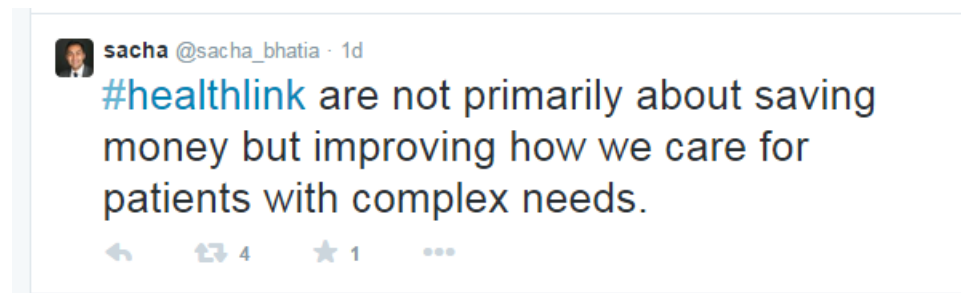


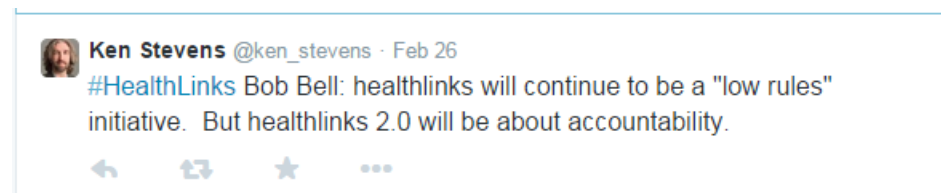
## Breaking through the Silos | a conference précis.

By Jessica Pavan, Esther Pollack, and Will Falk

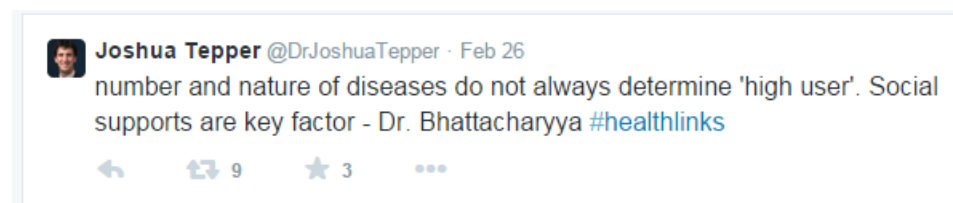
The *Ways and Means*\* conference led from strength with Ontario's Deputy Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, Dr. Bob Bell declaring the Ministry's commitment to Health Links as a central strategic pillar. The Deputy Minister demonstrated both leadership and ownership of the Health Links program and raised the bar for all speakers who followed. His speech provided an impressive breadth of information demonstrating his understanding, insight, and vision for Health Links. He also brought us settled organizational issues by placing Links firmly under the control of LHINs going forward.

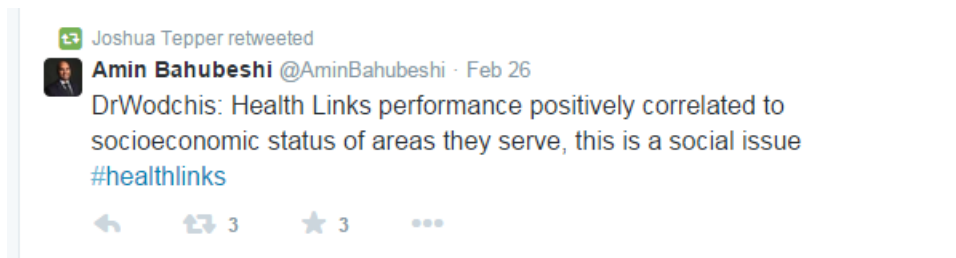


The room was filled with patients, providers, Health Link members, policy people and more – all energized by the support, validation, and potential for this grassroots, evolving program. The Deputy discussed where Health Links currently are (which is all over, depending on your Link) and the direction we are headed, which will one day be the model to manage care for the highly complex patient population. He identified many key challenges and opportunities, which were reiterated by the panel that followed.

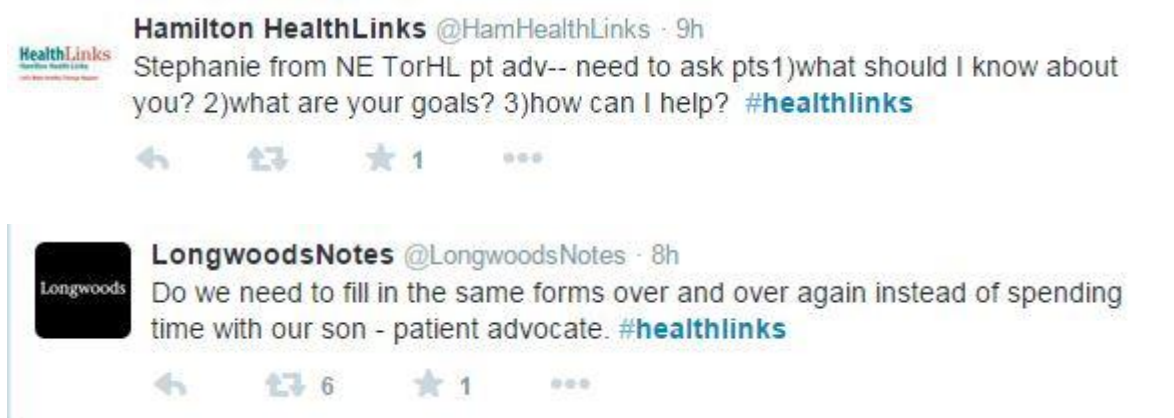


The first panel up highlighted the research and review of what we're learning as the Health Links roll out across the province. Consistent messages included – continue to focus on the 5%, care integration, and support Health Links autonomy to set up their own model. However, we need to begin focusing on standardization, accountability, governance, and integration across sectors.

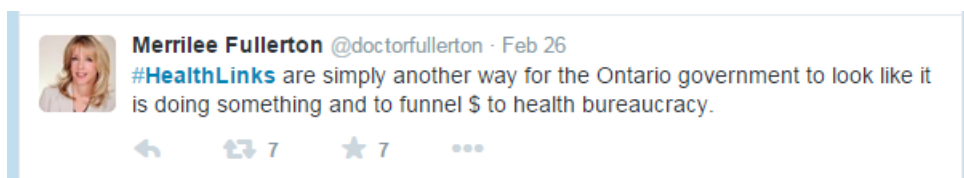




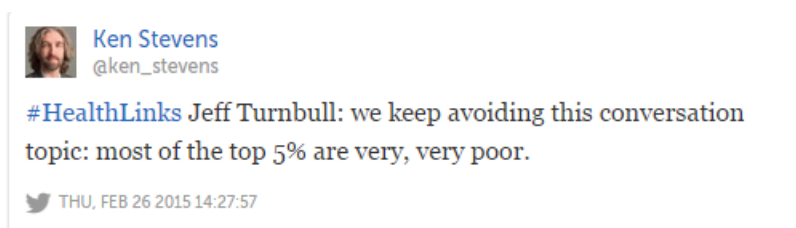
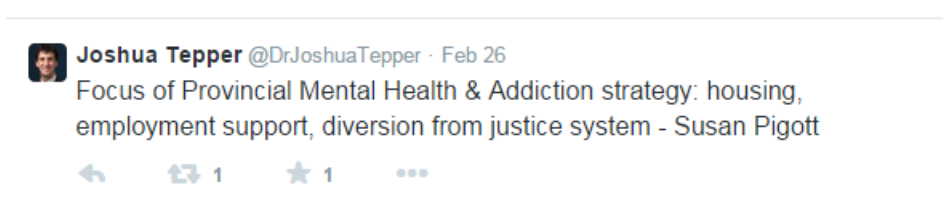
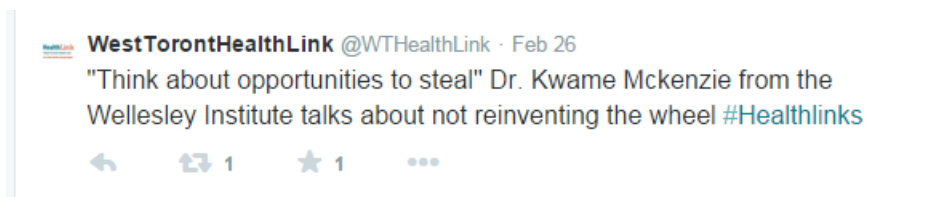
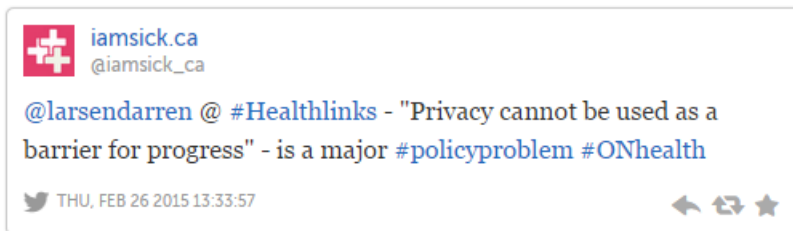
The second panel gave a face to our story. The 5% are not just an abstract number; real people's lives tell the story. We are patients, parents, caregivers. We have challenges that come with being a high-user of the system, ranging from too much paperwork to lack of respect and autonomy. The panel offered us the real face behind the numbers and reminded us why we want and need to advance the Health Links progress.



By mid-day the messages were clear and while the room was overflowing and positive, elsewhere (on Twitter) there were some critical voices.



Throughout the afternoon, there continued to be consistent messaging across the board – integration across sectors and the social determinants of health. Key levers for change are data, technology and engagement. Silo busters gave us the facts of the case we already knew. Health Links patients are very likely to be Mental Health and Addiction patients. Housing does improve care. And supporting the most disadvantaged has a positive impact on the health care system and the justice system.



The last panel echoed Dr. Bell's point on an integrated, population-based health care system; it's about what's important to the patient and evolving our health care system to match that. Integration was once again underscored and how family centred care needs to be at the centre for more accessible and community-based care.

Dr. Eric Hoskins ended the day with his continued support for Health Links, stating that Health Links will and have become a cornerstone of our healthcare system.



In conclusion, while there are still some unanswered questions Health Links are clearly supported by policy makers, system leaders, and service deliverers. There is excitement as the process begins to unfold, along with enthusiasm as the program expands to social determinants. People are no longer thinking within their box, they are thinking between services, agencies, and

ministries about how to meet the needs of the patient. We are truly becoming a patient centered healthcare system.

**\*The Ways and Means Conference** is produced annually by Longwoods Publishing Corporation in collaboration with Canadian and provincial healthcare leaders and global expertise.

---

This brief summary was prepared by Jessica Pavan and Esther Pollack, Senior Associates in the Healthcare Practice, and Will Falk, the Managing Partner – Healthcare at PwC Canada. Mr. Falk has appointments at the University of Toronto as an Adjunct Professor at Rotman School Of Management and as an Executive Fellow at the Mowat Centre for Policy Innovation.