

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

Overview and Application Process

DESCRIPTION

Partnerships for Service Improvement (PSI) is a voluntary, TC LHIN initiative aimed to stimulate improvements in system efficiency and service quality by encouraging, supporting, and profiling leading practices in integration initiatives between HSPs.

The first phase of PSI is being launched in February 2009 with a call for applications for Demonstration Projects. The TC LHIN intends to endorse four to six Demonstration Projects of leading practices in this initial phase of PSI.

SCOPE

PSI is supporting integration initiatives between back office functions (e.g. accounting, payroll, information technology) and clinical support functions (e.g. pharmacy, medical imaging, laboratories, infection control).

THE PROCESS AND MILESTONES

February 4, 2009	Launch of PSI and announcement of the first Demonstration Project: An integration of legal services and selected human resource services between a group of providers that are part of the East Toronto Solutions Collaborative.
February 23, 2009	Information and Partnering Meeting. Must be attended by all health service providers interested in applying to be part of one of the initial PSI Demonstration Projects.
February 27, 2009	Any follow-up clarification arising from the Information and Partnering meeting will be circulated to all HSPs.
March 20, 2009	Application deadline for Demonstration Projects
April 2009	Announcement of initial Demonstration Projects

Partnerships for Service Improvement (PSI) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is the purpose of this initiative?

Partnerships for Service Improvement (PSI) arises from the work of the Toronto Central LHIN (TC LHIN) Back Office Integration Council whose work concluded in late 2008. PSI is a voluntary, TC LHIN initiative aimed at stimulating improvements in system efficiency and service quality by encouraging, supporting, and profiling leading practices in integration initiatives between HSPs. PSI will focus on encouraging Demonstration Projects that engage committed organizations in integrating specific back office or clinical support services. The overall intention of this initiative is to create models that can be adopted or built upon for continued integration and service improvements between other organizations.

What and when is the first phase of PSI?

The first phase of PSI is being launched in Winter 2009 with a call for applications for Demonstration Projects. The TC LHIN intends to endorse four to six demonstration projects in this initial phase of PSI. [The deadline for Demonstration Project Applications is Friday, March 20, 2009.](#)

What functions / services are within scope of the Partnerships for Service Improvements initiative?

PSI is supporting integration initiatives among back office functions (e.g. accounting, payroll, information technology) and clinical support functions (e.g. pharmacy, medical imaging, laboratories). See Appendix 1 for examples of the kinds of functions and services that could be considered for PSI demonstration projects.

Do all partners have to be HSPs from the TC LHIN?

Applications may include HSPs from other LHINs.

What about shared service organizations or organizations that are not HSPs?

Proposals may include existing shared service organizations, private sector companies, or new shared service organizations that are being proposed by a group of HSPs.

Is there a minimum number of partners?

The minimum number of partners is two but preference will be given to demonstration projects that include three or more partners. Each proposal will be judged on its own merit. There is no maximum number of partners. Applications from a single organization (e.g. one HSP or an external service provider) that are proposing a concept that could be offered to multiple HSPs will not be considered. Applications must include two or more TC LHIN HSPs who are at the table and committed to the proposed partnership.

Our organizations are interested in exploring back office (and/or clinical support service) integration, but not sure we are ready to commit. Is PSI for us?

The PSI initiative is being designed with a strong bias for action, which by definition requires a serious commitment on the part of all partners to be prepared to implement the business plan that is developed. Organizations that are pondering integration but not fully committed may be best served by observing the outcomes of the demonstration projects and then revisiting the merits of integration and their readiness to make this a priority.

Our organization is interested. How do we find partners?

Evidence shows that partnerships that build on existing relationships are most successful. Therefore, HSPs should begin by looking to other HSPs with which they are already working with in some way. HSPs are encouraged to use existing networks in their exploration for partners with mutual interests. We are also designing our Feb 23rd Information and Partnering Meeting to provide a forum in which HSPs can express and explore mutual interests.

What are the criteria for choosing Demonstration Projects?

Final criteria will be published within a week of the Information and Partnering Meeting. See Appendix 2 for a preliminary outline of the criteria. The application form has been structured to incorporate the multiple considerations behind these dimensions of benefits, system contribution, implementation effort, and partner commitment. In brief, criteria will revolve around:

- Anticipated service benefits
- Potential contribution of the partnership to the broader system (i.e. replicability, expandability, learning opportunity)
- Implementation effort required
- Readiness and commitment of the partners to pursue this partnership opportunity.

What is the leadership structure for the Partnerships for Service Improvement? Who is driving it? Who is making decisions?

Rob Devitt, CEO of Toronto East General Hospital and Brigitte Witkowski, Executive Director of Mainstay Housing, are co-chairing this initiative with Ene Underwood as the executive lead for the TC LHIN. Toronto East General Hospital has been asked to administer and coordinate the PSI initiative on behalf of the TC LHIN. TEGH and Mainstay Housing will not be involved in the selection of demonstration projects and are not being excluded from applying to be part of a demonstration project.

A selection panel is being established that will apply the criteria and choose the demonstration projects. This panel will include:

- A TC LHIN senior executive
- A representative of the Ontario Hospital Association
- A representative from the Toronto Community Foundation
- A representative from the Ontario BPS Supply Chain Secretariat

Once demonstration projects are identified, a Steering Committee will be established to oversee the demonstration projects, to ensure that maximum system learning and benefit is achieved, and to set the course for future phases of the Partnerships for Service Improvement initiative.

Why was the Solutions legal /HR collaboration chosen as the first Demonstration Project?

The Solutions project was initiated during the course of the Back Office Integration Council’s work and culminated in the completion of a business plan that was reviewed by the Council. As a result of this foundational work, the Solutions group already has a business plan, which is ready to begin implementation. As a model involving both hospital and community HSPs it offers significant potential insights. Endorsing this project provides immediate action for the PSI initiative while advancing a model from which we hope many other HSPs will be able to draw insights.

What is the deliverable of Demonstration Projects? A business plan? A fully implemented partnership?

The answer will depend on the partnership. The primary objective of PSI is to enable organizations to come together to seriously explore and prepare for implementing service partnerships. The outcome of these Demonstration Projects will be a business plan that reflects a comprehensive feasibility analysis, which includes an outline of costs, benefits, and risks, and a proposed implementation plan. See Appendix 3 for a general outline of a business plan.

The PSI initiative will also consider partnerships that have already completed business plans and are now moving into full implementation or are in the expansion phase.

Is funding available for the development of business plans?

The TC LHIN has a small amount of funding that may be made available to Demonstration Projects to support the development of a partnership business plan and implementation plan. These decisions will be made based on merit and on need. Partnerships should not assume that full funding will be available from the TC LHIN.

Is funding available to support one-time costs of implementation?

The TC LHIN recognizes that some integration initiatives will require significant one-time costs for implementation. While no funding is currently designated to support one-time costs, the TC LHIN is open to supporting project partnerships in exploring funding sources that can off-set one-time costs.

Appendix 1

**Examples of the Types of Services and Functions
for PSI demonstration projects**

Back Office Integration	Clinical Support Services
Communications	Bio-Medical Engineering
Finance	Central Sterilizing
Food Services	Clinical Laboratories
Facilities Management	Diagnostic Imaging
Human Resource Management	Infection Control
Information Services/Information Technology	Pharmacy
Infection Control	
Laundry Services	
Legal Services	
Materials Management	
Payroll & Benefits Administration	
Planning/Project Management	
Translation/Interpretation Services	
Warehousing & Distribution	

Appendix 2

Preliminary Selection Criteria

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

- Service improvement benefits
- Financial benefits (savings, cost avoidance)

SYSTEM CONTRIBUTION

- Sustainability. Initiative must have clear potential to become a leading practice within the TC-LHIN and a model for broader adoption.
- Replicability (is this a model that could be replicated for other providers in the TC LHIN?)
- Expandability (is this a model that other HSPs could join once it is up and running?)
- Level of broader interest in the LHIN in this kind of service partnership

IMPLEMENTATION, COMPLEXITY & RISK

- Estimated timeframe to realize full benefits
- Relationships between partners
- Existence of a champion(s)
- Existence of available expertise and resources to support the project
- Synergies with existing initiatives among the partners or elsewhere in the LHIN
- One-time implementation costs
- Known models to build on (i.e. can draw on insights from similar model in another jurisdiction)
- Implementation complexity

PARTNER COMMITMENT

- Commitment of partners to act – not just explore
- Commitment of partners to share learnings and insights from the project

Note that these criteria will be applied to individual Demonstration Project proposals to rank overall proposals. Final decisions on demonstration projects will also factor in the need to have a cross-section of projects that collectively will contribute the most insights to HSPs in the overall TC LHIN.

Appendix 3

Business Plan Outline

This following template sets out the type of information that would typically be included in a business plan. It is intended to serve only as a guide in the development of a business plan narrative. On selecting the PSI demonstration projects, the TC LHIN will undertake further discussions with the demonstration project partners to reach agreement on the kind of deliverable that should be the outcome of the demonstration project.

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary

This section (which should be written last) contains a clear and concise outline of the proposal, including the rationale for proceeding with your recommended option. It should be able to stand alone as a logical, clear, and concise summary of the document highlighting key issues of which the reader should be aware.

2. Background & Situation Analysis/Current State

This section provides the reader with an introduction to the subject of the business case. It describes the history and current state of affairs giving rise to or relating to the general business problem or opportunity that is the subject of the business plan.

3. Project Outcome/Future State

This section provides the reader with a clear definition of the envisioned future state and business objectives. Consider what the project will accomplish (objective), what the project will and will not include (scope), and what are the expected results (outcomes).

4. Cost/Benefit Analysis

This section illustrates the value of the project with overall project economics (ROI). It contains a description of the associated implementation costs and the related qualitative and quantitative benefits the project will attain.

5. Implementation Strategy

This section provides the reader with an explanation of how you intend to put into practice what you have planned. It defines, among other things: how the project will be organized, what systems will be used, and what performance measures will be put into place in order to measure the success of the operation. It provides an overview of the project activities, timelines and milestones.

6. Acceptance & Sign Off

This section identifies the decision making body that approves the project.

7. Appendices