

Ministry of Health

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November 2, 2020

173-2020-138

Mr. Bill Hatanaka
Chair
Ontario Health
525 University Ave, 5th Floor
Toronto ON M5J 2L3

Dear Mr. Hatanaka:

As you begin planning for 2021-22, I am pleased to provide you in your capacity as Chair of Ontario Health, with a letter setting out expectations and direction for Ontario Health in the year ahead, pursuant to the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive.

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of our government's plan to build a modern, connected and sustainable health care system. The work that you and your fellow board members have already accomplished to establish Ontario Health has helped our health system and public health care sector contain the spread of COVID-19 in Ontario. Your ongoing efforts to establish the goals, objectives, and strategic direction for Ontario Health during this unprecedented time are vital in getting the province back on track to modernize the health care system and further strengthen patient care. As such, the direction outlined in this letter is consistent with our government priorities, your agency mandate, key policies and directives, and my directions, where appropriate.

As part of the Ontario government, agencies are expected to act in the best interests of Ontarians by being efficient, effective, and providing value for money to taxpayers. This includes:

1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management

- Operating within your agency's allocations;
- Identifying and pursuing innovative practices and/or improved program sustainability;

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- Identifying and pursuing efficiencies and savings; and
- Complying with applicable direction related to supply chain centralization, Realty Interim Measures and Agency Office Location Criteria.

2. Transparency and Accountability

- Abiding by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting;
- Adhering to requirements of the Agencies and Appointment Directive, and responding to audit findings, where applicable; and
- Identifying appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in agency governance and accountability.

3. Risk Management

- Developing and implementing an effective process for the identification, assessment and mitigation of risks, including planning for and responding to emergency situations such as COVID-19.

4. Workforce Management

- Optimizing your agency's workforce to enable efficient and effective fulfilment of government priorities, while enhancing customer service standards; and
- Streamlining back office functions to ensure that all available resources are redirected towards the critical front-line services that Ontarians depend upon.

5. Data Collection

- Improving how the agency uses data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting, including by leveraging available or new data solutions to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery; and
- Supporting transparency and data sharing with the ministry, as appropriate.

6. Digital Delivery and Customer Service

- Exploring and implementing digitization or digital modernization strategies for the provision of services online and continuing to meet and exceed customer service standards through transition; and
- Using a variety of approaches or tools to ensure service delivery in all situations, including COVID-19.

In addition to these government-wide priorities, I expect Ontario Health to build on the work it has already achieved to integrate and oversee key health services like cancer care. For the 2021-22 fiscal year, I am asking Ontario Health to focus on the following key priorities:

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1. Continue to support the government's supply chain centralization and modernization efforts, including planning, development and implementation of activities to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. Continue to work with hospitals and the ministry to oversee surgical and diagnostic imaging ramp up as well as hospital capacity initiatives in response to the COVID-19 pandemic;
3. Continue to establish and operationalize Ontario Health by bringing together an effective and efficient "single team" from the agencies and organizations already transferred into Ontario Health and preparing for possible future transfers of additional agencies and organizations;
4. Work with the ministry to develop and implement a regional structure for Ontario Health that ensures identification of regional and local health care needs. These structures should be regional extensions of Ontario Health's mandate of accountability, sharing clinical best practices and enabling quality improvement;
5. Work with the ministry to establish and support the implementation of Ontario Health Teams across Ontario, by leveraging existing accountability tools and resources in quality improvement, digital and analytics, and other resources;
6. Working within defined roles and responsibilities, lead the transition of home and community care responsibilities to points of care, aligned with the ministry's implementation of Ontario Health Teams, and support Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs)/Home and Community Care Support Services in the delivery and modernization of services and transition of responsibilities;
7. Further operationalize the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence at Ontario Health in accordance with the *Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence Act, 2019* to implement a comprehensive and connected mental health and addictions system across the lifespan, focused on core services embedded in a stepped-care model that spans the full continuum of care, including community, primary, and acute care, and that is supported by a robust data and measurement framework;
8. Build on the existing world class model and expertise in cancer care and apply that model to chronic diseases and conditions, by developing and offering patients new evidence-informed programs and treatments sooner;
9. Ensure the successful planning, implementation and operation of a province-wide testing and laboratory network capable of supporting provincial needs for COVID-19 testing. In addition, ensure the successful implementation of genetic testing, by conducting a detailed assessment and developing recommendations to drive better outcomes for Ontarians and improved value;
10. Leverage Ontario Health's expertise in health quality for regular public reporting on the performance of Ontario's health system per Quadruple Aim Framework at provincial, regional, Ontario Health Team and other levels as required;

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11. Provide leadership on patient safety, through the public reporting of data, and the development of clinical and quality standards for patient care and safety; and
12. In collaboration with the ministry, implement the ministry's Digital First for Health strategy to deliver a more modern, integrated and digitally-enabled health system experience for patients.

As Ontario Health implements these priorities, my expectation is that you recognize the diversity within all of Ontario's communities. I ask that you respect the requirements of the *French Language Services Act* in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of health care services for Ontario's French-speaking communities. I also ask that you recognize the role of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of health services, regardless of where they live in the province.

Please note that Ontario Health is also required to implement the priorities related to long-term care which will be forthcoming from Minister Fullerton. Ontario Health's plan to address all these priorities must be outlined in the agency's Annual Business Plan, which will cover the period from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2024.

Further, as part of your ongoing operations, Ontario Health will be expected to operate within the budget allocation set by the ministry and demonstrate openness and transparency by publicly posting governance documents and information related to expenses, as well as Board meeting minutes. Ontario Health will also be expected to work with the ministry to consider other opportunities for increasing organizational transparency as Ontario Health matures as a provincial agency.

Through these measures, we will continue building a health care system that will improve the patient and provider experience, provide better, more connected care, and capture better value for health care dollars. It will ensure we continue to take a 21st century approach to integrated health care that puts patients at the centre of Ontario's health care system.

I thank you and your fellow board members for your continued support, and for your valuable contributions. Should you have any questions/concerns, please contact Sean Court, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Transformation Division, at Sean.Court@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,



Christine Elliott
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health

- c: Helen Angus, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health
Matthew Anderson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Health
Melanie Fraser, Associate Deputy Minister, Health Services
Sean Court, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Transformation Division