission rates after surgeries.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

*Getting statistics on the number of procedures will give me an overall snap shot of the health care system – who uses the health care system and why are they using the health care system and what are the costs associated? This would help the public better understand how the system is being used, and then improvements can be made.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*Statistics are great but I also want to know why, get the story behind the statistics. What are ways the WRHA can address, better assist people so that they can use system more appropriately?*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*Statistics on prevention – how are we doing in terms of preventing obesity, etc.?*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

### **Planning for the future, challenges, changing demographics**

*The public would also like to know about future planning challenges given the aging population and how plans are responding to this – more personal care home beds, for example? What is the vision for health care over the next 10-20 years?*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

### **Other**

*Reviews on health care sites shared publicly – reflect on how their experience was – friendly, etc.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*What is the turnaround time for complaint resolution and outcome of incidents?*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*Outcome based funding – is this occurring anywhere in the system?*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*Need a tracking system between regional health authorities, nation-wide – to compare our performance to other regions, etc. like wait times.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*There is a lot of emphasis on hospitals and family doctors in the media – should share information about community-based services and report on how they are performing will also increase awareness of these services.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

**The province and the WRHA have identified priorities that it is working on (For example, doctor/“Primary Care for All”, Cancer Patient Journey, continuing care, and wait times). What kind of information would you like to know about how the work on these priorities is progressing?**

The Local Health Involvement Groups were asked what kind of information they would want to receive regarding the work of the region on identified priorities – like Primary Care for All, wait times, etc. They all felt that it would be important for the public to receive background information on why an initiative was chosen, the budget provided, along with regular updates on how each are progressing.

**Background information on how initiatives are chosen and regular updates on progress**

*Would be important to have more background information on these initiatives – rationale for, major actions, etc.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*Would like to know how the initiatives are going. Use a thermometer as way to show how close we are to reaching our goals.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Would want to know that the money, time, and human resources (allocated) have been effective or not.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Would like to know a little bit about them and how they are progressing, how far along are they?*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*I am curious to know what the experience is for health care providers as these initiatives roll out. Does it impact the quality of care or are they just working harder? Has this positively impacted the care that I can provide? Provide statistics and qualitative feedback from staff.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*Are the strategies transparent and known to patients?*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

**Health Equity/Meeting the Needs of Vulnerable Population**

*I would like to know more about health equity policy and projects. There can be a societal views that work against moving this forward – it’s their fault, handle addiction before providing housing, don’t agree with harm reduction, etc. We need a strong community approach to this and then get political attention and support that way.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*Would like to know what other initiatives are going to come out of the Health Equity Report, like, delivering care in the community, housing, inter-sectoral policy, working together on this, etc. I don't know how this will impact health care costs.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

### **Primary Care for All**

*Primary Care for All priority – where, how, and by whom are those priorities set?*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*Primary Care for All – what is the end date? How is it going? Is it on target?*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

### **Quick Care Clinics**

*Quick Care Clinics – I would like to know where we're at with this initiative, use of nurse practitioners, etc.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*How many people are using Quick Care Clinics, how it is taking the burden off emergency departments?*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*It would be important to know how decisions are made, like, how are sites are chosen for Quick Care Clinics, Access Centres, etc. Was the public asked for input?*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

### **Cancer Patient Journey**

Given how cancer impacts so many families, LHIGs recommended that regular updates be shared with the public about access to cancer treatment, cure rates, etc.

*Updates on cancer and heart information regarding research and treatment would be important to us. Have there been changes in recovery rates, for example.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*The Cancer Patient Journey timelines for children, adults getting care – very important that people get care right away.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*The Cancer Patient Journey – should provide regular updates to the public about lessons learned. Could relate to and benefit other aspects of the system.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*Cancer Care Journey – what are the milestones, period of time between milestones, and what to expect. This would be good to know this for other health issues – milestones, etc.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

### **Access Centres**

*Where are we at with Access Centre development in other areas of Winnipeg?*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Access Centres -- successes, changes, identified benefits and have they been achieved – why, why not? Have the access centres impacted on numbers of people using emergency departments?*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

*How have Access Centres responded to the needs of their specific communities?*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

### **Home Care – Effective Full Time Project**

*The Home Care Effective Full Time (EFT) project – when will it be in full effect, have there been positive results – for workers and clients?*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

### **Expansion of Personal Care Homes**

*It would be important to know more about Personal Care Homes and the expansion of beds/spots. In looking to the future, what is the strategy, numbers of new beds, are there plans to address the increasing demand – including for staffing?*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

### **Birth Centre and Midwifery Program**

*The Birth Centre and midwifery program – choice for women – has there been a cost savings? How many patients? Has this reduced costs on the system overall? Don't hear a lot about this facility – family doctors will share this information with pregnant patients.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*What are the implications of some of the changes, like, early discharge after birth? Are we just transferring responsibility from one area to another? In the long term is it a positive change?*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

### **My Right Care**

*My Right Care campaign – have there been positive impacts, are people using the different facilities/sites properly?*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

## **How regularly should the WRHA communicate health system performance to the public?**

The Local Health Involvement Groups were asked for their recommendations on how regularly the WRHA should share health system performance information with the public. Overall, they felt it was important to consider the kind of information being shared – that some information on how the system was performing could be shared quarterly, while other updates on initiatives and special projects could be shared once or twice per year depending on the time line of the initiative.

*The frequency of sharing information with the public is varied – some things the public would only want annually, like annual report, some things quarterly, and some information would be appropriate to receive monthly.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*How often? Would depend -- time frame that is relevant for different measures – like emergency room use could be quarterly, other indicators could be shared annually or longer.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*Right now, because there is a minimal sense of transparency, it would be better to receive more information, more often is better and will address this and improve overall sense of transparency.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

*If we ask for reports too often – it's too onerous, and the public would tune it out.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

### **Performance measures**

Overall, the LHIGs recommended that performance measure updates be shared with the public quarterly, every 3 months or so. Some LHIGs recommended monthly updates

*Performance reporting – to hear quarterly – will know what progress is being made on initiatives.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Community newspapers could provide updates monthly on performance measures.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

### **Initiatives, projects**

The LHIGs' overall recommendation for how often updates should be shared with the public about the progress of special initiatives was once or twice per year depending on the time line of the project. They recommended that at the beginning, background information on the rationale, goals, budget, etc. be shared.

*When a new strategy/initiative begins, information on it and the goals, etc. should be shared with the public. After that, reports on its progress should occur annually and could be shared on websites, provided at community health centres, community organizations, etc.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*How often to report, depends on the project. Some might be every 6 months, longer term projects, every year.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

### **Annual Reports**

Annual reports are a good opportunity to provide updates to the public on performance measures and the progress of strategic initiatives.

*Have WRHA spokesperson report annually on how the health care system is doing.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*I would like real time, accurate data with benchmarks that trend over time (that could be included in a performance report).*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

### **Special Reports**

*Special reports, to share success, etc., wouldn't have to wait.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

## What communication approaches would you recommend that the WRHA use to share health system performance with the public?

Members of the Local Health Involvement Groups were asked what communication approaches they felt would be most appropriate to share health system performance and strategic initiative updates with the public. In exploring communication approaches, LHIG members also felt that there were a number of issues to be considered when planning a communication strategy. They felt that a broad approach needed to be taken from use of websites and social media to presentations in communities and providing phone options for those who don't have access to computers. They also encourage the WRHA to be proactive in telling their side of the story, when critical incidents are covered in the media, by providing updates when possible.

### Considerations when developing a communication strategy

- Take broad approach, target to different ages, cultures, etc. considering what information they would be most interested in

*Don't just put info on the website take a broad approach including news releases, newspaper, television, radio, pamphlets at access centres, etc.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

*Strategies need to be multi-faceted, targeted to different ages, cultures, etc.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*Should consider what different groups and/or populations would be interested in knowing about.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Each community has specific issues that are of interest to them.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

- Be proactive when communicating with the public about critical incidents in the media

*Report on critical incidents, share information when they are resolved. Don't wait for the inquest, share information about immediate changes in response to the incident. Communicate through TV, website, spokesperson, and news conferences.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

- Make sure that issues are explained in a way that everyone can understand

*How do we take the complexity and make it understandable?*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

- Take information and updates out to where people are

*Go to where people are, engage on their level, and share that information in their language. They'll need to be receptive too.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

- The public also needs to learn about how to find existing information about how the system is performing

*Ensure that the WRHA promotes and educates the public about how to find the existing information on wait times, patient safety learning summaries, etc.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

### **Phone, 311, Health Links/Info Santé**

A number of the LHIGs recommended that the WRHA include an option for people to phone to receive updates on how the system is performing.

*Having a phone number to call and have someone answer my question – for those without computers or patience to go through the website to find information*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*For those who don't have internet, Health Links/Info Santé could provide information.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

### **Use innovative approaches to share data**

Members of the LHIGs felt it was important to use innovative approaches to communicating with the public, so that people connect with the information and it is more understandable.

*Use interesting ways to share data. For example, if X number of people used primary care instead of emergency departments for care, patient A would have accessed care this much faster, etc. People can see what their actions can do and consequences of using care appropriately.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Use interesting visuals to get information out to the public.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Share stories about their experiences in the system and relate them to initiatives, different performance reports, etc.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Share relevant performance data with patients. For example, share MRI/diagnostic performance measure updates with patients waiting for that service.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

### **Take to communities, use Local Health Involvement Groups**

LHIG members felt that bringing information on how the health system is performing makes it interactive, dynamic, and more relevant to the public.

*Should be a two way discussion – performance reporting and the public. Could use LHIGs to share updates on performance indicators, share progress reports, and then get feedback on how group feels about it, etc.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*Reports to LHIGs, verbal community reports?*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*Have community facilitators, program staff, Community Area Directors, etc. coordinate sharing performance information with community groups and organizations. Could use members of senior leadership team and/or subject matter experts to speak about the information.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*Besides websites and media releases, how is information about Quick Care Clinics being shared? Need to consider alternatives, especially in communities where people don't have computers. Could provide information through family doctors, at schools, etc.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*Get information out to Wellness Centre, seniors organizations -- anywhere people meet for programs where they can access the information. Could share information on new projects, status updates, etc. Those projects that might be important to them and relate to them.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

*Release information to groups like Alzheimer's society, information that they would be interested in and they would disseminate out to their network.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

### **Social Media**

Social media is an important tool for getting the message out to the public that new performance updates are available. It can be used as a tool to connect people to information on the WRHA website, for example.

*Facebook is used more by older population and a lot of the community groups, etc. are using Facebook to get information out, like the Winnipeg Humane Society. It has a very good Facebook page and you can sign up for notifications.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*Use Twitter to get urgent information out. This can be re-Tweeted out like virtual word of mouth.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Develop an app for performance measures.*

Member, Seven Oaks/Inkster LHIG

### **WRHA website**

Members of all of the LHIGs feel that the WRHA website should be a hub for performance information and updates on the progress of different strategic initiatives and projects. Special effort needs to be made to ensure that the public is aware of where to find this information and that it is easy to access. They also provided ideas for how to organize key information on the website to make it connect more with different segments of the population, in a way that makes sense to people.

*People should be able to get more data on the website. Some people would want more information.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*The WRHA could post updated statistics on the website and then send notifications to people who subscribe.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*Make reports available on the website. But people need to know that the information is there for them to look up.*

Member, Downtown/Point Douglas LHIG

*Create a dashboard view of all of the system on the website. Right now, the website is set up in a silo approach. I would like to see current events highlighted, like measles outbreak, and how it is being addressed.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

*The WRHA website could be organized for patients and providers and basic health information. The sections can include goals and indicators for different issues with updates over time. Keep archives for people to look through.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

*There are so many people looking for different information, depending on their health issues. It would be good to group the information based on a health issue – like pregnancy, for example.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

### **Newspapers**

The LHIGs suggest that newspapers, especially the community newspapers, be a key component of a communication strategy to share performance updates with the public.

*Use community newspapers. Can also have inserts in the newspaper with statistical data, eye catching data.*

Member, St Boniface/St Vital LHIG

*Stories at the community level would be really interesting. We will be skeptical of the spin of some reporters, like, how an Access Centre has changed a community, experience of care, etc.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

### **Media relations**

Having a proactive approach to engaging the media and sharing information with the public is very important to LHIG members.

*Would be good to have positive media relations person that people get to know through the media.*

Member, River East/Transcona LHIG

### **Wave Magazine**

LHIG Members felt that the WAVE Magazine is an excellent way to share information.

*Use WAVE magazine. It is well written and can provide range of information. Could present information on how the system is performing.*

Member, River Heights/Fort Garry LHIG

*Using info graphics in Wave Magazine to share performance reports and updates on how different strategic initiatives are progressing. Do a whole magazine issue on reporting.*

Member, St James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South LHIG

## Key Recommendations from the Report

1. Develop principles and benchmarks for transparency and accountability. Make those public.
2. Share with the public what the WRHA is doing to improve transparency and accountability – like getting input and ideas from the Local Health Involvement Groups.
3. Share feedback on how to improve transparency and accountability between health care providers and patients with program teams. Consider key recommendation that all treatment options are shared with patients and that all diagnostic results and key information about a patient’s health condition be provided in written reports.
4. Respond proactively and quickly to issues being discussed in the media. Use consistent media spokesperson that the public will become familiar with. Share positive stories about the system.
5. Share information about the challenging issues within the health care system so that the public can understand the big picture and the complexity of those issues.
6. Share information about the budget, how decisions are made, and how priorities are determined.
7. When a new strategic initiative or project is undertaken, share rationale, budget, goals, etc. with the public.
8. Share goals, objectives, and targets with the public, quarterly, and provide regular updates on how different strategic initiatives are progressing, like Quick Care Clinics, Access Centres, etc. twice per year or annually depending on the overall time line of the initiative. Be upfront with the public when targets are not met and why.
9. Use a variety of communication approaches with the public and target the interests of different segments of the population.
10. Enhance the website so it can be used as a hub for performance reporting information and use social media to provide quick updates and links to the website.
11. Utilize community newspapers and the WAVE magazine to periodically share health system performance updates.
12. Use WRHA staff – from senior leaders to community facilitators to share performance information with community groups and organizations that is relevant and of interest to them.

13. Use the Local Health Involvement Groups to provide initial feedback on performance reports.

# Appendix A

## **Local Health Involvement Groups:**

### **“Transparency and Accountability in Health Care: Community Perspectives”**

#### Background:

The topic, transparency and accountability in health care, comes out of the WRHA’s strategic direction of fostering public engagement. Fostering public engagement means that the WRHA will work with the community to improve its health and well-being by forging partnerships and collaborating with those we serve. This topic relates directly to the priority of demonstrating public and community accountability and transparency by fostering two-way communication.

LHIG input will help the WRHA better understand public perspectives and expectations about transparency and accountability and provide an opportunity for the WRHA to consider suggestions for how to be transparent and accountable to the people we serve, from the people we serve.

#### Transparency and Accountability in Health Care

The definition of transparency is “the condition of being transparent” and “clear and understandable””. Transparent means that “light can flow through so that objects behind can be distinctly seen.” Transparency in government or health care specifically refers to the open sharing of how decisions are made and how well it is performing by providing data and information to the public.

An example of this is the British Prime Minister, David Cameron’s public commitment to making information from the National Health Service (NHS) publicly available. This included information about how the health system was performing. He stated that information is power and by sharing it we can deliver modern, personalized, and sustainable (health) services. Being transparent by sharing performance information encourages changes in public and professional behaviour. Therefore, transparency about performance may be seen as a necessary step in improving the health care system.

The essence of accountability is answerability; being accountable means having the obligation to answer questions regarding decisions and/or actions. Defining accountability involves asking the questions – accountability for what, who is accountable, and to whom are they accountable.

Accountability in health care can be divided into three main categories – financial, performance, and political/democratic. Financial accountability involves tracking and reporting on the use of financial resources. Performance accountability refers to demonstrating and accounting for how parts of the system are performing in light of agreed-upon targets or goals. And, political/democratic accountability refers to whether or not the government has delivered

on electoral promises, thereby gaining the public trust and responding to societal needs and concerns.

*Accountability and Health Systems: Overview, Framework, and Strategies*, January 2003.

<http://www.who.int/management/partnerships/accountability/AccountabilityHealthSystemsOverview.pdf>

“Transparency: The Most Powerful Driver of Health Care Improvement”, *Health International*, 2011. (This is a secure document and therefore a link cannot be provided here. You can search by Google)

### Input from the Local Health Involvement Groups

At your **January/February meetings**, you will have an opportunity to provide your thoughts and feedback on the topic of transparency and accountability of our health care system by responding to the following questions:

1. What does transparency mean to you? What would it look like when the WRHA is transparent?
  - a. as a patient
  - b. as a member of the public
  
2. What does accountability mean to you? What would it look like when the WRHA is accountable?
  - a. as a patient
  - b. as a member of the public

Discussion and input at your second meeting in **March/April** on this topic will focus on your perspectives and ideas as a member of the public. Any patient perspectives regarding transparency and accountability will be shared with the programs.

LHIG members will be asked to respond to the following questions, reflecting on ways to ensure the transparency and accountability of our health care system:

1. What are the key things that you would like to know related to how your health care system is performing? (For example, wait times for specific services, patient safety, costs, etc.)
  
2. The province and the WRHA have identified priorities that it is working on (For example, doctor/“Primary Care for All”, Cancer Patient Journey, continuing care, and wait times). What kind of information would you like to know about how the work on these priorities is progressing?

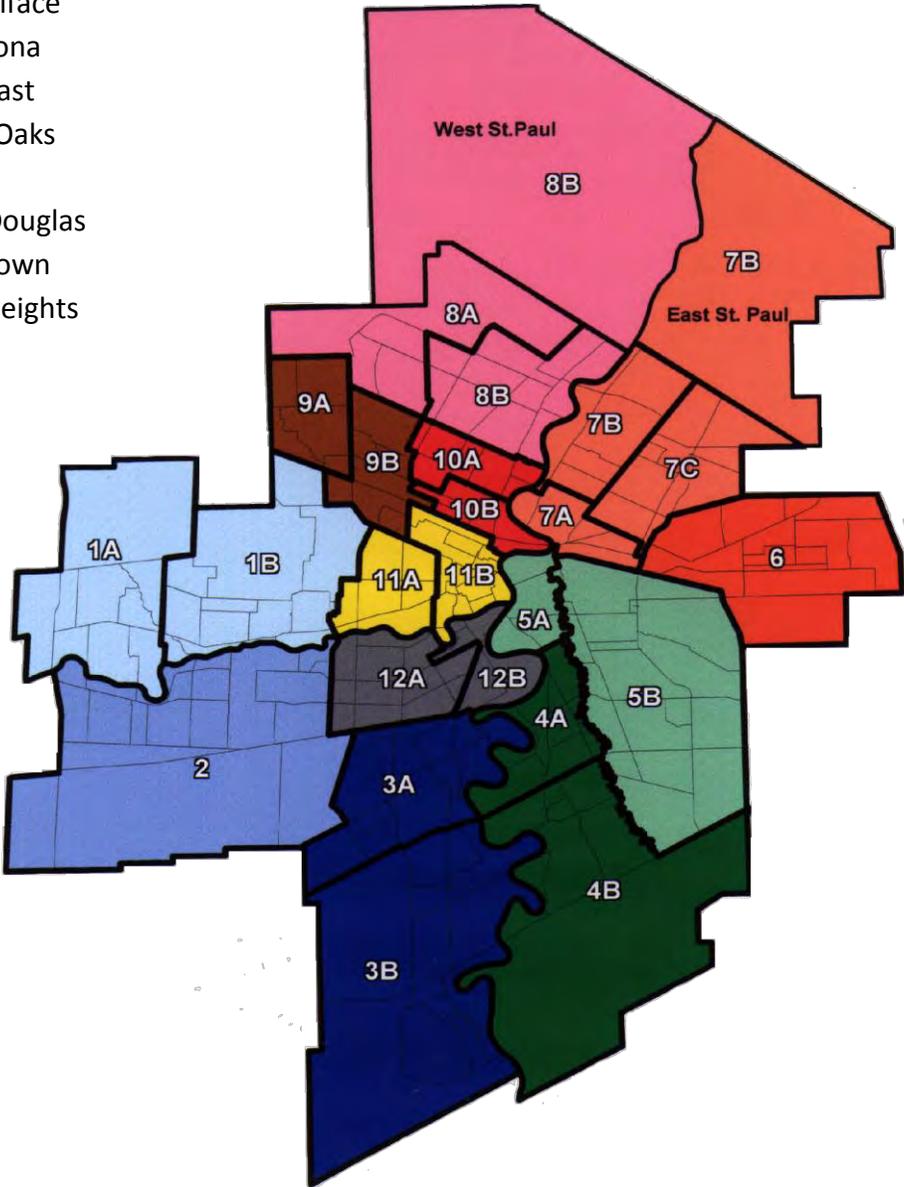
3. How regularly should the WRHA communicate health system performance to the public?
4. What communication approaches would you recommend that the WRHA use to share health system performance with the public?

This report will be presented by Co-Chairs of the Local Health Involvement Groups at the June all LHIGs meeting to the WRHA Board and members of Senior Leadership. This report will be presented to the Public Engagement Council, responsible for overseeing the strategic priority of “Fostering Public Engagement”. The report will also be circulated to all sites and programs.

# Appendix B

# Map of the Community Areas in the Winnipeg Health Region

- 1 St. James – Assiniboia
- 2 Assiniboine South
- 3 Fort Garry
- 4 St. Vital
- 5 St. Boniface
- 6 Transcona
- 7 River East
- 8 Seven Oaks
- 9 Inkster
- 10 Point Douglas
- 11 Downtown
- 12 River Heights



# Appendix C

Acknowledgements  
Members of the Local Health Involvement Groups  
Board Liaisons to the Groups  
Support Staff for Groups

## Members of Local Health Involvement Groups 2013-2014

### **Downtown/Point Douglas Group**

Todd Donahue

Kim Goodman

Blair Hamilton

Kelly Houle

Kendra Huynh Williams

Ian Montalbo

Christine Nijimbere

Harry Paine

Lissie Rappaport

Alberto Sangalang

Barbara Scheuneman

Doreen Szor

Carla Veldcamp

### **River East/Transcona Group**

Frank Fiorentino

Visaka Jackson

Michael Josefchuk

Darlene Karp

Nina Kostiuk

Jonathon Lloyd

Norman Meade

Sheron Miller

Maureen Peniuk

Judy Posthumus

Brian Reinisch

Brenda Paley

Sandra Sanders

Peter Veenendaal

### **River Heights/Fort Garry Group**

Loshame Arficho

Elissa-Marie Bittner

Heather Charles

Tom Dickie

Navsharn Dhaliwal

Derek Debrecen

Kevin Fontaine

Lorraine Klymko

Meryle Lewis

Natalie LoVetri

Amy Passmore

Amanda Rozyk

Karen Velthuys

Tim Wildman

### **Seven Oaks/Inkster Group**

Rawlee (Satch) Bachoo

Margaret Banasiak

Patrisha Bell

Phyllis Dana

Elsa Garcia

Louise Evaschesen

Joanna Flores

Elizabeth Kopp

Jocelyn Lantin

Chasity Premack

Terry Rear

John Sawchuk

Jagdeep Toor

### **St. Boniface/St. Vital Group**

Kristin Albo-Berkowits  
Mona Audet  
Sharon Cave  
Tim Church  
Laura Enns  
Robert Falcon-Ouellette  
Grace Gillis  
Jim Kolson

Kitty Leong  
Keith Lowe  
Ken Martin  
Lana McGimpsey  
Shirley Murray  
Elsie Nabroski  
John Wylie  
Derek Yakielashek

### **St. James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South Group**

Sangeet Bhatia  
Dayna Blackthorn  
Brian Clerihew  
Dennie Cormack  
Shawn Feely  
Heidi Fingas  
Wendy French  
Lionel Guerard

Ken Howell  
Angela Keno  
Diane Longeran  
Georgette Martin-Couture  
Elaine Nystrom  
Christine Portelance  
Angela Tessier

### **WRHA Board Liaisons** (non-voting members of Groups)

Elaine Bishop  
Sheila Carter and Doris Koop  
Bruce Thompson and Jeff Cook  
Stuart Greenfield  
Josée Lemoine and Rob Santos  
Joanne Biggs and Jean Friesen

Downtown/Point Douglas  
River East/Transcona  
River Heights/Fort Garry  
Seven Oaks/Inkster  
St. Boniface/St. Vital  
St. James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South

### **Community Area Directors** (non-voting members of Groups)

Louis Sorin  
Debra Vanance  
Dana Rudy  
Carmen Hemmersbach  
Susan Stratford  
Marlene Stern  
Pat Younger  
Kellie O'Rourke

Downtown/Point Douglas  
River East/Transcona  
River Heights/Fort Garry  
Seven Oaks/Inkster  
St. Boniface/St. Vital  
St. Boniface/St. Vital  
St. James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South  
St. James-Assiniboia/Assiniboine South

## **Support Staff for Groups**

Jeanette Edwards

Suzie Matenchuk

Sylvie Pelletier

Colleen Schneider

Regional Director, Primary Health Care and Chronic Disease

Manager, WRHA Volunteer Program

Administrative Assistant

Manager, Local Health Involvement Groups