

Topic Overview

Strengthening Chronic Disease Management in Ontario

**Stakeholder Dialogue
19 October 2009**

The McMaster Health Forum convened a stakeholder dialogue on the subject of strengthening chronic disease management in Ontario. With the support of the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the dialogue brought together 15 participants from a range of local, regional and provincial organizations, as well as select other stakeholders, to examine the problem, options for addressing it, and key implementation considerations.

The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care funded the stakeholder dialogue and corresponding evidence brief through two vehicles: 1) The Academic Health Science Centre (AHSC) Alternative Funding Plan (AFP) Innovation Fund, and 2) Continuing Professional Development – Ontario (CPD-O). The views expressed in this summary do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.



We worked closely with a group of representatives from CPD-O, to oversee the planning and completion of the dialogue. CPD-O is a partnership of the Deans of Continuing Medical Education of Ontario's medical schools, the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, the Ontario Medical Association and the Ontario College of Family Physicians

Deliberation about the problem

A number of dialogue participants concluded that the underlying policy issue needed to be reframed. Having originally begun the dialogue with a focus on strengthening chronic disease management in Ontario, they concluded that the real challenge lay in “supporting people to live well with chronic conditions.” Also, some dialogue participants argued that a concrete goal (e.g., saving 100,000 lives or adding one year to Ontarians’ life expectancy) was needed in order to mobilize support for addressing this challenge and to monitor progress in addressing it.

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Participants gather during a McMaster Health Forum event on 19 October 2009

Deliberation about options

Drawing on the input from the evidence brief, their own knowledge and experiences, and the insights from the deliberations, a number of dialogue participants concluded that achieving a patient-centred system requires a long-term (20- to 25-year) strategy of enhancing and co-ordinating all of the features of such a system – self-management support, provider decision support such as continuing professional development, delivery system design, clinical information systems, health system changes, and community resources – while simultaneously developing and committing to successive medium-term (3- to 5-year) strategies of enhancing and co-ordinating those system features that will also achieve near-term impacts.

They also concluded that different “levels” within the health system can each play key roles in operationalizing medium-term strategies and should be provided the necessary incentives to do so and entrusted with corresponding accountabilities.

Dialogue deliverables

To learn more about this topic, consult the [evidence brief](#) that was presented to participants before the dialogue, the [summary](#) of the dialogue or the [video interviews](#) with dialogue participants. For an electronic copy of the evidence brief or dialogue summary, or to view the video interviews, visit our website (<http://www.mcmasterhealthforum.com>) and click on ‘Products’ along the sidebar.

Deliberation about implementation

A broad-based provincial coalition of stakeholders could lead the push for purposeful efforts to deliver early successes in achieving a concrete goal through either: i) a focus on addressing a risk factor or disease through enhancing and co-ordinating the full range of supportive health system features, and then moving on to other risk factors and diseases; or ii) a focus on enhancing and co-ordinating a key health system feature across the full range of risk factors and diseases, and then moving on to other health system features.

The provincial government could, in its role as a steward for the health system, establish the medium- and long-term strategies and the framework within which these and other efforts can be promoted, understood, and supported.

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