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## Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)

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### **HAWKESBURY HOSPITAL SHORTENS EMERGENCY ROOM WAIT TIMES**

**July 14, 2010** – In recent months, the Hawkesbury & District General Hospital has made major changes to the way it runs its emergency department, resulting in reduced lengths of stay for patients.

Between March 2009 and March 2010, the length of stay for uncomplicated cases decreased from 4.5 to 2.8 hours. During the same period, the length of stay for more serious cases went down from 9.1 to 6.1 hours. (Length of stay represents the time a patient is registered to the time he or she is discharged from the emergency room.)

Out of 46 hospital sites in Ontario that received special funding to decrease their emergency room wait times, the Hawkesbury hospital improved the most.

Hospital staff achieved these results by bringing in new strategies. For instance:

- Patients with less complex conditions are fast-tracked to a dedicated area during peak hours.
- Those with more complicated conditions benefit from a ‘clinical decision unit,’ where they may undergo further investigation and tests in an efficient manner.
- People being admitted to the hospital from the emergency room are transferred to their rooms more quickly due to better ‘patient flow’ protocols.
- Under specific circumstances, patients can get care sooner while waiting in the emergency room, because triage nurses are given ‘medical directives’ to request tests and start treatment before a physician is available.

The Champlain LHIN has authorized the hospital to continue its improvement program in 2010/11, meaning further gains are expected.

“Reducing medical wait times is a key priority for the Ontario government. Through hard work and determination, the Hawkesbury & District General Hospital has shown exemplary progress in improving care for patients in the emergency department,” says MPP Jean-Marc Lalonde (MPP for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell). “Staff at the hospital deserve our appreciation and congratulations.”

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