

## **Ontario ranks among the best in Canada and internationally when it comes to certain measures of the coordination of care and communication between older patients and their health care providers**

*There is also room for improvement, report says*

**Toronto, ON – April 14, 2015** – Ontario patients aged 55 and older often experience top-rated coordination of their health care, as well as communication with their health care providers, compared to people in other provinces and in other countries, according to *Experiencing Integrated Care*, the latest report from Health Quality Ontario (HQO), the provincial advisor on health care quality.

The report is based on the 2014 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Older Adults. It found that 82% of Ontario respondents said their regular care provider helps coordinate their health care by making appointments with other providers. This result ranks Ontario among the best in Canada and on par with other top-performing countries.

The report also uncovered areas where Ontario could improve. For example, 75% of respondents in Ontario who had been hospitalized said they received written information about what to do and what symptoms to watch for when they got home, compared to 89% in the U.S. and 87% in New Zealand – the top-performing countries.

*Experiencing Integrated Care* offers patients' perspectives on key touch-points where patients are in transition from one health care provider to another and therefore, where care coordination and communication is needed, such as during a health care visit, between appointments or after a stay in hospital. These aspects of integrated care are important measures of how well our health system is performing.

### **Other report highlights on how Ontarians experience well-coordinated care include:**

- 81% of respondents in Ontario said that after a hospital stay, the hospital made sure they had follow-up care when they got home – on par with other provinces and top-performing countries.
- 90% of Ontario respondents knew whom to contact when they left hospital if they had a question about their treatment, a result that ranked the province on par with most other provinces on this measure, and better than four countries in the survey and on par with the rest.

### **In other areas, Ontario has room to improve:**

- In Ontario, 10% of respondents said there was a time in the past two years when a specialist doctor did not have basic medical information or test results at an appointment. In France, 3% of respondents said that was the case and in the Netherlands 5% reported that challenge.

- Among Ontario respondents aged 55 and older with chronic conditions, 63% said they have access to someone who can help with medical questions between visits. In the United States and the Netherlands, 79% said there is a health care professional they can easily contact for information or advice between visits to the doctor.

“Some of the highest risks to quality care occur during the hand-offs as patients move from one care provider to another,” says Dr. Joshua Tepper, President and CEO of Health Quality Ontario. “When the various parts of the health system work well together, patients and their care providers have the information they need to make informed decisions. Better transitions lead to a higher quality of care.”

To access the full report, visit [hqontario.ca](http://hqontario.ca).

*The 2014 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey of Older Adults was conducted among a random sample of the general population aged 55 years and older in 11 countries: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. For the Canadian portion of the survey, interviews were conducted between March 4 and May 28, 2014, in both official languages. In all, 25,530 people participated in the survey, including 1,502 in Ontario. The Canadian sample was 5,269.*

#### **About HQO**

Health Quality Ontario is the provincial advisor on quality in health care. HQO reports to the public on the quality of the health care system, provides evidence-based recommendations, and supports the spread of quality improvement throughout the system. Visit [www.hqontario.ca](http://www.hqontario.ca) for more information.

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