Deliberation about the problem

Dialogue participants generally agreed that the problem can be understood in relation to the five themes presented in the evidence brief: 1) clinical practice in Ontario is not consistently being optimized based on data, evidence and guidelines; 2) yet Ontario is home to some of the world’s best data, evidence, guideline and implementation ‘shops’; 3) these ‘shops’ support optimal practice with different perspectives and little coordination; 4) health-system arrangements also aren’t being effectively harnessed to optimize clinical practice; and 5) no big initiatives appear to be on the way to systematize and scale up efforts to optimize clinical practice. Participants focused in particular on how a lack of coordination (i.e., the third theme) limits system-wide practice-optimization efforts. However, they also pointed ‘upstream’ to two key contributors to the problem, namely limited long-term planning (particularly in terms of clearly articulating goals and sustainably allocating the resources needed to achieve those goals), and the lack of a clear governance model and accountability for practice optimization.
Deliberation about next steps

Participants articulated four priorities for moving forward: 1) pursuing opportunities to foster the cross-sectoral collaboration that will be required to have an impact on optimizing clinical practice in Ontario; 2) promoting greater local engagement and generating public awareness of progress made towards optimizing clinical practice as ways to foster the necessary cultural change; 3) focusing on identifying key barriers that are likely to hold up progress and targeting the investment of resources accordingly; and 4) collaborating on several research priorities, such as making tools that support optimal practice more usable for real-life settings, developing a ‘simplified Ontario framework’ for practice optimization, and taking coordinated action to better support initiatives that are designed to provide healthcare professionals and patients with access to the knowledge needed to narrow the evidence-to-practice gap.

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, and view or listen to the interviews with dialogue participants. For an electronic copy of the evidence brief or dialogue summary, or to view or listen to the interviews, visit our website www.mcmasterhealthforum.com