



## NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **NHS Trust and Reputation Survey Shows A Damaged Reputation and Fractured Relationships**

**November 9, 2011** – After more than 530 telephone interviews, 1550 online responses, 300 print surveys, 27 in-depth interviews of community leaders and 4,000 lines of personal comments, the results of the NHS Trust and Reputation Study conducted by Dr. Terry Flynn and his research team at McMaster University show a damaged reputation and fractured relationships within the communities of Niagara Region.

“Given the level of discussion and engagement within the community about the Niagara Health System, the heightened media coverage, and the operational and leadership challenges that the NHS has experienced over the last number of years, these results are not surprising,” said Flynn. “There is a significant lack of trust for the organization, a sense that the community has little influence or control, and a feeling of being continually let down. This has led to hopelessness, frustration and in some cases anger for many citizens of Niagara Region.”

The results show that there is a significant reputational deficit and community relationships are fractured; a great deal of work is needed and it will take time to undo the damage done. The NHS, and the community, must look at this as a long-term commitment that starts with action before words.

But there are reasons to be hopeful.

“Residents are highly engaged and want to be a part of the solution,” said Flynn. “Over the past several months, we spoke to many concerned and well-intentioned community leaders, volunteers and advocates who are committed to quality health care for all citizens of Niagara Region.”

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According to the report :

“There is notable admiration and respect for the doctors and staff of the NHS often described by the respondents in caring terms. Their direct encounters with the staff and volunteers of the NHS were often the reason for their positive opinions.

Despite this, there is a new, guarded sense of optimism appearing, brought on by recent changes including the appointment of a Supervisor and noted improvement in communication efforts.

Now, with this baseline measure for trust and reputation established in this study, there is a tremendous opportunity to make positive change for citizens of Niagara Region. “

“On behalf of our research team, we would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to the people of Niagara Region for their interest, involvement and insights. We would also like to acknowledge the leadership of the NHS who commissioned this study as a means to listen to the community and engage in a renewal of their outreach with the people of Niagara Region, “ Flynn said.

The full report was posted on the NHS website (<http://www.niagarahealth.on.ca/>) at 3pm today.