

**Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network**  
**BRIEFING NOTE**  
**February 2015**

**TOPIC: Community Hubs**

**PURPOSE:** To provide an overview and status update of the Toronto Central LHIN's vision for bringing primary care and community services to high needs neighborhoods.

**Background**

Among the 72 neighborhoods that make up the geography of the Toronto Central LHIN, there are several that have been identified as considerably underserved for the populations contained within. Many factors including geographic isolation, lack of transportation, rapid growth, poverty and cultural barriers contribute to poor access to primary care and community services.

The Toronto Central LHIN is developing opportunities for increased community capacity through the introduction of community hubs designed to deliver primary care and community services closer to residents in underserved geographies. The LHIN's vision includes the use of a shared space in which an array of programs will be delivered by multiple providers. Funding for community capital has been identified as a key enabler for advancing the goal of bringing care closer to home in these underserved neighborhoods.

**Community Capital: A Key Enabler**

Our plan for bringing health and community services into one space is designed with the needs of the patients in mind. It is also an economically responsible and sustainable model. Presently, if a provider wants to do a capital acquisition or expansion, they do so independently. Often cost constraints drive site selection to spaces that are not optimal for access, service delivery or ongoing stability (uncertain lease conditions).

There are opportunities for more strategic allocation and use of space to maximize the use of scarce land assets. This can be enabled by:

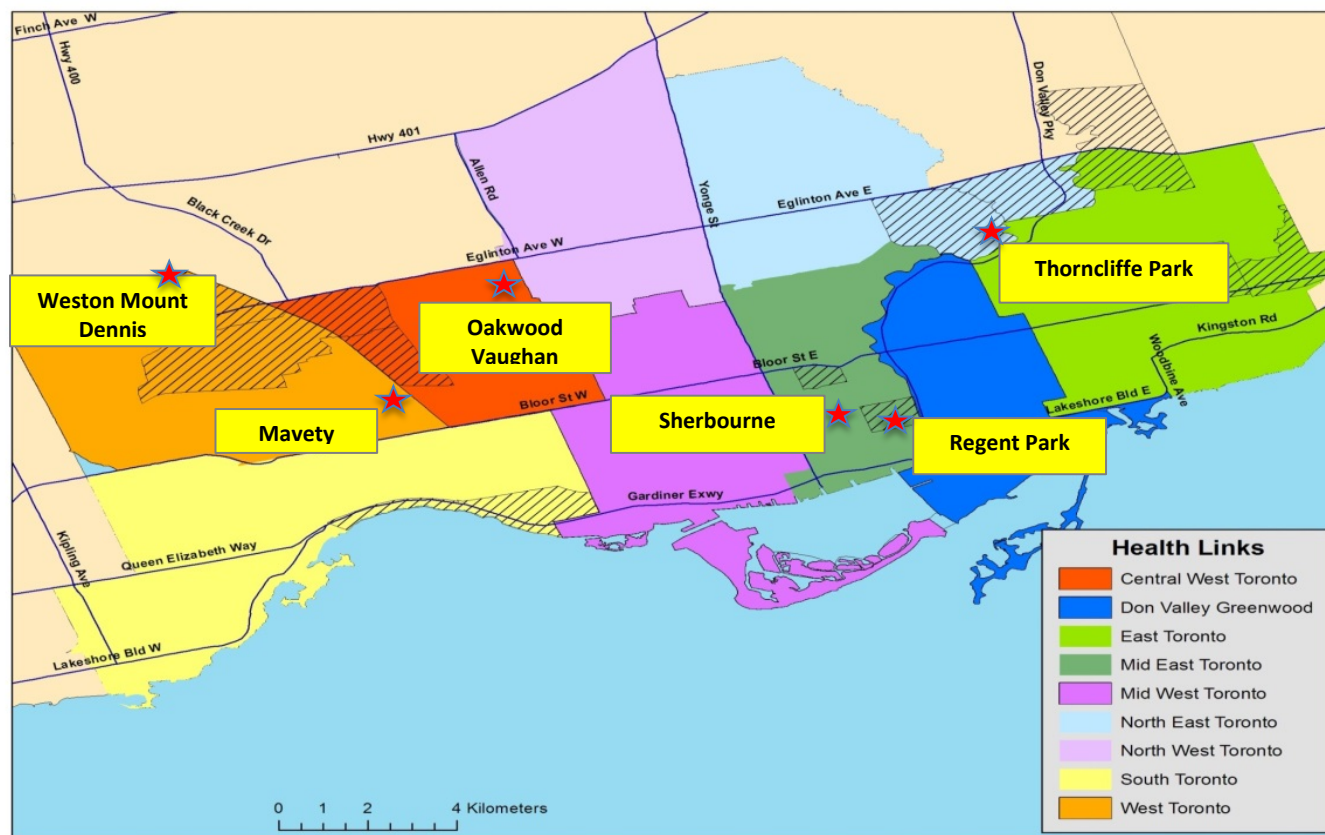
- optimizing the use of targeted community space
- aligning community capital plans with LHIN system level plans and priorities
- creating new models for community service delivery, such as community hubs

**Community Hubs**

Building on the experience of community hub development including the Community Corner in St. James Town, the hub models that are being developed by the LHIN are a unique blend of integrated community programs and flexible capital design. The hubs are intended to

be multi-purposed and adaptable, used by multiple providers to deliver a basket of services that are tailored and adapted over time to meet the changing needs of clients and the sub-LHIN level community. Design features and benefits include:

- Shared space using a hoteling concept, with scheduling of various programs offered by different providers to maximize the use of space and to provide extended hours of service
- Provision of Primary Health Care and community based services on-site
- Flexible design, multi-purpose, multi-size areas for programs
- Space designed for current community needs and readily adaptable as community needs changes warranting corresponding program and service changes
- Reduces stigmatization associated with some single purpose facilities (e.g. mental health or addictions services) through provision services in a multiple program setting
- Improves patient and client experience through a seamless front-end that:
  - supports coordinated access to on-site services through centralized intake and scheduling
  - reduces the risk of multiple and duplicative assessments
  - improves hand-offs of clients across programs and providers
  - improves access to multiple services in one location
  - reduces the need for multiple visits to access services



The TC LHIN is planning and implementing these hubs and new models of community based service delivery in targeted high priority neighbourhoods across the City. An overview of these priority areas and current status are outlined in the adjacent figure.