

# NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO REGIONAL STROKE NETWORK STEERING COMMITTEE

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Preamble:

The provision of stroke prevention and care across North Western Ontario is complicated by a broad geography which features small, remote and isolated communities with limited access to resources as well as cultural and linguistic differences.

The Regional Stroke Network is an integrated system of services, developed to reduce the frequency of and to respond to the occurrence of strokes. The development and operation of the network is beyond the scope of any individual board or person and includes the Regional Stroke Centre at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, Stroke prevention clinics and a variety of service providers across the region ranging from first responders to assessment/treatment and follow-up.

Service organizations and individuals play a role by addressing a particular aspect of stroke care/prevention and it is the sum of their activities that results in an integrated continuum of care. Service delivery is designed, organized, resourced and coordinated by the network of relationships fostered by the NWO Regional Steering Committee.

### VISION STATEMENT

Fewer strokes. Better outcomes.

### MISSION STATEMENT

To continuously improve stroke prevention, care, recovery and reintegration

### VALUES

Building on the excellent foundation of the Ontario Stroke System, we value:

#### ***Equity and Comprehensiveness***

Our activities will improve access to the care continuum and respect the diversity of the population we serve.

#### ***Accountability and Integrity***

We will demonstrate accountability and integrity to ensure the development, use and management of public resources.

#### ***Transparency and Engagement***

We will foster and demonstrate a culture of responsive, interactive, open and respectful communication and collaboration.

#### ***Learning and Performance Improvement***

We will contribute to knowledge in this field, advance new ideas and take action to continuously improve the stroke system through research, and evidence informed approaches.

#### ***Leadership and Innovation***

We will look to the future, embrace change and innovation, challenge the status quo, grow more leaders and through partnership build capacity.

## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

To achieve our vision The Northwestern Ontario (NWO) Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee will build a network of services providing stroke prevention and care by integrating the resources of a wide variety of provider organizations and individuals.

The Steering Committee is the vehicle through which network partners together develop a strategic direction, set priorities, identify need and make recommendations for the allocation of resources. The Steering Committee lacks the authority to direct individual network members but provides a forum to articulate inter organizational engagement with respect to stroke prevention and care.

The NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee provides advice and leadership to its members, and as well supports the implementation and continuous improvement of an integrated system of care<sup>1</sup> within the stroke region, aligned with the Ontario Stroke Network (OSN) vision and strategic directions.

The NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee also provides advice to the North West Local Health Integration Network (NWLHIN), and other stakeholders as requested, supporting the NWO Regional Stroke Centre and the NWLHIN to achieve their mandates, in particular related to integration of the health system.

## ACCOUNTABILITIES

The NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee is accountable to:

### **The NWO Regional Stroke Network for:**

- The development of a strategic direction which identifies needs, priorities and resource sharing/development opportunities
- Evidence-based input and decision-making for advice and options on ongoing improvements of the regional system of stroke care and recommendations and support to achieve targeted performance metrics
- Reviewing performance of the regional stroke system and recommending options for addressing any deficiencies
- Engaging stakeholders and the communities served when developing the regional plan and setting priorities for stroke care
- Sharing knowledge and best practice
- Monitoring the implementation of the work plan for the NWO Regional Stroke Network.

### **The LHIN for:**

- Building relationships and collaborating with the NW LHIN, other health service providers, and the community to identify opportunities for integration, and to improve access and services;
- Supporting the LHIN(s) and Stroke Centres to achieve system integration;
- Assisting the Stroke Centres in achieving LHIN accountabilities including performance metrics and work plan development, approval and implementation;
- Aligning with the NW LHIN's Integrated Health Services Plan; and

---

<sup>1</sup> From the Ontario Stroke Network's Strategic Plan, the Continuum of Stroke Care is defined to include: health promotion; primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention; pre-hospital care; emergency, diagnostic, and acute care; rehabilitation; long-term care; and community reintegration.

- Informing the NWLHIN, the NWO Regional Stroke Centre and other provider organizations of any gaps between needs of the communities served and scope of services provided within the NWLHIN allocation.

**The Ontario Stroke Network for:**

- Leadership and support for the implementation and continuous improvement of an integrated system of care within the stroke region, aligned with the Ontario Stroke Network Vision, Mission and Values, Strategic Directions, and priority provincial initiatives
- Identifying gaps and opportunities that may require provincial level action
- Supporting knowledge translation of current and emerging best practices

**The Consumer and will:**

- Endeavour to provide appropriate and timely access to services
- Endeavour to provide access to a seamless, integrated system of services
- Endeavour to provide services which reflect current best practices

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Regional Planning**

- With the Regional Director of the NWO Regional Stroke Network provides input into the development and approval of a regional plan, in alignment with the Ontario Stroke Network strategic plan and the North West LHIN health service priorities, for the development of a regional system across the continuum of stroke care
- Recommend priorities for the regional stroke team regarding: implementation and coordination of best-practices and evidence-based stroke care within the region
- Identify service needs and opportunities for resource sharing or development

**Implementation of Plans**

- Provide advice to the Regional Director of the NWO Regional Stroke Network regarding implementation of the regional work plan
- Monitor progress towards provincial, and regional, goals/objectives
- Advocate with the NW LHIN and member organizations, on behalf of the regional stroke network, for regional and provincial stroke initiatives, funding, planning, and priorities
- Identify opportunities to facilitate regional and district evaluations relating to stroke care
- Review and disseminate reports on the performance of the NWO Regional Stroke Network and implementation of the regional plan

**Best Practices and Quality Improvement**

- Support capacity building approaches to promote best practices, standards, and guidelines for the delivery of stroke care across the continuum of care in the region
- Provide representation at the provincial level for initiatives and plans, and provide advice as appropriate

## **Education and Knowledge Transfer**

- Support capacity building approaches to develop the regional stroke care system, including sharing of learning and knowledge transfer
- Support and promote research and knowledge transfer activities, at the regional and provincial levels

## **Resources**

In collaboration with the LHIN(s), Regional Stroke Centre and Stroke Prevention Clinics,

- Provide advice and monitoring for use of regional stroke funds and infrastructure to support and implement the work plan
- Review and sign-off on the regional work plan<sup>2</sup>
- Support the Centre and Clinics in achieving the work plans
- Identify resource requirements for coordinated stroke care, support and advocate for appropriate infrastructure, and collaborate on strategies to address resource gaps
- Identify opportunities for resource sharing and partnering across organizational and jurisdictional boundaries and amongst diverse service providers across the region

## **Human Resources Management**

- Collaborate with the Regional Stroke Centre in the recruitment and selection of the Regional Director of the Regional Stroke Network and other regional staff as may be requested
- Provide input into the performance management and review of the Regional Director

## **Partnerships and Linkages**

- Engage stakeholders for problem solving, action planning and identification of policy issues with respect to the regional stroke network
- Recruit and engage stakeholders
- Create and/or identify opportunities for partnerships to support achieving the Vision and Mission of the OSN
- Work cooperatively with the LHINs, Regional Stroke Centre, Stroke Prevention Clinics and other stakeholders

## **Communications**

- Liaise and share information with regional stroke network stakeholders and other Regional Stroke Centres
- Support communication strategies to engage and inform regional stakeholders of provincial and regional initiatives
- Communicate provincial level initiatives

## **Committee Structures**

- Determine the needs for implementing and managing the specific activities relating to a regional coordinated stroke system and establish the necessary structures as may be required

---

<sup>2</sup> The Draft HSAA agreement includes the following: “Where a hospital has been approved as a designated Stroke Centre (Regional, District or Enhanced District Stroke Centre), or to provide Stroke Prevention Clinic services (Stroke Prevention Clinic and Community Hospital Stroke Prevention Clinic) the hospital will participate with the Regional Stroke Steering Committee in developing an integrated stroke work plan that crosses the care continuum. The integrated regional plan must include a process for reporting its progress on achievement of identified goals and provide evidence that designated centres are maintaining their respective stroke infrastructure according to the original stroke service guidelines. As part of the HAPS submission, a copy of a letter from the Chair of the Regional Stroke Steering Committee to the CEO for each of the designated centres within the stroke region's geography, will serve as evidence of the approval of this integrated regional stroke work plan by the Steering Committee and of the engagement of the designated centres in this work plan.”

- Regularly review and develop, as needed, policies and practices for sub-committees and work groups

## KEY RELATIONSHIPS AND LINKAGES

The NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee links with the Regional Stroke Centre for:

- Recommending advice and options for ongoing improvements of the regional system of stroke care
- Recommendations and support to achieve targeted performance metrics and the regional work plan

The NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee, links with the OSN Provincial Coordinating Council, for advocacy and issue awareness, through the Regional Director of the NWO Regional Stroke Network and other communication and engagement forums that the OSN may implement for linking with the Chairs, Regional Directors, and/or Medical Regional Directors of the Regional Stroke Networks.

## MEMBERSHIP

Reflecting current best practices and its purpose and scope, the NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee membership is comprised of 12-18 voting members<sup>3</sup>.

The membership will reflect:

- The full spectrum of the stroke continuum of care
- The diversity of the regional stroke system including the geography<sup>4</sup> of the region and its diverse communities
- The organizational components of the Stroke Region, including the NWO
- NW LHIN
- Person with stroke and/or family member

Ex-officio members should include: a designated senior leader from the NWO Regional Stroke Centre (voting); Medical Director of the NWO Regional Stroke Network (voting); and the Regional Director of the NWO Regional Stroke Network (non-voting). Members of the NWO Regional Stroke Team (non-voting) may attend meetings of the Steering Committee as resources to the Steering Committee.

Participation will be on a voluntary basis and the term of service will be a renewable three year term.

---

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from the Guidelines for the Selection of Members of the Provincial Coordinating Council: The Regional Stroke Steering Committee as a whole should be seen by the community it serves as capable, experienced and well able to lead the organization. The overall composition of the Regional Stroke Steering Committee should reflect a balance of skills and expertise needed for the Regional Stroke Steering Committee to fulfill its purpose and responsibilities.

<sup>4</sup> This should include:  
 1-2 members east of the NWO Regional Stroke Centre;  
 2-3 members west of the NWO Regional Stroke Centre; and  
 1-2 members north of the NWO Regional Stroke Centre,

## **PROFILE OF A MEMBER**

- A member of the NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee acts ethically, honestly and in good faith with a view to ensuring the best interests of the NWO Regional Stroke Network and exercises the care, diligence and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances.
- A member is likely associated with a particular organization or a particular component of the continuum of stroke care. A Member may, from time to time, function as an advocate in order to promote excellent service and sufficient resources to fulfill the NWO Regional Stroke Network purpose and scope.
- Members should have decision-making authority within their organization.
- Core members may send alternates to meetings with approval from the Chairperson.
- Member's action and participation will reflect an agreement with the stated mission vision and purpose of the Steering Committee.

## **CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

- The Chairperson and Vice-chairperson will be a leader without sponsorship to any of the partnering organizations in the region.
- An ad hoc Nomination Advisory Group will present the NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee with names of candidates for Chairperson and Vice-chairperson.
- The Chair and Vice- Chairperson will be selected by the members of the NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee.
- The Vice-Chairperson will become the Chairperson subsequent to completion of the Chairperson's term.
- The term will be a two year renewable term.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Members will be required to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary conflict of interest to the NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee as appropriate.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

In general, the NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee will work in a transparent manner supporting open communication throughout NWO. However, on occasion, the NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee may determine that aspects of its deliberations are confidential for a period of time. All members will be expected to respect this confidentiality and will be encouraged to discuss information that can be reported publicly at the end of each meeting.

## **DECISION MAKING**

- Members of the NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee will receive an agenda one-week in advance of the meetings; items for decision will be identified.
- Members of the NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee unable to attend scheduled meetings have the opportunity to provide comment and agreement to action items. Questions/issues may be taken to the meeting for consideration and decision.

- Members in attendance will make final decisions and approvals through a consensus process or by a formal vote, depending on the nature of the decision to be made and the wishes of the NWO Regional Stroke Network Steering Committee present.
- If consensus cannot be achieved, an action plan will be developed by the committee

### **MEETING FREQUENCY AND LOCATION**

Meetings will be held on a quarterly basis (or as required). Special meetings may be called at the request of the Chairperson. Meetings will be held in person, or via video or teleconferencing. Travel expenses incurred for face to face meetings will be reimbursed according to Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre's policy. Consideration will be given to holding a meeting once a year in a regional facility in Northwestern Ontario.

The agenda for the meetings will be developed by the Chair with the support of the NWO Regional Stroke Network staff. Efforts will be made to have the materials sent to the members no later than one week prior to the meeting.

### **RESOURCE SUPPORT**

NWO Regional Stroke Network Staff will provide support to the Steering Committee.

### **REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed every two years. Revisions will be endorsed through the decision making process outlined above.