

MEMO

TO: NSM SGS Program Partners
FROM: Sandra Easson-Bruno, Director NSM SGS Program
DATE: February 14, 2022
TOPIC: Notice of Program Changes

This communication provides notice to partners of the following changes within the North Simcoe Muskoka Specialized Geriatric Services (NSM SGS) program **effective February 14, 2022**.

- **A new NSM SGS program Referral Form**
- **Changes in access to geriatric medicine team services across NSM sub-regions.**

BACKGROUND

The NSM SGS program was established in 2016 to advance the care of frail older adults and caregivers in the NSM region. Since 2016 we have been redesigning our services and building partnerships with area providers. Early redesign work focused on our geriatric mental health team. More recently, we have been redesigning our geriatric medicine team by broadening our original focus on falls (through the Integrated Regional Falls Program – IRFP) to a more comprehensive geriatric medicine focus. As part of the redesign, we received approval from Ontario Health Central Region to sunset our Integrated Regional Falls Program (IRFP). This is an important next step in creating an innovative service that can work with our sub-region Ontario Health Team partners to advance local integrated specialized geriatric medicine services for frail older adults and their caregivers.

The redesign plan:

- Is supported by our regional Seniors Health Working Group, a sub-committee of the Central Ontario Health Team for Specialized Populations;
- Aligns with our clinical design hub-and-spoke model and advances the integration of specialized geriatric medicine and geriatric mental health services across the region; and,
- Helps us continue to improve patient outcomes, build system capacity, make better use of specialized resources and, over time, simplify access to specialized geriatric services.

CHANGES

- **NSM SGS Referral Form:** Effective February 14, 2022 we will be using a new referral form for our program and services. We recognize it will take time for partners to transition to the new form. As we receive old forms we will follow-up with referring sources to ensure they are aware a new form is available. A pdf fillable form is attached. It can also be found on the Clinical Services page of our website (www.nsmmsgs.ca) or by clicking this [link](#).
- **Geriatric Medicine Services:**
 - All referrals received in our Central Intake are reviewed and triaged to the most appropriate available specialized geriatric service based on patient needs.

- The NSM SGS program has been working with local partners to better integrate geriatric medicine team services across all sub-regions. This work is at varying stages of progress.
- As of February 14, 2022 the NSM SGS program will sunset IRFP and complete any outstanding referrals on our waitlist over the coming months. During this transition period, access to geriatric medicine team services will vary across NSM sub-regions.

Patient Region of Residence	How/ Where to Access GERIATRIC MEDICINE TEAM SERVICES
Couchiching	Complete a NSM SGS program referral OR a GOT referral <i>The Couchiching FHT's Geriatric Outreach Team and the NSM SGS program are working together to deliver a single integrated service</i>
South Georgian Bay	Complete a NSM SGS program referral OR a HA Service referral <i>The Georgian Bay FHT's Healthy Aging (HA) Service and the NSM SGS program are working together to deliver a single integrated service</i>
Muskoka	Complete a NSM SGS program referral OR: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Algonquin FHT Geriatric Care Team referral <i>*for Algonquin FHT rostered/Huntsville region patients</i> • A Cottage County FHT Memory Clinic referral <i>*for Cottage Country FHT rostered patients; must meet Memory Clinic eligibility criteria</i> <i>The Algonquin FHT, Cottage Country FHT and the NSM SGS program are just starting to work together toward a single integrated service. Any referrals sent to the NSM SGS program for the Muskoka region will receive a seamless soft transfer to area FHT partner services (and vice-versa based on the needs of the patient)</i>
North Simcoe	Contact the North Simcoe FHT Community Seniors' Care Program <i>Any referrals sent to the NSM SGS program for the North Simcoe region receive a seamless soft transfer to the North Simcoe FHT's Community Seniors Care Program (and vice-versa based on the needs of the patient)</i>
For the period February 14 – June 30, 2022, the NSM SGS program will work with partners in the Barrie sub-region to advance a single integrated service. During this period there will NOT be access to the NSM SGS geriatric medicine team service. The following referral options are offered for consideration:	
Barrie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrie and Community Family Health Team: Aging Well Clinic <i>*for rostered patients</i> • Georgian Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic: Wise & Well Clinic <i>*for registered patients</i> • Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre: Urgent Geriatric Clinic • Specialist Consultation via OTN <i>Within OTN, go to the "Directory" and search for geriatric medicine under the "Specialist" option. You will find a list of physicians accepting geriatric medicine referrals and approximate wait times.</i> • For straight-forward consults, consider the NSM SGS eConsult service <i>Go to the OTNhub's e-Consult service and select the specialty group "North Simcoe Muskoka Specialized Geriatric Services".</i> • For medication-related consults, consider GeriMedRisk <i>This can be accessed on the NSM SGS program Referral Form</i>

It is important to note that:

- ONLY the geriatric medicine team service is impacted by this redesign, with regions being impacted in different ways. All other services within the NSM SGS program (i.e. geriatric mental health, GeriMedRisk, Seniors CARE Exercise program) remain available.
- Access to Geriatricians continues to vary across sub-regions with recent access impacted by competing priorities and system pressures. We continue to actively explore options to improve the equity of access to Geriatricians across NSM.

Please contact me if you have questions or concerns. Thank you for your ongoing support of the NSM SGS program!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SE Bruno'.

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