

'How would you change the health care system?'

The attendees at Mississauga Halton LHIN public consultation sessions are there, says John Magill, Chair, because they “feel passionately and want to make a difference.”

But a number of attendees, he says, are there to vent and tell “war stories” about their experience with the health care system.

The typical response of LHIN staff is to see this situation as an opportunity to encourage people to think about how they would re-design the health care system.

“We give people the opportunity to get their own stories off their chests, and then we ask them – how would you change it? And then, how would you go about changing it?”

This approach always produces positive results, says Magill.

“A community can be pretty aggressive when it wants to produce change – and if you can marshall that energy it can happen quickly. The public have to see themselves as owners of the health care system,” he says.

The key to a better relationship between the public, providers, and the LHINs, he says, is one of shared accountability.

“We have to demonstrate to the public tangible results – they have to be able to see and feel the changes. But the public has to pay attention to their duties – it’s their system, too.”

Providers, he adds, know where the problems currently exist. The key to change is to find ways to collaborate.

At a recent conference hosted by Metamorphosis, a collaborative begun by Ray Applebaum of [Peel Senior Link](#), Magill witnessed a strong “appetite” for change.

Metamorphosis has held three conferences in the LHIN, asking providers to comment on ways to encourage and conceive of new collaboration efforts. Similar to the approach at public consultation meetings, attendees were encouraged to consider themselves part of the process of change and the solution.

Providers at the meetings were asked two questions:

- 1) If you could leave here and create efficiencies how would you do it?
- 2) If you could leave here and partner how would you do it?

“It was a huge learning opportunity,” he says.

Providers in Mississauga have a history of innovation and integration, says Magill, which will make finding new opportunities for collaboration a natural process.

The transfer of Georgetown hospital to Halton Health Care Services in January 2006 is one example of integration designed to better serve health care consumers within their respective LHINs, he says. The transfer involved an exhaustive coordinated effort at multiple levels.

See Also:

[Stakeholder meetings to help generate input for better health care system](#)

LHINs are engaging community in diverse ways

[Hamilton LHIN to ask public to guide engagement process](#)

[LHINs to ‘democratize’ health care governance: LHIN chairman](#)