

**North Simcoe Muskoka Local Health Integration Network (NSM LHIN)
Emergency Room/Alternate Level of Care (ER/ALC) Steering Committee**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

The initial purpose of the ER/ALC Steering Committee is to develop the NSM LHIN ER/ALC strategy in accordance with the NSM ER/ALC Project Charter, and to define and develop the systems structure needed within NSM to support the ER/ALC strategy. This is an exciting opportunity to develop a key strategy within the NSM LHIN area with a focus to improve system capacity and performance, improve patient/client satisfaction and health outcomes, and improve coordination of services to provide the right care in the right place at the right time, across the NSM LHIN. The Steering Committee will define the operational Committee structure needed to support the ER/ALC strategy moving forward.

The ER/ALC Steering Committee will be comprised of key decision makers who will use a systems level perspective to coordinate ER/ALC activities, indicators and outcomes across the NSM LHIN through focused direction and leadership. The ultimate goals are to reduce ER demand, increase ER capacity and performance through reduced length of stay, and improve bed utilization by reducing the percentage of ALC days and length of stay to within performance targets across the NSM LHIN.

Mandate

Building on the NSM LHIN ER/ALC 2009/10 Overarching Plan, the Committee will develop a NSM LHIN-wide strategy and action plan to address ER/ALC. The project will identify strategies which are direct and have an immediate impact on clients already in ER or ALC patients; diversion strategies which support medium term interventions, such as high risk populations presenting in ER if supports/services are not provided or maintained; and prevention/wellness strategies which are long term focusing on low to medium risk populations. The Committee will develop a framework and criteria for monitoring performance data and metrics related to ER/ALC. Working groups or interdependencies with other groups will be established. The Committee will contribute to the NSM LHIN Integrated Health Service Plan through community engagement. The Committee will also identify how the ER/ALC strategy will continue in the long term once the initial project phase is completed.

Guiding Principles

In developing ER/ALC strategies and providing advice to the NSM LHIN, the ER/ALC Steering Committee will need to consider the following guiding principles as they relate to the provincial and NSM LHIN activities:

- Fulfilling the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's ER/ALC, Wait Time, and Access strategies;
- Improving access to the right care in the right place at the right time; and
- Improving patient/client satisfaction and health outcomes.

Accountability and Reporting

The ER/ALC Steering Committee is advisory to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the NSM LHIN and is accountable for developing an ER/ALC Strategy for NSM. The Committee Chair will report on behalf of the Committee to the CEO at least quarterly regarding advice on key strategies and their implementation and other matters as raised by the NSM LHIN. Steering Committee Members will be responsible to report back to their organization and the sector or committee they represent, as well as bring information to the Steering Committee on behalf of their organization and the sector or committee they represent. The Committee will implement communication mechanisms to report to the public, such as a NSM LHIN website posting of the Quarterly Stocktake Report on ER/ALC performance and activities. A brief written summary of the work of the project and updates will be circulated quarterly by the NSM LHIN to participating agencies and through the NSM LHIN newsletter.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the ER/ALC Steering Committee is an advisory body to the LHIN; the Committee is not a decision-making body. The Committee reports to the CEO. The NSM LHIN will Chair the meetings.

Role of Chair

- Receives direction from the NSM LHIN CEO and Committee Members to determine priorities for the Committee.
- With input from the Committee Members, sets agendas for meetings based on identified priorities.
- Ensures clear communication among the Committee Members and the NSM LHIN to ensure provincial and NSM LHIN priorities are addressed.
- Determines how to organize the Committee to ensure it is responsive and effective, including establishing working groups if required.
- Chairs Committee meetings, ensuring an opportunity for productive participative dialogue from all members of the Committee.
- Ensures a summary of discussions and recommendations are taken and that meeting notes are distributed to Committee Members and within the NSM LHIN.
- Synthesizes advice of Committee Members as it relates to specific priorities raised by the NSM LHIN and meets with the NSM LHIN CEO to discuss. May be required to meet with the Board of Directors from time to time.

Role of Members

- Brings their expertise and leadership in support of the Committee's mandate and priority areas as established in the Project Charter and other issues as determined by the NSM LHIN.
- Conveys local health issues and needs that may emerge from the community as they relate to ER/ALC and other issues as determined by the NSM LHIN.
- Participates actively and constructively in the work of the Committee and provides leadership to working groups that may be created.
- Operates in a way that demonstrates inclusiveness and respect for diversity of opinions.
- Uses an evidence-based approach to inform advice.
- Provides advice as appropriate and as requested to other NSM LHIN committees/forums.

- Acts as liaison by reporting back to their organization and the sector or committee they represent, as well as bringing information to the Steering Committee on behalf of their organization and the sector or committee they represent.
- Provides key decision-making for their organization.
- Commits to having regular attendance or sending an Alternate representative with key decision-making authority for their organization, while fulfilling the full Committee Member role. If an Alternate attends more than three meetings, Committee Member status will be reevaluated.
- Identify a data advisor/decision support representative as a liaison for institution/organization specific data required to support the project. This project will also link with existing data working groups to avoid duplication.

Role of NSM LHIN CEO

The CEO or delegate will regularly report to the Board of Directors on the work of the ER/ALC Steering Committee.

Role of NSM LHIN Staff

- The ER/ALC Performance Lead or delegate will coordinate the ongoing work of the Committee and provide facilitation to ensure a fulsome participation and achievement of meeting its goals.
- Provide administrative support to the Committee to ensure that meeting logistics are organized and, through the provision of tools, monitor and record minutes of the Committee.
- Provide a data advisor/decision support coordinator.
- Provide communication support.

Duration of Term

It is estimated that the main work of the project will be completed within one year. The Steering Committee will coordinate and organize ER/ALC action plans, communication, information flow, data collection, performance evaluation, and committee reporting streams. After one year, it is anticipated that this project will transition into an ongoing ER/ALC Steering Committee designed to coordinate the NSM LHIN work on ER/ALC.

Committee Membership

Members will include key decision makers from NSM LHIN funded health care organizations ensuring a broad representation from across the NSM LHIN geographic planning areas and senior leadership from the NSM LHIN. Members may represent multiple organizations, sectors and/or committees in order to link with current ER/ALC structures. Members may also include other community partners with linkages to the ER/ALC project. Ad hoc members or guests will be invited to provide information or expert advice to the project team as required. Core membership will be limited to 16 members. Committee Members will be selected by the NSM LHIN.

An Alternate representative with key decision-making authority may be selected to fill the full Committee Member role periodically. If an Alternate attends more than three meetings, Committee Member status will be reevaluated.

The core membership will include representatives from:

- Senior Director, Planning, Integration and Community Engagement, NSM LHIN (Chair)
- ER/ALC Performance Lead, NSM LHIN
- Addictions and Mental Health
- Community Health Centre
- Community Support Services
- Each Hospital
- Emergency Department Physician Lead (Hospitals)
- Emergency Medical Services
- Family Health Team
- Housing sector (i.e., affordable, non-profit, supportive, retirement living)
- Long-Term Care Homes
- Municipal sector
- North Simcoe Muskoka Community Care Access Centre
- North Simcoe Muskoka Chiefs of Staff Committee (Hospitals)
- Seniors' Health Regional Action Group

Frequency of Meetings

The ER/ALC Steering Committee will meet at least monthly and additionally as deemed necessary by consensus of the Committee Members or at the call of the Chair.

Meeting Attendance

Effective operation of the Committee will require commitment from its members. Meetings shall proceed as scheduled, regardless of the absence of any Committee Members or Alternates in attendance. Committee Members who are unable to attend may select an Alternate representative who must have key decision-making authority for their organization and fulfill all roles of the Committee Member. ER/ALC Steering Committee Members who cannot attend meetings are to advise the NSM LHIN ER/ALC Performance Lead in advance, and inform them of their Alternate who will attend. Attempts shall be made to make provisions for teleconferencing and/or videoconferencing for those unable to attend in person.

Remuneration

The ER/ALC Steering Committee is a volunteer Committee and members will not be compensated for their role on the Committee. Members will be responsible for their own travel and other expenses through their respective organization.

Non-Disclosure

Each Committee Member will be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement indicating their understanding of the roles and responsibilities with respect to the handling of information shared and received as a member of the Committee.