

## Operational Direction: Digital Planning and Procurements

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**ISSUED TO:** Hospitals

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Health care delivery in Ontario is evolving from organization and sector-specific care delivery models to connected and team-based care delivered across multiple organizations and sectors. To successfully connect care for patients, their health information must also be connected.

Historically, siloing of patient information is in large part due to digital planning that occurs at the organization-specific level without consideration to system integration; it has resulted in fragmented health information across provincial, shared, and local solutions. The current model does not allow patients, caregivers, or front-line providers to see a comprehensive view of the patient's health record, and results in system inefficiencies in procurement, privacy, and security efforts, and ongoing support for thousands of individual systems.

Achieving an integrated and connected health system requires a mix of provincial and regionally coordinated digital solutions. This operational direction requires hospitals to submit existing digital plans and planned Hospital Information System (HIS)-related investments to Ontario Health. Ontario Health will review these plans with Local Delivery Groups to ensure alignment with the provincial digital architecture and will provide direction that will improve standardization and inter-operability.

While this direction is specific to hospitals, a similar direction to all health service providers holding Service Accountability Agreements with Ontario Health will follow.

We look forward to working together to enhance the delivery of digital services in health care. Your role is crucial in achieving our shared goal of improving patient care experiences and outcomes, provider experiences, population health outcomes, and health system value through effective connection and use of digital tools.

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## Operational Direction to Hospitals

For the purposes of this operational direction, “hospitals” refer to those who hold an H-SAA with Ontario Health.

Moving forward, hospitals must:

- Advise Ontario Health of their plans to renew any HIS. It is Ontario Health’s expectation that hospitals will join an existing instance wherever possible; hospitals are expected to seek Ontario Health approval in advance of joining an existing instance of an HIS.
- Inform Ontario Health in advance of procurement initiation and seek Ontario Health approval before signing new contracts related to HIS procurements.
- Submit existing digital plans (e.g., procurements and digital implementations) to Ontario Health for review by **June 9**.
- Coordinate and work with their respective Local Delivery Group and Ontario Health to create future system-level development plans.

Ontario Health will:

- Provide decisions on HIS procurements within 30 days of receipt of request.
- Review the submitted digital plans, consult Local Delivery Groups, and provide feedback.
- Work with Local Delivery Groups and hospitals to align digital plans to the provincial digital architecture.
- Provide periodic updates on progress and any needed support of major digital plan initiatives.

Please submit plans as well as any questions about this direction to the Ontario Health Digital Health Network at [odhn@ontariohealth.ca](mailto:odhn@ontariohealth.ca).