



Access to Health & Human Services for Niagara's Most Vulnerable People

Niagara Connects is leading a working group of Niagara-wide community partners in identifying key building blocks to build a centrally-dispatched access system for health and human services for **Niagara's most vulnerable people** - 'those in our community without the means or ability to access health and human services in a safe and acceptable way - such as those living in poverty, frail seniors, people with mental health and addictions challenges, limited mobility, hearing or visual impairment, or the need for life-sustaining equipment'.



Working Group Actions

scanned the environment for best practices

assembled the building blocks to construct a central access system

engaged diverse organizations in advancing this work

reviewed Warm Transfer central access model developed by Mental Health and Addictions Planning Group of Niagara-based LHIN-funded agencies

reviewed factors that affect ridership with vulnerable people

Working Group Partners include:

- Bridges CHC
- Canadian Cancer Society (Niagara)
- Canadian Red Cross
- CASON
- CMHA - Niagara
- FAST - Fort Erie
- HNHB CCAC
- HNHB LHIN
- Niagara Age-Friendly Community Network
- Niagara Falls CHC
- Niagara Health System
- Niagara Prosperity Initiative
- Niagara Region (Community Services, Integrated Community Planning, Transportation Services)
- Quest CHC
- Welland Community Roundtable on Poverty (CRoP),
- YWCA Niagara Region

October 2012

10 Niagara organization representatives gather to explore ways to collectively move forward to achieve safe, efficient, accessible transportation for vulnerable Niagara residents seeking human services

February 2013

15 organization representatives form Getting There Working Group, with a common agenda to identify and gather building blocks for a central access model

April 2013

Working Group gathers to analyze relevant models (eg. Easy Ride - Huron-Perth) informed by the lens of the 12 Living in Niagara Sectors

October 2013

Working Group identifies Niagara agencies that serve vulnerable people; reviews factors affecting ridership; discusses business model

September 2013

Working Group Subcommittee identifies existing Niagara assets and how they could combine for a central access system: Trapeze Novus software/ central dispatch technology, purchased by Red Cross Canada with funding support from HNHB LHIN; Service provider vehicles/transit systems/volunteers/ taxis; Niagara agencies that serve vulnerable people for health and human services

July 2013

Working Group assembles foundational building blocks for Niagara model: (i) central dispatch technology; (ii) fleet/vehicles; (iii) engaged agencies; work informed by relevant community initiatives (eg. Warm Transfer Mental Health & Addictions central access model and FAST - Fort Erie accessible transit model.)

'Getting There' model 3 key elements:

- 1. Central Dispatch Technology**
Eg. Canadian Red Cross has purchased Trapeze Novus software with funding assistance from the HNHB LHIN
- 2. Vehicle Fleet** - Leveraging already-existing Niagara community and transit assets:
- 3. Engaged Agencies and Points of Service** - with a common denominator of "Access to Services for Vulnerable People", across the 12 Living in Niagara quality of life Sectors.

Agency Engagement Phase

December 2013 - Strategy developed to engage at least 60 Niagara agencies serving vulnerable people in gathering to discuss the idea of building a central access model for Niagara

February 2014 - Agenda drafted for a Spring 2014 Niagara-wide "Getting There" forum

March 2014 - Review of lessons learned about access and central dispatch by the Canadian Cancer Society in Niagara

May 2014

Niagara-wide Forum held for Executive Directors of agencies serving vulnerable people in Niagara, to review Getting There building blocks and describe what qualities a centrally-dispatched access model for Niagara could have