

# Mount Waddington Health System Stabilization Local Working Group

## Context and Issues

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*Draft v4 (6 December 2011)- NB. It is expected that this document will be revised throughout the course of the LWG's work*

***The goal of the Mount Waddington Health System Stabilization Local Working Group (LWG) is to develop solutions that will enable a sustainable health system in the Mount Waddington region – one that supports long-term, predictable and culturally-safe health care for its patients and a stable and healthy environment for its staff and physicians.***

As the LWG approaches its task, it is important to set the context for its work and define the priority issues that must be addressed to advance the LWG's mandate and goal.

The stabilization of the Mount Waddington's Health system must recognize that there are several key assets and strengths in the current system that must be persevered and leveraged to help build workable solutions for a sustainable future. These include:

- Local solutions that have been found in some parts of the region that might be transferrable to other parts.
- Committed physicians and health care workers that have stayed in and with their communities throughout significant and complex change in the region over the past several years.
- Dedicated, creative and flexible care providers that know how to work together in the interest of their patients
- A diverse group of professions and interests that recognize the need for regional solutions for system sustainability and have volunteered to come to the LWG table to work collaboratively to find these solutions
- Strong, specific initiatives that are working in the region – including but not limited to, diabetic nurse educator programs and dietician services.

The LWG has reviewed and grouped the key issues that it feels must be tackled to develop solutions that advance its goal. The LWG recognizes that these issues are highly inter-dependent and cannot be dealt with in isolation. At the same time, it is felt that the grouping of issues and associated solutions helps set priorities for action and provides the core building blocks to support a sustainable system. These issues are as follows:

**1. Stabilizing Physician availability and recruitment and retention – including:**

- Predictable scheduling for full physician coverage in ERs
- Appropriate primary health service – coverage and delivery
- Organization and support of practice – i.e. Division of Family practice; administrative support

- Recruitment and retention challenges associated with the region – recognizing the provincial, national and global competition for talent
  - Shortage of Medical Residents
  - Efficient facilities for practice
  - Morale and burn-out issues
- 2. Stabilizing Multi-disciplined care teams (Acute services) and access to Primary Care – including:**
- Nurse Practitioners operating at full scope of practice
  - Nursing staff – recruitment, retention, staffing levels, conditions of work
  - Lab/Diagnostic staff – recruitment, staffing levels
  - Mental Health and Addiction services
  - Ambulance services
  - Availability of primary care and staffing levels – particularly in remote communities
  - Facilities
  - Under-resourced community programs and services
  - Morale and burn-out issues
- 3. Public Education – including:**
- Primary health care
  - Service delivery – through GPs in practices rather than in ERs
  - Promoting better understanding how the regional care system works and setting expectations realistic accordingly
  - Change management and communications (through many channels)
- 4. Long-range planning – including:**
- Lack of a collaborative community plan for health system stabilization in the region
  - Community role and support in providing a strong, local environment to attract medical professionals and retain them.