

BRIGHT LIGHTS AWARD


2012

**System Integration: Building the Team Beyond the FHT
Award Winner - The Centre for Family Medicine**

Building partnerships to strengthen care



Creating family health teams was a first step to ending the traditional isolation of solo practice — but it takes some heavy lifting to move from linking physicians to bridging broad healthcare communities.

Kitchener's Centre for Family Medicine has a goal of offering a tapestry of clinical services, education, research and innovation to its community; to do that, it has been working since 2005 to develop programs that intentionally promote integration in healthcare. In that time, the Centre team has developed partnerships with McMaster University, the University of Waterloo, Western University, Wilfrid Laurier University, the Research Institute for the Aging, Reception House (an entry portal for new immigrants), the Alzheimer Society, the Ontario Neuro-trauma Foundation, the Waterloo-Wellington Local Health Integration Network, the community care access centre, local hospitals and the Canadian Paraplegic Association of Ontario.

However, the Centre for Family Medicine does not limit itself to links for its own benefit. Working with other family health teams across Ontario, it is expanding training and education programs, including 34 teams that have developed Memory Clinics on the centre's model. The anti-coagulation clinic model developed by the Centre for Family Medicine is being used across Canada.

More recently, members of the team have been leading research and development of programs to care for spinal cord injuries in primary care. And there is a group working on the integration of ClinicalConnect — online, secure access to health records — for the Waterloo Wellington health network of family health teams and hospitals.

To reach out further, members of the team make presentations at provincial, national, and international conferences, on topics including interprofessional care and education, global health, dementia care, chronic disease management, and social work. Others have published in peer-reviewed journals.