

A THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2019

**Better has no limit:
Partnering for a
Quality Health System**



Let's make our health system healthier

Who is Health Quality Ontario

Health Quality Ontario is the provincial advisor on the quality of health care. We are motivated by a single-minded purpose: ***Better health for all Ontarians.***

Who We Are.

We are a scientifically rigorous group with diverse areas of expertise. We strive for complete objectivity, and look at things from a vantage point that allows us to see the forest and the trees. We work in partnership with health care providers and organizations across the system, and engage with patients themselves, to help initiate substantial and sustainable change to the province's complex health system.

What We Do.

We define the meaning of quality as it pertains to health care, and provide strategic advice so all the parts of the system can improve. We also analyze virtually all aspects of Ontario's health care. This includes looking at the overall health of Ontarians, how well different areas of the system are working together, and most importantly, patient experience. We then produce comprehensive, objective reports based on data, facts and the voice of patients, caregivers and those who work each day in the health system. As well, we make recommendations on how to improve care using the best evidence. Finally, we support large scale quality improvements by working with our partners to facilitate ways for health care providers to learn from each other and share innovative approaches.

Why It Matters.

We recognize that, as a system, we have much to be proud of, but also that it often falls short of being the best it can be. Plus certain vulnerable segments of the population are not receiving acceptable levels of attention. Our intent at Health Quality Ontario is to continuously improve the quality of health care in this province regardless of who you are or where you live. We are driven by the desire to make the system better, and by the inarguable fact that better has no limit.

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Quality is a team effort. Throughout this report are photographs of just some of the many dedicated patient, family and public advisors, providers and employees who make our work possible. We thank them for enabling us to show the human element that is so important to everything we do.



Health Quality Ontario is the provincial advisor on the quality of health care. We are motivated by a single-minded purpose: **Better health for all Ontarians.**

Introduction

Health Quality Ontario (HQO) is committed to better health for every Ontarian.

These words that sound deceptively simple suggest that the current health system, despite remarkable and effective initiatives, falls well short of the needs and expectations of some patients and some health care providers. They also declare that any effort to improve the health system must place the needs of all Ontarians — regardless of their circumstances or where they live — front and centre. And they commit all of us to continuous and improvement. Better has no limit.

No one is indifferent to the health system's performance. Patients expect to be looked after promptly, competently, and respectfully. Health care professionals, managers, and policy makers are motivated to serve with pride and purpose. That is why the highs and lows of the Ontario health system are felt so acutely. Consider wait times: as we reported in *Measuring Up* (HQO's yearly report on the performance of Ontario's health system), the proportion of heart surgeries and cancer surgeries completed within the target time has markedly improved. That is a promising development. Yet Ontarians living in the north have twice the level of premature death than those living elsewhere in the province. That is deeply concerning.

There are many examples of inspired and innovative approaches to health care yielding great results, yet they are often isolated efforts. At the same time, there are wide and unexplained variations in health care delivery that can have negative consequences for patients. An important way to connect these islands of excellence and to reduce inappropriate variations in health care is by establishing quality care as a core value in our system.

This explicit commitment to quality is the fulcrum of a high-performing health system. It is how we achieve better health for all Ontarians. But what is “quality” health care? Which indicators most faithfully tell the story we need to understand? What evidence points to best quality care? What's the most effective way to broadly adopt best-in-class initiatives so that all Ontarians experience quality care in each and every one of their encounters with the system?

Where We Fit In

Working with patients and providers across the system, our goal is to answer these sorts of questions.

We are the provincial advisor on the quality of health care in Ontario. Our task is to create a shared understanding of quality as it relates to health care and to support the many thousands of providers in the system to improve the quality of care.



Our task is to create a shared understanding of quality as it relates to health care and to support the many thousands of providers in the system.

Advancing the Health Care Quality Agenda

Guided by the *Excellent Care for All Act*, HQO examines and reports on many aspects of health care in Ontario — the overall health of Ontarians, how well different areas of the system are working together, and patient experience. Using our Common Quality Agenda — key performance indicators identified in collaboration with health system partners — we monitor and report on how Ontario's health system is performing. We also make recommendations on which health care services and medical devices should be publicly funded and soon will produce quality standards designed to improve care using the best evidence. And we collaborate with our partners to help health care providers learn from each other, share innovative approaches with their peers, and, ultimately, improve quality care.

Fundamental to our approach in advancing the health care quality agenda is *Quality Matters*. Launched in October 2015, *Quality Matters* is intended to help everyone in the health system — providers, administrators, academics, policy-makers, patients, and the public — develop a shared commitment to quality-focused goals and a road map to move forward.

As part of *Quality Matters*, we are listening to the voice of patients and incorporating their perspectives. This engagement process, known as *Quality Is...*, is based on the belief that a strong quality agenda should be shaped by the experience and wisdom of patients, families, caregivers, and the public.

At the same time, we assembled an advisory group made up of experts with a keen understanding of what it takes to build a quality health system. These experts are doing a deep dive to explore what it will take to deliver system-wide quality care and to build a culture of quality. Their first report, *Realizing Excellent Care For All*, builds the case for a provincial quality framework, and offers a set of principles, dimensions of quality, and key factors we need to consider to instill quality at the core of our health system.

Through initiatives such as *Quality Matters* and our day-to-day work, we seek to objectively understand Ontario health care from multiple perspectives and to transform information and data into knowledge and action. This is all in service to health care providers, to help them do the best possible job, and in service to patients and caregivers, to help them receive the best possible care.



We foster strong partnerships and work with health care providers and patients to create positive and lasting change in the health system.

Strategy Overview

The strategic plan is the result of in-depth consultations with many partners across Ontario's health system and reflects what we heard from them about what they need to advance health care quality. It sets out our strategic priorities for the next three years and reflects our organization's vision and mission, while also reflecting the role we will play in bringing the *Quality Matters* health system vision — a just, patient-centred health system committed to ongoing improvement — to life.

Health Quality Ontario's strategic priorities are:

- Providing system-level leadership for health care quality
- Increasing the availability of information to enable better decisions
- Evaluating promising innovations and practices, and supporting broad uptake of those that provide good value for money
- Engaging patients in improving care
- Enhancing quality when patients transition between different types or settings of care

As always, we will continue to focus on all sectors across the system as well as on integrating care across sectors and settings of care to provide patients and caregivers with a seamless experience. In the coming three years, we also intend to add extra effort to three areas with a strong need for more quality improvement: mental health and addictions care; palliative and end-of-life care; and primary care.

The strategic plan also identifies the essential activities that will make it possible for HQO to deliver on its priorities. One is the need — and desire — to work closely with health care leaders, clinicians, researchers, academics, professional associations, colleges, and government agencies. This also includes deepening our engagement with patients and all Ontarians in ways that respect their unique perspectives. Other factors enabling our success include a comprehensive approach to communications (listening and sharing) and a well-aligned and high-performing organization.

By making progress on our focus areas and five strategic priorities over the next three years and by being faithful to our vision, mission, and values, we can make important strides — in step with patients and providers — toward better health via excellent quality care.

What We Do

Health Quality Ontario serves as the provincial advisor on the quality of health care in Ontario.

We have been entrusted to:

- Monitor and report on how the health system is performing
- Provide guidance on important quality issues
- Assess evidence to determine what constitutes optimal care
- Engage with patients and give them a voice in shaping a quality health system
- Promote ongoing quality improvement aimed at substantial and sustainable positive change in health care

VISION

Better health for every Ontarian. Excellent quality care.

VALUES

Collaboration

We foster strong partnerships and work with health care providers and patients to create positive and lasting change in the health system. We understand that diverse perspectives often contribute to better outcomes and working alone will not lead to success. We work as a cohesive organization because we know the different knowledge and skills across the organization are best used by working together.

Integrity

We demonstrate integrity by objectively analyzing and reporting on the performance of Ontario's health system and by producing evidence-based recommendations about how to improve health care in Ontario. We are transparent about our work to the health system, patients, the public, and government. We are honest with each other and see our failings as opportunities to learn.

MISSION

Together, we work to bring about meaningful improvement in health care.

Respect

In our efforts to help improve the health system, we are considerate of the feelings, wishes, rights, roles, and traditions of those who interact with and work in the system. We listen to and learn from patients, their caregivers, and providers. Within our organization, we interact with each other respectfully and provide supportive feedback.

Excellence

We strive for excellence in everything we do, from producing robust and relevant reports and promoting new ideas to how we interact with our partners. Within our organization, we strive for excellence with enthusiasm by encouraging professional growth and continuous quality improvement through learning.



Leadership is not a solo act. Health Quality Ontario will meet our strategic priorities in partnership with patients, health system providers, and organizations.

Strategic Priorities

Our five strategic priorities indicate how we will focus our energies over the next three years. All of the priorities will support and be aligned with our ongoing work with the provincial-wide *Quality Matters* initiative and our efforts to develop a shared commitment to act on key quality-focused goals.

HQO's strategic priorities are also informed by the six dimensions of high-quality care identified in *Quality Matters*: safety, effectiveness, a focus on patients, timeliness, efficiency, and equity. While HQO has historically employed a definition that includes nine slightly different dimensions, striving for a pervasive culture of quality requires a more streamlined operational definition. The *Quality Matters* approach reflects the shift from looking at quality of care as the responsibility of individual providers and institutions to a system responsibility. It is a definition that focuses on ongoing improvement.

Strategic Priority 1:

Provide system-level leadership for health care quality

As the provincial advisor on the quality of health care in Ontario, HQO is uniquely positioned to provide system-level leadership. This role in health care quality takes many forms. It involves identifying key focus areas, high-level approaches, priorities for action, timelines, and accountabilities. It involves leading the development and implementation of a quality framework for Ontario and an operational definition of health care quality. And it involves serving as a trusted resource, rapidly responding to system- and practice-level quality challenges as they arise and proactively providing advice in key areas of identified need.

Leadership is not a solo act. HQO will meet this strategic priority in partnership with patients, health system providers, and organizations. We will continue to serve as an objective facilitator, identifying and recommending evidence-informed solutions. By establishing strong foundations to support a widespread culture of quality and by working with others to build capacity, HQO will help prime the system for ongoing improvement.

We will ensure that the dimension of equity is embedded in all of our efforts. Each and every Ontarian where appropriate must benefit from system advancements.

Some of the ways we will act on this priority:

- With the help of system experts and patients, HQO will develop a common framework for quality and priorities for action.
- We will continue to advance the Common Quality Agenda, a set of key performance indicators selected in collaboration with health system partners.
- In order to develop evidence-informed recommendations, we will analyze health system data from Ontario and synthesize scientific evidence from around the world using the most appropriate methods.
- We will initiate a program to develop quality standards in areas where there appears to be large variations in care or where there is a gap between the best possible care and the quality of care that is currently provided, as identified through our work with the Common Quality Agenda and other initiatives.



Decision makers and Ontarians at large need to know how the system is performing and how it compares to systems in other provinces and countries.

- To nurture a culture of quality throughout the system, we will connect providers with those who are initiating change and help scale and spread successful quality initiatives across the province.
- We will establish annual priorities for the Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) that health care providers prepare that will inform quality improvement efforts across all health care sectors.
- We will respond to requests from government and others to provide support in addressing system-wide quality issues.
- And as the system continues its transformation in areas such as home care and primary care, we will work to ensure that the evolving focus on quality remains central.

Strategic Priority 2:

Increase availability of information to enable better decisions

Data is the cornerstone of quality improvement. For information to be most useful, however, it needs to be timely, accurate, relevant, easily accessible, and understandable. An ocean of health system data grows each day and policy makers, providers and Ontarians alike can get submerged in all the indicators. HQO adds value by prioritizing what should be measured to advance health quality and by helping people interpret and use the available data.

HQO is committed to providing information that will support the quality improvement efforts in all sectors of the health system, including home and community care where data needs are acute.

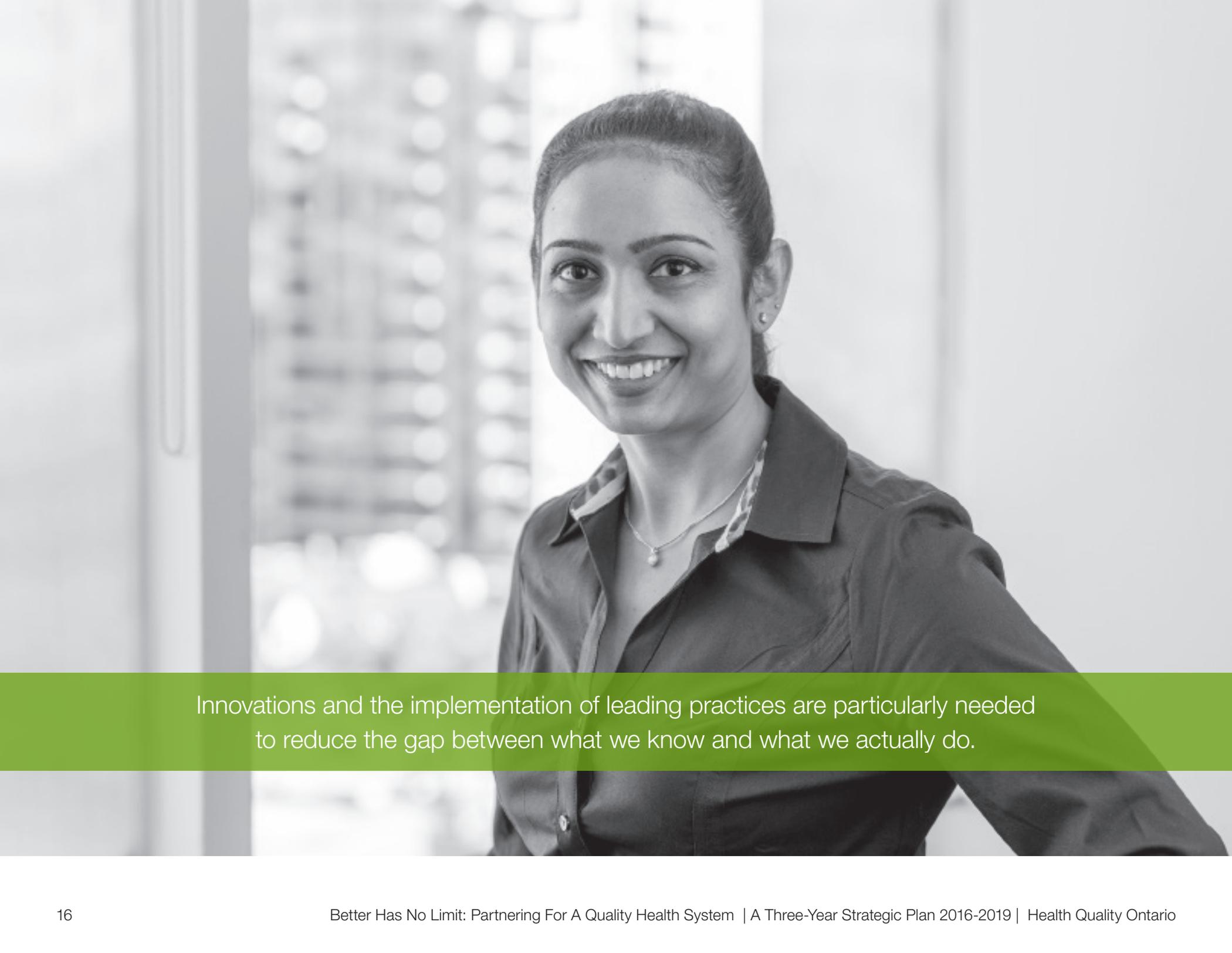
Decision makers and Ontarians at large need to know how the system is performing and how it compares to systems in other provinces and countries. Currently, very little information is reported directly to providers to help them understand their practice in context. We will place a major emphasis on developing a disciplined and reliable process to collect performance information with our partners that will allow providers to see how they are doing.

We also will listen to the perspectives of patients so we can find ways to thoughtfully report on their experiences. And we will continue our efforts to facilitate access to as much meaningful data as possible, in formats that are easy to use and understand. We want to enable patients and their families to make evidence-informed decisions about their care.

By gathering data, we will have a better understanding of how health care varies. Variation can suggest that some Ontarians are getting poorer service than others or that some Ontarians are getting better access to services than others. Variation may also reflect that evidence-based innovations, guidelines, and standards are not consistently adopted or that barriers exist to equitable access.

Some of the ways we will act on this priority:

- HQO will develop information relevant to providers' performance, such as personalized practice-level reports for primary care physicians, as well as information relevant to organizations and their efforts to improve quality.
- With our system partners, we will develop new indicators to close gaps between what needs to be measured and the supporting data currently available.
- We will provide performance information in our public reports and in-depth theme reports on key topics of interest, and more granular information directly to providers and organizations.
- To ensure information reflects the perspectives of patients, we will actively engage with them to hear their insights about how to make the information reflective of their experiences.
- We will ensure our recommendations are accessible and easy to understand for patients and their families.
- We will produce quality standards that are based on evidence and expert consensus.
- We will enhance how we report on indicators online. This includes providing users with more functionality to use the data in ways useful to them.



Innovations and the implementation of leading practices are particularly needed to reduce the gap between what we know and what we actually do.

- We will build on our existing work, such as clinical handbooks for quality-based procedures, to develop strategies that will help providers reduce inappropriate variation.
- And to support well-grounded decision-making in the area of quality improvement, we will recommend improvement tactics that are supported by evidence, and we will share insights from Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs).

Strategic Priority 3:

Evaluate promising innovations and practices, and support broad uptake of those that provide good value for money

HQO is well positioned to identify and assess a broad range of innovations and practices, while encouraging others to adopt those that foster quality care and good value for money. Increasingly, we will partner with organizations that do similar work to enhance our capacity in these areas.

Innovations and the implementation of leading practices are particularly needed to reduce the gap between what we know and what we actually do. We will work with leading researchers to promote the adoption by service providers of quality improvements supported by the best available evidence.

A great deal of HQO's efforts will involve deploying this information to fuel large-scale change efforts. We will use a full range of knowledge to connect the quality improvement community with clinical champions as we work with partners to drive practice improvements and a more equitable health system. And we will invest in building capacity and supporting improvement across the system to undertake quality improvement through partnerships.

Some of the ways we will act on this priority:

- In addition to providing input on annual priorities for Quality Improvement Plans across all sectors, HQO will review all QIPs to identify and share new models of delivering care that result in positive change.
- We will continue to thoroughly synthesize evidence (globally, nationally, and provincially) to determine the effectiveness of new and existing interventions. We will make evidence-based recommendations about specific interventions (such as for medical devices) as well as broad methods of quality improvement.
- We will consult with experts to make evidence-informed recommendations that consider the Ontario context.
- We will encourage the uptake of evidence-based innovations by identifying the structures, processes, and activities that will empower their spread and by transferring that knowledge through multiple channels.
- We will actively work with the system to spread and scale practices through major improvement efforts across all sectors, including areas of significant emphasis for the health system such as in home care.
- We will foster the development of communities of quality improvement to generate and exchange knowledge and innovative ideas. Such communities will include Adopting Research to Improve Care (in collaboration with the Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario), the National Surgical Quality Improvement Program, and Improving and Driving Excellence Across Sectors.
- By identifying, evaluating, and promoting innovations and practices that lead to enduring, large-scale change, we will support policy makers and legislators in making well-informed and impactful decisions.
- And we will support providers to undertake quality improvement projects by providing them with knowledge exchange tools to support their work.



We view patient, family, and public engagement as central to supporting quality improvement in health care.

Strategic Priority 4:

Engage patients in improving care

Health Quality Ontario views patient, family, and public engagement as central to supporting quality improvement in health care. Patient outcomes and experiences are indicative of a high or low quality health care system, and patient engagement is critical for identifying both gaps in care and improvement. This is borne out by a growing body of evidence that shows how learning from users of health care services helps to fulfill all the dimensions of quality and ultimately, outcomes. Besides that, it is the right thing to do.

Pockets of Ontario's health system are doing great work in this area. Across the entire system, however, patient, family, and public engagement remains fragmented and uncoordinated. It is not always clear "what to do" or "how to do it" even when people agree on "why to do it".

We see an opportunity to develop tools, resources, and activities that the health system can use to accelerate and spread the adoption of proven engagement practices. To that end, our intent is to provide education and practical support that will make patients, caregivers, and the public full partners in ongoing quality improvements of the health care system. The goal here is to involve health care users in all aspects of the system, from care delivery and service design to system governance.

If we as a system can do this right and replicate the best-in-class examples of engagement widely across the province, Ontario would have a health system that is truly inclusive of user needs.

Some of the ways we will act on this priority:

- Health Quality Ontario will work with partners to develop an approach to measuring patient experience that actively engages patients and spans all levels and sectors of the health system.
- Building on our Common Quality Agenda, we will develop indicators and benchmarks relating to how well the system addresses patient concerns and report our findings to the public.
- We will involve patients, caregivers, and the public more as we make evidence-informed recommendations about what structures, processes, and activities should be put in place to fuel quality improvement, what care should be publicly funded, and as we begin to produce Quality Standards.
- Understanding patient relations as part of the continuum of engagement, we will support the establishment of the Ontario Ombudsman Office at HQO and develop tools for the system to improve the management of patient concerns
- And we will provide tools, resources, and supports for patients, families, Ontarians at large, and providers to build their capacity to effectively engage with one another and cooperatively develop QIPs.



We can help to bring a quality focus not only to each episode of care but also to how those episodes connect to deliver high-quality integrated care.

Strategic Priority 5:

Enhance quality when patients transition between different types or settings of care

Many patients require care that crosses health care sectors or settings. This can make for an inconsistent experience. Patients may be pleased with the care they receive from individual health care providers or settings, but have a poor overall experience due to the lack of coordination among different providers.

Navigating the boundaries between different parts of the health system can be especially challenging for patients with complex health conditions. As noted in HQO's yearly report *Measuring Up*, more than two-thirds of mental health patients and less than half of heart failure patients do not receive a follow-up physician visit within seven days of their discharge from hospital.

HQO can bring a system lens to quality across all parts of the health system. We can help to bring a quality focus not only to each episode of care but also to how those episodes connect to deliver high-quality integrated care. Increasing the emphasis on care in the home and community, for example, can translate into improvements elsewhere in the system. For this to happen, however, different parts of the system need to improve how they talk and coordinate with one another. HQO will explore ways to promote such engagement that leads to effective health system integration.

Some of the ways we will act on this priority:

- Actively working with the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs), we will spread and scale practices through major efforts including Health Links (Health Links communities help patients and caregivers better navigate local health services and organizations) to encourage system integration.
- We will work with the LHINs to promote condition-specific integrated approaches.
- We will encourage the large-scale implementation of tools and emerging innovations to enable coordinated, efficient, and effective care to all patients, including those with complex needs.
- We will use our new quality standards program to make evidence-based recommendations to improve transitions of care.
- To determine how well the system is progressing in this area, we will report on performance indicators that measure integration.
- To encourage discussions and integrated action across sectors, we will report on cross-sectoral approaches that we are seeing through the Quality Improvement Plans.
- We will strongly encourage the enabling of infrastructure such as leadership, cross-sector partnerships, and technology systems to support system integration. And we will seek feedback from patients, families, and the public on their experiences as they transition through the system.



While maintaining our broad commitment to supporting quality across all sectors, Health Quality Ontario has identified three emerging areas of focus.

Emerging Areas of Focus

As the provincial advisor on the quality of health care, Health Quality Ontario takes a view of quality across the health system and the six dimensions of quality. While maintaining our broad commitment to supporting quality across all sectors, HQO has identified three emerging areas of focus where we intend to add extra elbow grease because of their strong need for more quality improvement:

- Mental health and addictions care
- Palliative and end-of-life care
- Primary care

These three areas have been identified for added attention based on what we know from existing data, experience, and Ontario's performance relative to other jurisdictions. There is also broad agreement within the field that these growing areas of focus are aligned with the emerging needs and trends in health care.

Health Quality Ontario's Common Quality Agenda includes indicators measuring many of these emerging areas of focus, but there is a lot of room for improvement. Going forward, they will have a greater presence in the CQA to support the quality improvements we all want to see.

It is also worth noting that each one of these emerging areas of focus cuts across HQO's strategic priorities and that, for the most part, each will require a cross-sector perspective and approach. We also recognize home care is a key area and it will have a strong focus in these emerging areas of focus and in many of our priorities.

Mental Health and Addictions Care

Mental health and addictions is an area of health care that is widely recognized as having challenges with respect to access, transitions in care, and equity.

Health Quality Ontario is undertaking a number of initiatives with sector partners; one example involves working with the Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council to develop, measure, and assess indicators for a published mental health scorecard report. We will also enhance our reporting in this area in *Measuring Up*, HQO's yearly report on health system performance. And we will synthesize what is known about effective care for patients with mental health and addictions.

HQO has also initiated a program to develop quality standards in areas where they are most needed. The first three quality standards will focus on depression, schizophrenia, and dementia. In developing these standards, HQO will work closely with patients and health care providers.

As information becomes available, we will support integrating mental health and addictions care with the rest of health care, using Health Links as one mechanism. We will work with our partners to dig deeper into variations in outcomes for different populations and help take steps to address these issues.



We intend to hold ourselves accountable to the same standards as we do the health system at large.

Palliative and End-of-Life Care

Many Ontarians would prefer to spend their final days in their own homes, yet Ontario's rates of hospitalization near the end of life are higher than in many other jurisdictions. At the same time, it is estimated that about 40 percent of the current patients enrolled and identified through Health Links will require palliative care by 2016. Clearly, there is an opportunity to support better identification of needs and ways to address patient/family goals for care, and proactively arrange for appropriate supports.

HQO has recently produced a set of evidence-based recommendations in the area of end-of-life care and palliative care for chronic illnesses. Over the next three years, we will work with Cancer Care Ontario, the LHINs, and others to implement these and other evidence-informed recommendations. Our contribution will also be to provide support through levers such as QIPs, enhanced public reporting, Quality Standards, and Health Links.

Primary Care

Primary care is often called the foundation of the health system. Hundreds of primary care practices across the province can be better supported in identifying where and how they can improve quality of care.

Currently, very little information is reported publicly or directly to providers about their own practices. Health Quality Ontario will place a major emphasis on developing and deploying information that will allow providers to see how they are doing relative to their peers locally, regionally, and provincially. This will include supporting the use of tools to measure patient experience in primary care; summary data will be reported to the public as well.

We will also provide advice and support to government and partners within the primary care sector — practitioners as well as organizations and associations supporting primary care — to develop the capacity for practice and quality improvement across the sector, at local, regional, and provincial levels.



For us, engaging patients, clinicians, and other health care providers, researchers, academics, professional associations, colleges, and government agencies, is essential.

How We Will Deliver on Our Priorities

We have identified three essential activities, known as core enablers, which will make it possible for HQO to successfully deliver on our strategic priorities. They have both external and internal orientation.

Enabler 1: Working with Others

We have always worked with system leaders and providers, but will now actively engage a much broader group of health system partners through a variety of formal and informal strategies throughout our work.

For us, engaging patients, clinicians, and other health care providers, researchers, academics, professional associations, colleges, and government agencies, is essential for a number of reasons. For one, the results of our efforts will be more relevant and meaningful. We will boost our capacity to achieve outcomes with impact. And others will be able to achieve their goals as well.

Enabler 2: Creating an Effective and Comprehensive Approach to Communicating our Work

Health Quality Ontario has multiple audiences. All of our audiences need to know about the path we are setting for health care quality and about our findings, recommendations, and quality improvement initiatives. Communication runs both ways. We also need to listen to others as part of our commitment to communication and continuous improvement.

As a result, our external communications will be timely, clear, meaningful, and motivating in order to build enthusiasm for our strategic initiatives and to generate discussion about what quality means throughout the health system. We will craft communication pieces that others can use with their own communities. We will also use multiple channels, engaging groups via digital communications, social media, events, conferences, and media relations. These channels will help us share and listen.

Enabler 3: Functioning as “One”

Health Quality Ontario has a complex and multifaceted mandate with a remarkable group of individuals who have a highly varied set of skills and experiences. To realize our full potential we must be a cohesive organization and aligned in our efforts.

The culture within HQO will foster a nimble, innovative, dynamic, collaborative way of working. We will be committed to improvement and to learning from our failings, and to making timely and values-based organizational decisions. The goal is to have an organizational culture in which we see ourselves as committed to a shared vision, mission, set of values and sense of purpose.



Let's make our health system healthier.

Final Words

At its core, Health Quality Ontario is an evidence-based organization that is committed to supporting better care for all Ontarians. We are dedicated to measuring and monitoring health care quality, sharing that information, providing advice grounded in evidence, and fostering the spread of innovations and leading practices. Our strategic plan reflects this view. It calls for deepening our pool of knowledge and spreading it widely to raise the level of quality in all areas of the system and parts of the province.

The strategic plan also reflects our commitment to bringing patients, families, and caregivers ever closer to their rightful place as partners in improving quality care in the most equitable manner. In three years, if we are truly on the path to building a health system with quality at its core, we expect to see clear improvement in the quality of patient experiences in all their interactions with the system.

We intend to hold ourselves accountable to the same standards as we do the health system at large. That means collecting performance metrics on how well we, at Health Quality Ontario, fulfill the objectives of this strategic plan, and within the context of HQO's Common Quality Agenda.

At Health Quality Ontario, we are passionate about our work. We are motivated to make a difference while staying true to shared organizational values and our unique role in the health system. We will listen, learn, and improve. We will work with and through others. We will lead when appropriate.

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