

## Benefits of OHTs for family doctors

Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) are a new way of planning and delivering patient-centred care that will meaningfully impact the care experience for both you and your patients.

Some benefits are immediate, while others will be experienced when OHTs are fully developed.

Ontario Health Teams will have many benefits for family doctors. OHTs have the potential to:

- 1 Improve your work experience
- 2 Help you deliver enhanced patient care
- 3 Help you develop stronger relationships with other health professionals
- 4 Provide you with the opportunity to influence how care is delivered in your region
- 5 Give you more opportunities for learning and leadership development

Ontario Health Teams are a model of integrated care. OHTs bring together clinicians, including physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses and interprofessional health teams, along with community programs and services for patients and families to focus on a shared purpose: to provide co-ordinated, effective, efficient and high-quality care to patients. OHTs are intended to be designed together with physicians, other providers, patients and families to ensure that they are truly meeting patients' needs.

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Initial family doctor impressions of OHTs:

**“The OHT becomes a way to bring everyone together”**

-Dr. Kim McIntosh, family doctor, Couchiching OHT

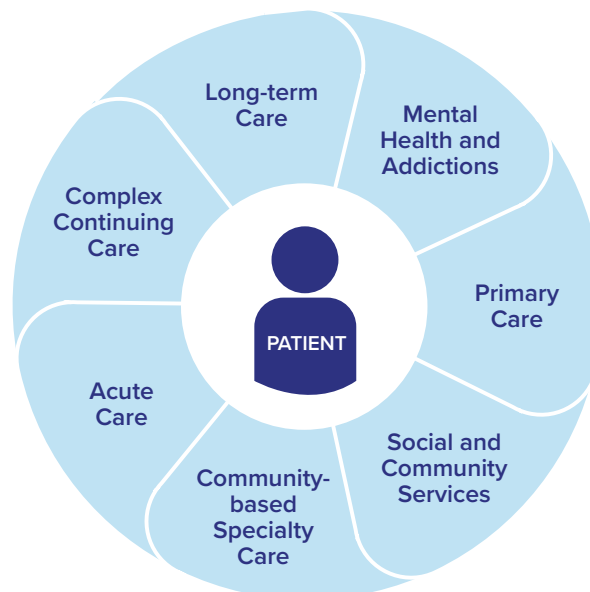
**“My day-to-day work as a physician has been much easier in many respects”**

-Dr. Catherine Yu, family doctor, East Toronto Health Partners OHT

**“I’m excited about where this is going to go”**

-Dr. Vineet Nair, family doctor, Western OHT

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## 1 OHTs will help improve your work experience:

- ✓ Better integration among care providers will lead to **stronger connections** to specialists, interprofessional health teams, home care services, mental health and addictions services and other local supports that will help you better manage complex patients
- ✓ More seamless co-ordination at the system level will lead to **shorter wait times**
- ✓ IT solutions will enable **digital communication** among all members of the care team and reduce your administrative workload
- ✓ Better integration will **reduce hours spent finding referrals** and follow up allowing you to focus more on your patients.

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Before OHTs, I would spend some time interacting with patients and then spend the bulk of my time trying to find resources for them.

Now, I spend more time with my patients, rather than with the logistics, paperwork or practice management of trying to find resources for my patients.”

-Dr. Catherine Yu, family doctor, East Toronto Health Partners OHT

## 2 OHTs will help you deliver enhanced patient care:

- ✓ Better co-ordination between health sectors and care providers will enable a **better experience** for both patient and provider
- ✓ A population health approach to planning and delivering care will result in more **equitable access** to care and services
- ✓ Access to care co-ordinators will help your patients navigate the system so you spend **more time with your patients** and less time locating referrals and following up on care
- ✓ Centralized digital records will give you access to co-ordinated, comprehensive information about your patients and help you **avoid unnecessary repeat tests and referrals**
- ✓ Directories will allow you to easily **identify the right specialist** for your patients, so they can get the right care as soon as possible
- ✓ Improved access to supports and programs, like **mental health or home care services**, will help your patients receive more timely care.

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We're going to be focused on team-based care and making sure every patient has primary care access. We're going to look at 24/7 coverage for our patients who need it the most, and 'warm handoffs' when patients are moving throughout the system.

We're also working towards that dream of one electronic health record that can follow the patient so they don't have to repeat their story again and again.”

-Dr. Vineet Nair, family doctor, Western OHT

### 3 OHTs will help you develop stronger relationships:

- ✓ Stronger relationships will support **faster, more effective referrals** that improve transitions in care
- ✓ A more organized primary care sector in addition to increased interactions with other providers allows you to build **meaningful connections** with your peers
- ✓ More awareness of **community-based resources** will help your patients get the supports they need.

“ I have had the pleasure of working more closely with many family doctors in the community. The community of practice that we’ve formed because of the OHT has been quite impactful on my own wellness and my day-to-day enjoyment of my own career.”

-Dr. Catherine Yu, family doctor, East Toronto Health Partners OHT

OHTs can help you develop stronger relationships with:

- Other family doctors
- Community and hospital-based specialists
- Home and community care
- Long-term care
- Mental health and addiction services
- Community support services
- Interprofessional health providers

“The OHT has helped us organize as a primary care sector and that can’t be overstated. The way that this has helped organize our sector, we are stronger as a result.”

-Dr. Vineet Nair, family doctor, Western OHT

### 4 OHTs will allow you to influence how care is delivered in your region:

- ✓ Opportunities for physicians to have **meaningful impact** into delivery of care and **decision-making** at the local level
- ✓ Dedicated positions with compensation for physicians at the OHT leadership table will ensure the **physician perspective** is considered in all regional decisions
- ✓ Being part of a physician network or association will allow physicians to come together and have a stronger, more **unified voice**.

“ I didn’t realize how much we are actually needed and how our presence in the health system leadership table is appreciated, and that what we bring to the table as physicians is so valued.”

-Dr. Catherine Yu, family doctor, East Toronto Health Partners OHT

5 OHTs will give you more opportunities for learning and leadership development:

- More time for patient care will lead to **experiential learning** through local physician associations and networks, communities of practice and other groups
- Opportunities for **leadership training** and support may be available for physicians taking on leadership roles within the OHT
- Cultural competency** training opportunities and experiences working with Indigenous partners in the community can provide you with greater understanding of the barriers faced by some of your patients.

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Through the partnerships of our OHT, I learn about the system and services and corners of the community that I would have never known before. It expands my knowledge and allows me to better serve my patients and refer them more appropriately.”

-Dr. Kim McIntosh, family doctor, Couchiching OHT

### Get involved

As a family doctor, getting involved early will allow you to stay informed about what is being developed and implemented in your region. If you choose, you can also participate in the co-design of the OHT.

To learn more about your local OHT and how to get involved, contact your OMA Regional Manager: [www.OMA.org/regional-managers](http://www.OMA.org/regional-managers)

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The OHT becomes a way to bring everyone together with a shared purpose. When physicians understand that their investment is in improving the care of their patients and improving their work-life balance...every physician wants that when you get right down to it.”

-Dr. Kim McIntosh, family doctor, Couchiching OHT

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If we speak up as a physician group, we can really make a difference, and make sure we have changes that affect us positively as physicians and help our patients get the best care.”

-Dr. Vineet Nair, family doctor, Western OHT