



Fora Charter

Forum Definition

Fora are created under Article 6 of the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) By-Laws to provide a structure to represent members from across medical/surgical specialities with multiple diverse areas of interest, but who have unique needs and common areas of interest and concern. The Fora represent significant and defined areas of medical practice that are not represented by any other single constituency group of the OMA.

Fora bring their member's perspective to the business of the OMA through various channels, including the General Assembly.

More specifically, fora serve to support the following core functions:

- Compensation
- Subject matter expertise
- Member engagement, leadership development, and succession planning
- Member education
- Advocacy
- OMA governance requirements

Mandate

Fora represent physicians who work in an area or model of practice not represented by any other group of the OMA. Fora provide input to the OMA on key issues affecting members such as funding that directly or indirectly impact physicians, learners and patients, health human resources, health policy decisions, and medical education and research.

In carrying out the functions described above, fora responsibilities may include:

- Studying, understanding, and making recommendations regarding compensation and other health care system issues that impact fora members
- Facilitating communication with membership to support collaboration, knowledge sharing, and issue identification
- Supporting advocacy activities related to issues and opportunities that have a positive impact on fora members, patients, the profession and the health care system

- Actively participating in the General Assembly by selecting delegates to the Priority and Leadership Group, and encouraging members to have their voices and issues heard by soliciting ideas to the General Assembly
- Through the General Assembly and networks, providing input into the broad directions of the OMA strategic plan and the development of key OMA initiatives and priorities
- Holding an annual general meeting to report to all fora members on pertinent activities and share financial statements
- Maintaining an annual workplan and providing an annual report to the membership on pertinent activities of the forum as they track to the forum's workplan

Fora Structure

Application

An application for the approval of a nascent forum will,

- a. Identify the area of medical practice and rationale for the proposed forum. Rationale should describe:
 - i. A description of the unique requirements of the proposed fora and how it isn't duplicative of other governance structures within the OMA, and why the gap the proposed fora will fill necessitates the ongoing permanent structure that fora provide
 - ii. A description of the cross-sectional nature of the work and the anticipated sections that would be impacted
- b. Enclose a draft executive structure, rules and regulations and 2-year work plan
- c. Be signed by at least 50 members, representing at minimum 25% of the OMA's sections
- d. Provide evidence that membership could include members from at minimum 50% of the OMA's sections and that at minimum 1,000 members would be eligible to join the fora.

Any potential forum must not duplicate the work or function of other groups within the OMA including sections, medical interest groups, fora or expert panels.

The board will consider the application and, if it satisfies the requirements of this charter, the board will make a recommendation regarding the granting of forum status to the applicants. If a forum is approved by the board, an open election will be held to populate the executive.

Maintaining Forum Status

A forum must maintain a minimum of 1,000 members representing at least 50% of the OMA's sections as well complete their reporting requirements to maintain forum status.

These requirements will be assessed biannually. A forum that is not in compliance will be permitted one year to resolve its deficiency. If it is not brought itself into compliance after one year, the Board may terminate its forum status.



Any member in good standing with the OMA may join one or more fora, in addition to their primary and/or secondary sections, if they meet the requirements for membership in said forum. A forum can outline which requirements would be relevant for forum membership in their Rules and Regulations.

No person shall be a member of a forum who is not a member of the OMA.

Fora Leadership Composition

Fora Executive*

The executive comprises those positions elected by the fora membership through the OMA single election process, unless otherwise specified, and may include the following:

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Past-Chair - *Optional*
- Secretary and/or Treasurer – *Optional*
- Tariff Lead - *Optional*
- Members-at-Large, the number and role description of which will be specified in a Fora's Rules and Regulations however at minimum a fora must have at least 1 Member-at-Large on their Executive

Fora have the option of having members elect all executive positions through the OMA single election period or having members elect representative Member-at-Large positions and then having the executive elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and/or Treasurer from within the elected executive.

Tariff Leads may be elected by the membership or appointed through an open Expression of Interest process if a forum determines a Tariff Lead is necessary.

Fora have the flexibility to structure their executive in the above manner; however executive size should be a minimum of 4 members and a maximum of 10 members. Exceptions can be approved, by the OMA Board of Directors, to exceed the maximum executive size of 10 members in the event it is required to ensure appropriate representation of the membership.

Executive Positions Descriptions

Chair

The Chair's responsibilities include:

- Understanding the issues that are most important to the forum members, with respect to their practice area and represent these to the OMA, health system stakeholders, and the media on behalf of the forum

- Calling the first meeting of the forum. Subsequently, meetings may be at the call of the chair or upon request of a member of the forum executive made to the chair
- Facilitating and optimizing the constructive involvement and participation of all members of the forum executive
- Approval of forum communications to members
- Calling and overseeing the organization of the forum annual general meeting (AGM). An AGM should happen no later than 18 months following the last AGM
- Being the primary point of contact for forum business, via other OMA physician leaders and assigned OMA staff
- Fostering a positive culture that is respectful, civil and collaborative

Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair's responsibilities include:

- Understanding the issues that are most important to the forum members, with respect to their practice area and represent these to the OMA, health system stakeholders, and the media on behalf of the forum
- Assisting the chair in their duties and assumes the powers of the chair when absent or unable to perform the chair's duties
- Supporting the chair in providing leadership and in communicating regularly with members
- Fostering a positive culture that is respectful, civil and collaborative

Past-Chair (Optional)

The past-chair position will be held by the immediate past chair of the forum. The responsibilities of the past chair include:

- Attending executive meetings to maintain continued communication within the forum executive
- Assisting in member engagement and succession planning
- Advising the chair, as necessary, for continuity and mentorship purposes
- Fostering a positive culture that is respectful, civil and collaborative

*Secretary and/or Treasurer (Optional) **

A Forum may choose, as defined in their Rules and Regulations, one of the following for its executive composition, as it relates to the secretary and treasurer:

- a. Elect a combined secretary/treasurer (one position)
- b. Elect both a secretary and treasurer (two separate positions)
- c. Elect a secretary only
- d. Elect a treasurer only
- e. No secretary or treasurer



The secretary's responsibilities include:

- Working closely with the forum chair in the planning of meetings of the forum executive and the forum annual general meeting
- Ensuring agenda and other meeting materials, including meeting minutes, are distributed to the members of the forum executive and forum membership, with OMA staff support
- Fostering a positive culture that is respectful, civil and collaborative

The treasurer's responsibilities include:

- Providing oversight of the financial affairs of the forum in accordance with the OMA financial policy for constituency group funding
- For fora that maintain a discretionary spending account for constituency funds raised, preparing a set of financial statements under generally accepted accounting principles and make them available to all members at least annually
- Fostering a positive culture that is respectful, civil and collaborative

*If a Forum opts to forego election of the secretary and/or treasurer position(s), these duties will be assigned to another forum executive member(s). For fora that do not maintain a discretionary spending account, a treasurer position may not be required.

Tariff Lead (Optional)

The tariff lead's responsibilities include:

- Managing, in collaboration with the forum chair, all matters related to physician billing, fees, and remuneration, including preparation of documentation and information for submission to relevant OMA committees
- Understanding of the diverse interests and needs of the forum membership
- Working with the forum executive to ensure appropriate representation of the experience and needs of fora members
- Representing the forum during physician services agreement negotiations and physician payment/fee setting processes, as directed by the forum chair
- Fostering a positive culture that is respectful, civil and collaborative

*Member-at-Large (Optional) **

The member-at-large's responsibilities include:

- Attending executive meetings to discuss, debate, and vote on agenda items/issues to support the work of the forum
- Providing input into issues based on their clinical expertise and/or other criteria, as determined by the fora executive
- Fostering a positive culture that is respectful, civil and collaborative

*The number of member-at-large positions required and assigned specific duties and eligibility criteria for the member-at-large positions will be based on the needs and priorities of the forum, and will be outlined in the Rules and Regulations for the forum.

Broader Leadership Group

Each forum may also have a broader leadership group that is advisory (non-voting) to the forum executive. The broader leadership group may include other physician leaders and non-OMA member leaders, as determined and appointed by the forum executive. The specific duties of broader leadership group members are determined by the forum executive and may vary from forum to forum.

Fora Executive Meetings

Fora executive meetings will be carried out as follows: *

- Meetings of the forum executive shall be called by the chair, or upon the request of a member of the forum executive to the chair. Notice of executive meetings to be provided in writing no less than 2 weeks prior. Notice of special meetings to address urgent and time sensitive issues to be provided in writing no less than 2 days prior
- Meetings may be held in person or through virtual electronic means that permit all participants to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting
- The quorum for executive meetings is 50% plus one (1) of the executive membership
- In the case of a tie vote at a forum executive meeting, the otherwise neutral chair will have a casting vote
- Non-executive members, including invited guests and subject matter experts, may attend meetings of the executive at the discretion of the chair to provide advice and take part in the discussion without voting privileges

Fora Executive Elections and Appointments

- Fora executive positions are elected in accordance with the OMA Elections Policy, unless otherwise specified
- A member may only run for and vote in elections in the fora in which they are members
- Vacancies may be filled via a by-election in accordance with the OMA Elections Policy or via the OMA established appointment process where a member of the fora may, through a resolution of the executive, fill the vacancy
- Appointments and positions elected during a by-election are for the remainder of the term or until the next regularly scheduled Single Election Period, whichever is less

- The term of office for the forum chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, and member-at-large positions is two (2) years and will commence immediately at the conclusion of the OMA AGM.
- The term of office of the past chair is two (2) years, and can be extended as determined by the fora executive, and will commence immediately after the OMA AGM if a new chair is elected
- Appointments and positions elected during a by-election are for the remainder of the term or until the next regularly scheduled Single Election Period, whichever is less.
- A member, after serving on the forum executive for ten (10) consecutive years, is no longer eligible to be elected in their current position on that forum for a period of two (2) years
- A member may not serve on the forum executive for more than 20 years in total.

Fora Annual General Meetings

- The annual general meeting of a forum's membership will be held at a time and place to be determined by the executive members
- Meetings may be held in person and/or through virtual electronic means that permit all participants to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting
- Notice of annual general meetings will be provided to all members in writing at least 30 days prior to the scheduled date.
- Quorum for a forum general and special meeting is a minimum of ten (10) members in good standing. Fora may choose to increase quorum in their Rules and Regulations.
- In the case of a tie vote at a fora annual general meeting the otherwise neutral chair will have a casting vote.

Special Meetings

- A special meeting of the fora may be called by the chair at any time with at least two (2) weeks' notice to all members of the fora.
- The fora executive may, upon its own authority, and will, upon presentation of a request made in writing by no fewer than fifty (50) fora members, give notice to each member of the fora of a special meeting of the members in that forum. Any such request and the notice will specify the matters to be considered at the meeting or will state that the meeting is to consider all matters within the jurisdiction of a general meeting of the members of the fora. Any notice will be provided by the fora within seven (7) days of receiving the request, and any special meeting will be held no more than three weeks after notice is given. A

copy of the notice of any special meetings will be forwarded to the corporate secretary of the OMA at the same time it is sent to the members of the fora.

Delegates to the OMA Priority and Leadership Group

- The executive has the authority to appoint delegates to the Priority and Leadership Group, in accordance with the Priority and Leadership Group eligibility criteria and procedures.

Sub-Committees, Task Forces and Working Groups

- The executive may establish, as required, sub-committees, task forces, and/or working groups to develop a specific policy and/or accomplish a specific task.

Funding and Remuneration

- The OMA will provide funding to support the work of the fora, in accordance with the OMA constituency finance policy

Fora Rules and Regulations

- This charter represents the minimum baseline governance requirements that all fora must follow. Any fora can develop their own complimentary Rules and Regulations that may expand on the criteria outlined, provided they are still in alignment with the charter.
- Fora Rules and Regulations require approval by the executive at a meeting of the executive.

Amendments

- Amendments to this charter are subject to approval of the OMA board of directors.

Approved by the OMA Board of Directors: June 25, 2025

