

# INTERPROFESSIONAL PRIMARY CARE TEAM EXPANSION

## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – Qs AND As

May 31, 2023

### **1. What is this Expression of Interest (EOI) all about?**

We are connecting more people with primary care in communities across the province, including additional funding to create more interprofessional primary care (IPC) teams to help make care more convenient for people.

As part of this, the Ministry of Health is moving forward with a process to expand existing teams and/or create up to 18 new teams in communities with the greatest need.

These multidisciplinary care teams will provide direct care to vulnerable, and marginalized people as well as those without a primary care provider across Ontario. This will help connect people to care when they need it without having to visit emergency rooms and experience long wait times, while also improving health outcomes by increasing preventive care and screening procedures.

Completing an Expression of Interest is a requirement for funding consideration by the Ministry of Health (ministry). The EOI should set out a case or rationale and include all relevant details to enable the ministry to appropriately assess the need and effectiveness of the proposed programs and services in the community.

### **2. Why is the government doing this?**

The government is improving access to interprofessional primary care services for Ontarians, with an emphasis on addressing the needs of vulnerable and marginalized people as well as those without a primary care provider across Ontario.

### **3. How can interested organizations apply for funding under this initiative?**

Interested parties must complete the EOI template and submit to Ontario Health a plan that outlines how they will provide primary care to vulnerable, marginalized, and unattached people living in their communities.

The deadline for submission is **5 pm Eastern Time, June 16, 2023** to be considered for investment for a new or expanded interprofessional primary care team. The EOI should set out a convincing case and include all relevant details to enable Ontario Health and the ministry to appropriately review and assess the need and effectiveness of the proposed programs and services in the community.

The EOI form and submission instructions are available online through the Ontario Health web site at <https://www.ontariohealth.ca/primary-care-funding>.

#### **4. Who can apply for funding under this initiative?**

Any entity or organization that is currently or will be providing primary care in a team-based model may apply for resources to address the health needs of vulnerable, marginalized, and unattached populations in their communities.

Through the EOI, the ministry and Ontario Health will consider applications for creating new and/or expanding existing interprofessional primary care teams.

These applications may come from both established interprofessional primary care models such as Family Health Teams (FHTs), Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinics (NPLCs), Community Health Centres (CHCs), Indigenous Primary Health Care Organization (IPHCOs), physicians/physician groups, or from other, new, and innovative models for addressing the needs of these priority populations.

#### **5. When is the deadline to apply?**

Completed EOI forms must be submitted to Ontario Health no later than **5 pm Eastern Time, June 16, 2023** to be eligible for consideration.

Please note: no late submissions or partially completed submissions will be accepted.

#### **6. REVISED - How will successful applicants be determined?**

Ontario Health and the ministry will use an evaluation framework based on the questions of the EOI form.

Successful proposals will demonstrate and contribute to the following:

- Increase access to primary care services.
- Reduce barriers to care for historically disadvantaged populations.
- Efficient and effective governance (i.e., board operations).
- Team-based models of care that optimize the scope of the team members and enhance how the team works together.
- Integration and collaboration with primary care partners and Ontario Health Teams and participation in population-based planning and service delivery.
- A commitment to a learning health system philosophy by using data and evaluation for continuous quality improvement.
- Improved patient engagement (including diversity that represents the community being served), and patient-centred care.
- Use of digital health solutions to support care delivery.
- Support the principle of providing the right care in the right place including at

the right time.

- Be agile and responsive to the needs of the community over time and in crisis responses (including providing guidance or referrals to social service supports).

**7. REVISED - When will recipients of funding under this investment be announced and when will funding flow?**

The goal is to announce the successful applicants in Fall 2023. Funding will flow after the Funding Agreement between the recipient and the ministry or Ontario Health is executed.

**8. Is there going to be a separate investment or process for Indigenous organizations to seek primary care resources?**

There is currently no separate investment or process for Indigenous organizations. Indigenous organizations seeking interprofessional primary care resources to address the needs of vulnerable, marginalized, and unattached populations are encouraged to apply through the EOI.

**9. Are Indigenous applicants going to be prioritized in this EOI process?**

The intent of the EOI is to help address the needs of the vulnerable, marginalized, and unattached patients and communities of highest need which includes Indigenous communities due to the historical impacts of colonization.

**10. Smaller organizations planning to apply may not have the resources needed to work on their EOI application. What are you doing to ensure that they are not disadvantaged compared to larger, more established models or organizations?**

Ontario Health and the ministry are aware that the EOI process may be challenging for smaller and less experienced organizations.

Ontario Health will provide support to those who want to apply but may lack resources. Please contact your Regional Ontario Health contact, via the email provided, to seek assistance with applying.

**11. Can applications be submitted by Ontario Health Teams (OHTs)?**

Yes. Ontario Health Teams with a primary care component are eligible to submit applications as long as they are an established legal entity. The ministry must be able to enter into an agreement with the Ontario Health Team in order to flow funding to them for the purpose of providing primary care.

**12. Do applicants have to be part of an OHT or have an endorsement letter from an OHT to apply?**

No. Being part of an OHT or having OHT endorsement is not mandatory, but it is encouraged.

Applications should demonstrate plans to partner with other individuals, groups, or organizations in their community to organize the delivery of services to the community and prevent duplication of services.

Depending on OHT maturity, applicants are strongly encouraged to partner with their local OHT on their proposal.

**13. Can physicians apply for resources through the EOI?**

Yes, physicians or physician groups that are not currently affiliated with an interprofessional primary care team can apply through the EOI.

In addition to applications from existing primary care models or providers, the ministry is open to receiving applications for new and innovative models to address the needs of priority populations.

It is recommended that you contact your Ontario Health Regional representative to discuss options for your proposal

**14. Is the objective to provide care to unattached patients or to attach them?**

Both. The intent of this initiative is to provide resources to attach patients currently without a primary care provider in communities of highest need and to help address population health needs by offering interprofessional primary care programs and services that would focus on health promotion, disease prevention and chronic disease management (e.g., cancer screening, diabetes management, etc.)

**15. Have the communities with the greatest need been identified by the government?**

The ministry and Ontario Health will consider available data to inform the review and assessment of applications across a number of areas, including communities of greatest primary care need.

Please note however, this EOI process is not targeting specific communities. This is an open call to any entity or organization that is looking to address gaps in primary care access and services for vulnerable, marginalized, and unattached populations across Ontario.

**16. Will existing interprofessional primary care organizations currently receiving funding from the ministry or Ontario Health have an advantage in the competition for this funding?**

No. The ministry and Ontario Health will be using an evaluation framework that emphasizes the proposed plan to increase access to care for vulnerable, marginalized, and unattached patients, efficient and effective governance, and integration and collaboration with the broader health system partners.

**17. With this EOI, will applications that are small scale be considered, e.g., requests for salary support for 1-2 health professionals to assist in the care of unattached patients?**

Yes, the EOI will consider all proposals that aim to address the need of the identified priority populations and make a positive impact on access to primary care and population health in their communities.

**18. The \$30 million investment can only go so far. Is it better for applicants to curtail their ask and submit an amount that they feel is more likely to be approved or should they submit a full request for funds?**

Applicants are encouraged to submit their full request based on the needs they have identified in their application.

Note that all submissions help the ministry and Ontario Health better understand the primary care gaps and needs of communities across Ontario.

**19. NEW - Is there a maximum of administrative support per full time primary care team complement that we are permitted to request and to add in the resources for leadership, human resources (HR), IT, etc.?**

Applicants should request the full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) that they feel they need to make their proposal successful.

There are no restrictions on the number of HR resources one can request.

**20. NEW - Can an organization submit more than one EOI? The team has multiple ideas for expansion.**

Applicants are encouraged to submit their full request in one EOI and provide details of each idea.

**21. Do organizations that have recently submitted proposals for new and/or expanded interprofessional primary care teams or resources outside of the EOI process (e.g., directly to the ministry or Ontario Health) need to resubmit their applications through the EOI?**

Organizations that have submitted proposals seeking to create new or expand existing interprofessional primary care teams should discuss requirements with their Ontario Health regional contact.

All proposals will be evaluated using a framework based on the questions and requirements of the EOI application template.

**22. NEW - Completing the EOI requires considerable resources and effort, especially for smaller organizations. If the \$30 million available is for the entire province, why are you encouraging everyone to apply – can this help make a difference beyond the current process?**

The decision to apply is up to potential applicants.

While the announced investment of \$30 million is intended to expand existing interprofessional primary care teams and/or create up to 18 new teams in communities with the greatest need, all submissions will help the government and Ontario Health better understand primary care gaps and needs across the province. This information will help inform planning for the future and guide decision making if additional government funding becomes available.

**23. What happens when you aren't aligned with an OHT? Will applications be excluded if they aren't aligned with an OHT?**

Alignment or partnership with an OHT is not mandatory and all applications will be reviewed.

For groups that are not presently engaged in OHT activities, they are asked to provide a rationale why and describe their efforts undertaken to build partnerships across the continuum of care. This will help the ministry and OH better understand challenges and unique needs when assessing applications.

**24. NEW - Is there a word count restriction on the open-ended questions?**

No. Applicants should feel free to provide as much information in their responses as they feel is necessary to address the question.

**25. NEW - Is there a maximum page limit for the submission including the template and supporting documents?**

No. Applicants should feel free to provide as much information in their submission as they feel is necessary to support their proposal.