

## BRIEFING NOTE: POPULATION HEALTH

### About Our Healthy Future

Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS) is doing long-range planning for our redevelopment over the next 20 years. The initiative is called **Our Healthy Future** and it requires a high degree of staff and community engagement. Redevelopment is a multi-year process for Ontario hospitals requiring approvals from the Local Health Integration Network and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

### A population health approach

The redevelopment of HHS facilities is just part of the way we will meet our communities' future health needs. A very important part of our vision is a model of care called **population health**. It takes into account the entire range of factors that determine a person's health – such things as income level, housing stability, education, social supports and more.

HHS will work in partnership with health and social service providers to identify and intervene with people most at risk of disease or preventable hospital stays. We will bring our services closer to the people who need them most, providing more care at community-based hubs and clinics.

This approach depends on a more coordinated system of care between the hospital and community-based providers, including primary care.

### An example of using a population health approach

Hamilton Health Sciences is currently leading two **Health Links** projects, which is a MOHLTC initiative. The focus is people who repeatedly visit the Emergency Department for non-emergent health issues because they have unmet needs. Health Links Coordinators visit patients in their homes and work with health and social services to help patients manage their health better. Early results show Health Links participants are experiencing better health outcomes while using fewer hospital resources.

## Why are we adopting this approach?

- The urban core population of Hamilton is unique in Ontario for its above average use of hospital resources. It has a high rate of poverty and related social challenges such as uncertain housing, low education and unemployment.
- People living in Hamilton's urban core often have multiple chronic conditions that make them significantly less healthy than people living in other parts of the greater Hamilton and West Niagara areas.
- Proactively intervening and helping at-risk people to better manage their health will reduce and even prevent hospitalization. In turn, this will reduce pressure on hospital bed capacity and improve service time. It will also reduce the transactional nature of hospital care.
- Hospitals around the world are adopting population health approaches as a way of managing the prevalence of multiple, chronic disease

## 3 POINTS to remember

- ▶ A population health approach will identify people at risk for chronic disease and preventable hospitalization and provide customized intervention
- ▶ Wherever possible, we will bring our services close to the people who need them most
- ▶ Hamilton Health Sciences will work closely with community-based health and social service providers in implementing a population health approach

## How can I learn more?

Please visit our OHF web site: [www.OurHealthyFuture.ca](http://www.OurHealthyFuture.ca). You can also email us with a question or comment at [ourhealthyfuture@hpsc.ca](mailto:ourhealthyfuture@hpsc.ca).