

The Niagara Ontario Health Team-Équipe Santé Ontario Niagara (NOHT-ÉSON) is a steadily growing network of more than 45 health care providers, social service agencies, educational institutions and patient/client and family/caregiver representatives. We are committed to working as one coordinated team to provide exceptional service, support and care to you, no matter when or where you need it, now and for our future generations.



EXPANDING PRIMARY CARE ACCESS IN NIAGARA REGION: \$2.1M INVESTMENT ANNOUNCED

In a concerted effort to address the critical issue of primary care accessibility for people who do not have a doctor or nurse practitioner, the **NOHT-ÉSON has received funding from the Government of Ontario for an initiative aimed at connecting thousands of individuals to regular primary care services.**

Developed in collaboration with NOHT-ÉSON partners and members, the model will target regions within Niagara, including St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Welland, Fort Erie, and Port Colborne, where there are significant pockets of people who are unattached.

Recent data from the Niagara Region reveals alarming statistics, indicating that between 111,000 and 117,000 individuals within the NOHT-ÉSON's catchment area lack access to primary care, representing approximately 25% to 33% of the population.

To address this pressing issue, the NOHT-ÉSON has received \$2.1 million from the Province to facilitate the implementation of a comprehensive strategy. This investment will primarily focus on leveraging the existing infrastructure of four Community Health Centres (CHCs), two Family Health Teams (FHTs), and other primary care organizations within the region to connect approximately 7,600 unattached people to primary care services.

Bridges Community Health Centre has been named as the lead organization on this initiative, and other participating primary care organizations include **Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara, Niagara Falls Community Health Centre, Niagara Medical Group Family Health Team, Niagara North Family Health Team, Quest Community Health Centre, and Regional Essential Access to Connected Healthcare (REACH) Niagara.**

"Our local Ontario Health Team is committed to ensuring timely and equitable access to primary care, and this investment promises to do so for a broader number of people, particularly individuals with significant health and social needs," said Sabrina Piluso, the NOHT-ÉSON's Director of Planning.

"Our team is eager to develop those pathways to primary care for Niagara residents within their local communities."

Key components of the initiative involve the hiring of 6 to 8 new nurse practitioners and 5 to 9 allied health professionals, namely mental health and addiction support positions. The additional staffing will enable the delivery of additional hours of direct patient care, effectively reducing waitlists for general clinic services and enhancing mental health and addiction supports across the participating FHTs and CHCs.

The NOHT-ÉSON and its partners and members are appreciative of the substantial funding commitment from the Ministry of Health and Ontario Health to bolster community primary care in the Niagara region.

Want to learn more? Read the St. Catharines Standard's article, **Province invests \$2.1M for Niagara health teams (February 26, 2024).**



CONNECTED CARE

WINTER 2024



ConnectMyHealth is a digital health solution that provides you with an online, single access channel to view your health records from participating hospitals in Ontario Health West Region, including Niagara Health's five sites and Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre in St. Catharines.

ConnectMyHealth is different than other patient portals because it combines various types of health records created at hospitals you've been to in the Ontario Health West Region into one, consolidated view. Additional data sources, like community-based laboratories and radiology clinics, are expected to be added in the near future. ConnectMyHealth can be an ideal complement to in-person or virtual visits with your care providers by providing you easy access to your hospital records, and to additional functionality you may have through your local hospital, like appointment scheduling.

Other key features of ConnectMyHealth include:

- **New Results Alerts:** Subscribe to be notified by email when you've got new results available to view in ConnectMyHealth from select hospitals in Ontario Health West Region; your New Results page displays first when you log in, for quick and easy viewing
- **Patient Dashboard:** Customize your patient dashboard view by organizing the types of health records (modules) that are most important to you
- **Patient Visits Timeline:** View your upcoming scheduled hospital appointments, where available
- Functionality to 'share your records' with your family and care partners who are also ConnectMyHealth users is expected to be added in the near future.

ConnectMyHealth can be used on desktop and mobile devices from within Canada, and there's no cost to use it. ConnectMyHealth is a web-based tool, so there is no app to download to access your account on an ongoing basis. For added security, Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) is required at each login to ConnectMyHealth, which is available via SMS Text or by using an authenticator app such as Google Authenticator or Twilio Authy. Instructions to set up MFA are available that describe how to complete this part of your account activation.

ConnectMyHealth is operated by the **HITS eHealth Office at Hamilton Health Sciences**, is funded by **Ontario Health**, and is being made available to patients in **Ontario Health West Region** in collaboration with local Ontario Health Teams. The HITS eHealth Office operates the ConnectMyHealth Program Office.

Meet Mary! She's taking charge of her health journey with ConnectMyHealth! By giving patients like Mary access to their medical info, they have the power in THEIR hands. Click [here](#) to learn more about her story.



Check out ConnectMyHealth now! - <https://info.connectmyhealth.ca>



ÉQUIPE SANTÉ ONTARIO
NIAGARA
ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM

CONNECTED CARE

WINTER 2024



HEALTH811: CONNECT TO FREE HEALTH INFORMATION AND SERVICES, 24/7

Ontarians can now access Health811, a free, secure and confidential service

to receive health advice from a registered nurse, locate local health services, and find trusted health information. Ontarians can call 811 (TTY: 1-866-797-0007), chat online or access resources online at ontario.ca/health811.

Previously known as Health Connect Ontario, which replaced Telehealth Ontario, Health811 can also help Ontarians to find a family doctor or nurse practitioner accepting new patients, offer support to quit smoking and/or a referral for vaping cessation services, nutrition counselling by a registered dietitian, breastfeeding assistance, colorectal cancer screening and refugee health supports all continue to operate.

FIT kits are available through Health811 for eligible Ontarians. A FIT kit can only be requested via phone.

The Health811 service, including the phone line, online chat feature and website, is available in English and French. Translation support is also available in over 200 languages, including Indigenous languages such as Cree and Inuktitut, through Health811's phone service.

Health811 is for non-urgent health care information, advice and health service referrals. This service is not a substitute for 911, which should still be used for a medical emergency. Health811 is also not a substitute for regular touchpoints with a health care provider.

On the Health811 website, Ontarians can:

- Use the online chat feature to talk with a registered nurse, request assistance locating health services and ask general health questions.
- Check their symptoms with the online symptom assessment tool.

- Use the online health services directory to search for health services or health providers by keyword, location and specific search filters.
- Review content about common health concerns and learn more about Health811's features.

Click [here](https://ontario.ca/health811) to visit the Health811 website.

Health811 Free health advice from a registered nurse

Call 811 or chat online,
ontario.ca/health811

TTY: 1-866-797-0007



Ontario  Health811

noht-eson.ca  

CONNECTED CARE

WINTER 2024



MAINTAINING A HEALTHY BRAIN FOCUS WITH LUCI

People who wish to reduce the risk of developing dementia may want to explore **Luci**, a free program designed to promote healthy lifestyle habits that support brain health.

In addition to a library of educational content that is accessible to all, the Luci program provides access to an online program focused on three main areas that are recognized to have a protective effect on cognitive health: healthy eating, physical activity, and intellectual stimulation.

When taking part in this program, participants obtain an overview of their lifestyle habits, set personal goals, and receive the support of a healthy lifestyle advisor.

Luci is free for all users, with or without an account.

To participate in the program, the following criteria must be met:

- Be over 18 years old.
- Individuals that have been diagnosed with a cognitive disorder are not eligible to participate in the program.

Luci was not specifically designed for people living with a cognitive disorder such as Alzheimer's disease.

However, some of the tools in the application are available to everyone (e.g., the library, which includes numerous articles on brain health and healthy lifestyle habits).

Luci's healthy lifestyle advisors are health professionals who are trained to help you achieve your goals in three areas known to have a protective effect on the brain: healthy eating, physical activity, and intellectual stimulation.

Support is provided by one of the advisors over chat or video calls, which can be scheduled at the time of your choice.

Luci's advisors are there to guide you through the process of changing your lifestyle habits. They can help you set concrete and realistic goals, answer your questions, and give you personalized suggestions for educational or practical articles.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Luci or to participate in the program.

ABC Communautaire and the Niagara Ontario Health Team – Équipe Santé Ontario Niagara invite you to a free one-hour webinar on March 25 hosted in collaboration with the Luci team. Learn about brain health with kinesiologist **Vincent Dubé** and **Marianne Vipond**, two of Luci's Healthy Lifestyle Advisors.

The webinar is free, but registration required. Click on the date below to register for the webinar.

- **Monday, March 25 - 6:30 to 7:30 PM**



Luci

- Eat better
- Move more
- Stimulate your brain



A science-based program designed to help you adopt healthy lifestyle habits.