

Ministry of Health

Office of the Deputy Premier
and Minister of Health

777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 1N3
Telephone: 416 327-4300
Facsimile: 416 326-1571
www.ontario.ca/health

Ministère de la Santé

Bureau du vice-premier ministre
et du ministre de la Santé

777, rue Bay, 5^e étage
Toronto ON M7A 1N3
Téléphone: 416 327-4300
Télécopieur: 416 326-1571
www.ontario.ca/sante



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July 1, 2021

Mr. Kenneth Joseph (“Joe”) Parker
Board Chair
Home and Community Care Support Services
via email

Dear Mr. Parker:

As you begin planning for the 2021-22 fiscal year, I am pleased to write to you in your capacity as Board Chair of the Home and Community Care Support Services Boards of Directors. Pursuant to the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive (AAD), this letter sets out my expectations for Home and Community Care Support Services (also known as the Local Health Integration Networks) for the 2021-22 fiscal year. This letter is part of the Ministry of Health’s (the “ministry”) accountability framework for Home and Community Care Support Services, including the Memoranda of Understanding which set out the roles and responsibilities of the Minister, Board Chair, Deputy Minister and Chief Executive Officer, and the Accountability Agreements which set out operational and performance obligations and expectations for Home and Community Care Support Services.

Our government remains committed to connecting and integrating Ontario’s health care system by making it more patient and family-centered to meet the health needs of Ontarians and to improve health outcomes. One of the foundational initiatives is modernizing home and community care services to improve patient access to care and to enable successful integration of these services within the Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) model. Home and Community Care Support Services play a pivotal leadership role in this plan by providing home care delivery to support the continued delivery of high-quality services and to stage these transformation activities in the 2021-22 fiscal year and onwards.

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As part of the Ontario government, agencies are expected to act in the best interests of Ontarians by being efficient, effective, and providing value for money to taxpayers. This includes the following government-wide priorities for the provincial agency sector:

1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management

- Operating within your agencies’ allocations;
- Complying with applicable direction related to supply chain centralization and Realty Interim Measures for agency office space;
- Leveraging and meeting benchmarked outcomes for compensation strategies and directives; and
- Working with the ministry, where appropriate, to advance the *Ontario Onwards Action Plan*

2. Transparency and Accountability

- Abiding by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting;
- Adhering to requirements of the AAD, accounting standards and practices, and the *Public Service of Ontario Act* ethical framework, and responding to audit findings, where applicable; and
- Identifying appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board’s role in agency governance and accountability.

3. Risk Management

- Developing and implementing an effective process for the identification, assessment and mitigation of risks, including planning for and responding to health and other emergency situations, including but not limited to COVID-19.

4. Workforce Management

- Optimizing your agencies’ workforce to support the best possible public service delivery; and
- Modernizing and redeploying resources to priority areas when and where they are needed.

5. Data Collection

- Improving how your agencies’ use data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting, including leveraging available or new data solutions to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery; and
- Supporting transparency and privacy requirements of data work and data sharing with the ministry, as appropriate.

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6. Digital Delivery and Customer Service

- Exploring and implementing digitization or digital modernization strategies for online service delivery and continuing to meet and exceed customer service standards through transition; and
- Adopting digital approaches, such as user research, agile development and product management.

7. Diversity and Inclusion

- Developing and encouraging diversity and inclusion initiatives promoting an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace;
- Demonstrating leadership of an inclusive environment free of harassment; and
- Adopting an inclusion engagement process to ensure all voices are heard to inform policies and decision-making.

8. COVID-19 Recovery

- Identifying and pursuing service delivery methods (digital or other) that have evolved since the start of COVID-19; and
- Supporting the recovery efforts from COVID-19.

In addition to these government-wide priorities, for the 2021-22 fiscal year, I am asking Home and Community Care Support Services to focus on the following key priorities:

1. Continue to work with the ministry, Ontario Health and health system partners to plan, develop and implement activities to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including supporting response activities in other sectors of the health system and restoration/recovery activities such as an increase in scheduled surgeries.
2. Continue to provide home care services directly or indirectly through home care service provider organizations, long-term care home placement co-ordination services, and access to community services.
3. Work with the ministry and Ontario Health to advance health system transformation, including supporting the implementation of OHTs across Ontario through staged transitions of home care resources from Home and Community Care Support Services to OHTs, or providers within or aligned with OHTs.
4. Work with the ministry and Ontario Health to advance home and community care modernization, including supporting the transition from the current legislative framework for home and community care (*Home Care and Community Services Act, 1994*) to any successor legislative framework.

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5. Work with the ministry, Ontario Health and OHTs to consider innovative ways to bring care coordination closer to the front line of care and ensure more responsive integrated care.
6. Work with the ministry, Ontario Health and Ministry of Long-Term Care to consider a future long-term care home placement model, in support of long-term modernization.

The Home and Community Care Support Services’ plan to address these priorities must be outlined in the agencies’ combined Interim Business Planning Document to be submitted to the Minister of Health by October 2021, and cover the period from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

In addition, as part of your ongoing operations, Home and Community Care Support Services are expected to operate within their respective budget allocations set by the ministry and to demonstrate openness and transparency by publicly posting governance documents and information related to expenses, as well as Board meeting minutes.

Together, we will continue to build a health care system that will improve the patient and provider experience, provide better, more connected care, and capture better value for health care dollars so Ontarians can rest assured there will be a modern, integrated and sustainable health care system for them, when and where they need it.

Thank you for your service and I look forward to working closely with you, the Boards, and Home and Community Care Support Services staff to achieve these objectives. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact Amy Olmstead, Acting Executive Lead, Ontario Health Teams Division, at Amy.Olmstead@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

Original signed by the Minister

Christine Elliott
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health

c: Ms. Helen Angus, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health
Mr. Matthew Anderson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Health
Ms. Melanie Fraser, Associate Deputy Minister, Health Services, Ministry of Health
Ms. Amy Olmstead, Acting Executive Lead, Ontario Health Teams Division, Ministry of Health