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Using news to build transparency

The Central East (CE) Local Health Integration Network (LHIIN) has turned to an independent web-based news service (Axiom News) to provide news stories on their community engagement and integrated health services plan.

“Using an independent source outside the LHIN to write news stories is part of the transparency process,” says James Meloche, senior director of planning, integration and community engagement for the CE LHIN.

The CE LHIN is one of 14 LHINs created by the provincial government to transform the health care system in Ontario. The LHINs have the power to integrate, plan and, beginning Apr. 1, 2007, fund their regional health systems.

The CE LHIN includes Haliburton, Peterborough and Northumberland Counties, City of Kawartha Lakes, Durham Region and Scarborough and is home to close to 1.5 million residents.

The stories produced by Axiom appear under the heading Newsroom on the [CE LHIN website](#).

The stories are part of the LHIN’s ongoing plan to involve the community in continuing, open, interactive discussions to identify local issues, priorities and opportunities for integration in the development of an Integrated Health Services Plan, says Meloche.

“By building transparency, we can ease people’s concerns,” Meloche says. “The LHIN is a collaborative effort and the newsroom fits into this by offering a window into the conversation between local health providers, residents and the LHIN.”

The newsroom also gives the LHIN an ear to the ground through stories about local providers, success stories, issues and opportunities, he said. It can also give a voice

to agencies that are not at the table, adding more good dialogue to the conversation and bringing it to the public.

Part of the LHIN's community engagement process is to establish nine regional zones, each with a Collaborative or advisory council, with seven to 12 members, to support and advise the LHIN on local health system performance, strategic priority setting, planning and evaluation.

News stories can facilitate open discussions among Collaboratives and between the Collaboratives and the LHIN, Meloche says.

In the past each health provider was concerned with its own interests, Meloche says. "We are trying to build a community of care and the stories are a part of this effort."