



ONTARIO HEALTH TEAMS IN ONTARIO January 2020

Please note that Ontario Health Teams in Ontario is a **very new issue (announced Dec.9, 2019)**. This Backgrounder is presented as a source of information to learn more about these as they evolve.

Health Care was listed as the priority issue in the 2019 Ontario Council survey of issues.

What are Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) for Ontario?

Ontario Health Teams are groups of providers and organizations that are clinically and fiscally accountable for delivering a full and coordinated continuum of care to a defined geographic population.¹

From the government press release – “a new model of organizing and delivering health care that better connects patients and providers in their communities to improve patient outcomes. Through an Ontario Health Team, patients will experience easier transitions from one provider to another, including, for example, between hospitals and home care providers, with one patient story, one patient record and one care plan.”² Supposedly “a self-governing model with a lead agency”³

The difference between the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and the new OHTs seems at this point to be “the integration into genuine systems is to be done directly by representatives of the people served and of their health service providers” complete with the funding and resource allocation needed. This was how the LHINs started but it never happened.⁴

Background:

The OHTs are the second step in the reorganization of the Ontario health system. The first was the creation of Ontario Health⁵, a super-agency that has pulled together 6 other agencies, such as Cancer Care Ontario, and the 14 Local Health Integration Networks (non-home and community care functions only)

On Dec.9, 2019, 24 Ontario Health Teams were announced⁶. While they cover much of the province, there will be more OHTs announced later.

What to do:

Monitor. As a club, create a team or person to **track what’s happening** in your community. Report back to your club.

These are new, evolving and related to their own community. Many are starting with smaller areas first. For example, Mississauga Health will focus Year 1 only in three areas, one being palliative care. Each OHTs will have its own foci.

This has been attempted before with the Local Health Integration Network (LHINs). What went wrong?

One of the concerns is that the OHTs will become hospital driven and responsive to their needs. What effect will that have on smaller health care providers and agencies? Will there be more privatization of health care?

¹ http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/connectedcare/oht/docs/guidance_doc_en.pdf

² <https://news.ontario.ca/mohltc/en/2019/12/ontario-introduces-24-ontario-health-teams-across-the-province-to-provide-better-connected-care.html>

³ Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Long Term Care Challenges, <http://www.amo.on.ca/AMO-Content/Backgrounders/2019/LongTermCareMunicipalChallengesinOntario.aspx>

⁴ Queen’s Policy Blog, May 22, 2019 <https://www.queensu.ca/connect/policyblog/2019/05/22/whats-an-ontario-health-team/>

⁵ <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-health-agency>

⁶ <http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/connectedcare/oht/default.aspx>

CFUW POLICY SUPPORTS:

Our policy is “to ensure (that) quality health care and preventive health care programs which are universal, accessible, comprehensive, portable and publicly administered and that all reforms to the health care system incorporate these five principles of Medicare as outlined in the Canada Health Act 1984, **(Health Care Delivery Standards, 1996)** which was further extended to support the “recommendations of the Romanow Commission *Building on Values; The Future of Health Care in Canada* (2002)”. **(Health Care Delivery Services [Romanow Report] 2003)**

“Canadians Want and Need a More Comprehensive Health Care System

We must transform our health care “system” from one in which a multitude of participants, working in silos, focus primarily on managing illness, to one in which they work collaboratively to deliver a seamless, integrated array of services to Canadians, from prevention and promotion to primary care, to hospital, community, mental health, home and end-of-life care. ... I am therefore recommending a series of measures to create a more comprehensive system whose component parts fit together more seamlessly. “

From Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada, *Building on Values, The Future of Health Care in Canada, Final Report* November 2002, Roy Romanow, Commissioner, pgs.xviii-xix

CFUW also supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. **(Sustainable Development Goals, 2016)**

RESOURCES:

For a list of **current OHTs** announced Dec.9, 2019 , please see:

<http://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/connectedcare/oht/default.aspx> This has links to the individual teams.

Government of Ontario, Ministry of Health <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/> The program is called Connected Care.

Ontario College of Family Physicians <https://www.ontariofamilyphysicians.ca/tools-resources/timely-trending/ontario-health-team-oht-overview>

Ontario Hospital Association <https://www.oha.com/discovery>

Ontario Medical Association <https://content.oma.org/wp-content/uploads/private/OHT-101-Brochure-DIGITAL-V2-Dec-2019.pdf>

Registered Nurses Association of Ontario <https://rnao.ca/news/nurses-welcome-news-health-system-reform>

Hallway Health Care: A System Under Strain, 1st Interim Report from Premier’s Council, Jan.2019

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/publications/premiers_council/report.aspx

Mike Crawley, Some of Ontario’s biggest hospitals are filled beyond capacity nearly every day, new data reveals, CBC Investigates, Jan.22,2020 <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-hospital-hallway-medicine-healthcare-beyond-capacity-1.5420434>