

Greater Hamilton Health Network

Background

An opportunity for health and social service transformation

In February, the Ministry of Health announced plans to better connect the health care system by implementing local Ontario Health Teams (OHTs). In April, the Ministry released a prescribed, multi-phased process for formal applications by health and social service agencies seeking to be selected an early implementer of the OHT concept.

On July 18, the Greater Hamilton Health Network was invited by the Ministry of Health to submit a full application to create an Ontario Health Team (OHT). On October 9, the Greater Hamilton Health Network submitted its full application to the Ministry.

On May 15, 2019 the Greater Hamilton Health Network submitted an expression of interest (a self-assessment proposal) to be considered as an early implementer of the OHT model.

In November 2019 the Greater Hamilton Health Network received full approval and was one of the first cohorts to receive year 1 funding.

Agencies and organizations across Hamilton have long been working to strengthen and better integrate services to better serve the community. Since 2016, a formalized group of health and social service providers, named The Hamilton Community Health Working Group (HCHWG) born out of Hamilton's Anchor Institution Leadership Group (HAIL), has been working together to examine how to improve health and well-being of the population in Hamilton through better coordination of services – with a view to making patient care experiences more seamless and integrated.

Building on this, the Greater Hamilton Health Network, co-chaired by two patient advocates, was formed to explore local implementation of the OHT concept, and to prepare and submit the initial expression of interest to the Ministry.

The Greater Hamilton Health concept presents significant opportunities for Hamilton's health and social service sector to be more coordinated and integrated than ever before - expanding the collective impact and efforts of the systems to advance ideas for stronger population health approaches.

While this transformation will take time, and more engagement with the community and with partner agencies is critical, at maturity the Greater Hamilton Health Network plans to serve the whole of Hamilton with a long-term population health approach that builds on successful work in the community and strong partnerships.

Patient and partner engagement is central to the success of this initiative and a key area of focus in next steps. The team is committed to meaningfully engaging patients, families, caregivers, a broad array of partners and the communities we serve.

