

Four Pillars: Recommendations for Achieving a High Performing Health System

Summary of Recommendations



Setting Ambitious Goals

We believe:

The Government of Ontario should set and communicate medium-term (5-year) and long-term (10-year) goals with specific, quantifiable performance targets, so that health care providers can effectively contribute to their achievement, and the public can understand where our health system is headed and why.

We propose dramatic health system reform based on four pillars. They are:

1. Setting Ambitious Goals

2. Planning Properly

3. Letting Evidence Drive Care Decisions

4. Connecting Care

Planning Properly

We believe:

The Government of Ontario should develop and publish a comprehensive health system strategic plan. This plan should:

- Feature execution strategies and tactics, timelines, change management exercises, and funding commitment;
- Contemplate the appropriate mix of capacities of services our health system needs;
- Include quality and efficiency improvement measures with a focus on using funding incentives to drive positive change;
- Be dynamic and evolve as goals are reached and new evidence is gathered and assessed; and,
- Include a robust program of community engagement - as the plan is being developed, and as it is being implemented.

The Government of Ontario's health system strategic plan should build on existing research and sub-sector plans in an effort to accelerate the planning process and implementation efforts.

The Government of Ontario should move ahead with its promised review and updating of the *Public Hospitals Act*, and any other relevant legislation and regulations, to ensure that they promote, rather than impede, the implementation of a health system strategic plan.

The Government of Ontario should facilitate the use of research to determine which staff mixes and models of care work best in different health care settings, from hospitals to home care, and the results should be used to inform the health system strategic plan as it evolves.

The Government of Ontario should implement measures to re-establish compensation equity between union and non-union staff.

The Government of Ontario should designate a registered employers' bargaining agent for the health system.

Let Evidence Drive Care Decisions

We believe:

The Government of Ontario should make the widespread adoption of clinical pathways for specific diseases and patient groups like wound care, diabetes, palliative care and mental health a high priority in their health system strategic plan.

The Government of Ontario should ensure that it uses all of the available tools, particularly those included in the *Excellent Care for All Act*, to ensure that evidence-based practices are identified and disseminated to health care providers quickly and efficiently, and to incent providers using funding tools to adopt them without delay.

The Government of Ontario should expedite the development of the *Excellent Care for All Act* and associated regulations for application to other key health care providers, in order to facilitate the adoption of care pathways and evidence-based practice and accountability across the continuum of care.



Connecting Care

We believe:

To facilitate care at the right place at the right time, the Government of Ontario should ensure that structures and processes are in place so that patients, especially those with complex care needs, have their care connected across the continuum.

The planned legislative review of Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) should be expedited so that the benefits of that review can be made available to the Government of Ontario as soon as possible. The review should consider how to best ensure that patients across Ontario have reasonable access to similar baskets of services, and that consistent approaches are used based upon evidence of success. The review should also examine how physicians can be better integrated with LHINs, Community Care Access Centres, hospitals and community-based health providers.

The Government of Ontario should make a comprehensive health information technology adoption strategy - complete with specific, dedicated, and gated funding - a central part of its health system strategic plan. This plan should set direction and measure progress centrally, but allow for regional execution. Clear, preferred standards for information exchange in order to ensure the interoperability of systems used by health care service providers should be central to this plan.

The Government of Ontario should promote the adoption of proven process redesign techniques and strategies to improve efficiency and quality outcomes across the health system, and dedicate resources and supports to their implementation.

Annual expenditures on the community sector by the Government of Ontario should increase by 3.5% plus inflation (CPI). Enhancing community expenditures in specific targeted areas will facilitate a cost-effective shift of service, resulting in a positive impact on hospital utilization and better care for patients.

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