

## Ontario Improving Access To Family Health Care

*McGuinty Government Issues Call For 19 Family Health Teams*

NEWS

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Ontario is calling for applications for 19 new Family Health Teams (FHTs) as part of the government's commitment to create 50 new FHTs.

Applications for Family Health Teams will be accepted from:

- Community and physician groups in eight Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs): North West, North East, Erie St. Clair, North Simcoe Muskoka, Central West, Central East, Champlain and South East. These LHINs were selected based on the proportion of residents without a family health care provider, the prevalence of chronic disease, and the existing access to family health services.
- Applicants from across the province who place a priority on teaching future family physicians. This will help to expand the teaching and training capacity for physicians in Ontario and work to increase the supply of physicians
- The six existing 'Shared Care Pilots' in Hawkesbury, Brampton, Cochrane, Downsview, London, and Plantagenet. These pilots offer the same team-based patient care services as a FHT, but are based on a different physician payment model. Launched in 2006, this pilot program has funding until December 31, 2009.

The call for applications closes on July 30, 2009. The FHTs will be awarded in the fall of 2009.

FHTs provide better access to care, closer to home with physicians, nurse practitioners, social workers, dietitians and other health care providers working together in teams. FHTs also help to reduce emergency department use for non-emergency care.

### QUOTES

"These additional Family Health Teams are an important step towards increasing access to comprehensive, front-line health services in the communities across Ontario that need it most. By using a collaborative model of care, Family Health Teams are able to see more patients, keep them healthy and provide the highest quality of care."

– David Caplan, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

"Ontario's doctors have been advocating for the expansion of Family Health Teams (FHTs) for some time and we are pleased the government is moving ahead with 19 additional teams. FHTs are an effective model that bring a variety of health professionals together to provide patients with a comprehensive level of care. Every Ontarian deserves the care and expertise of a family physician and collaborative care models, like FHTs, are not only providing timely access to care to millions of patients in the province, but are also helping Ontarians who don't currently have a physician, find one."

- Suzanne Strasberg, MD, President, Ontario Medical Association

## QUICK FACTS

- Ontario has 150 FHTs which are currently providing care to more than 1.9 million Ontarians and are serving more than 270,000 patients who did not have access to a family physician. Over 1,150 new health professionals have been hired to work at these FHTs.
- FHTs are located across the province in both urban and rural areas, with half being in communities which are under-served.

## LEARN MORE

Read more about the call for applications for the 19 new Family Health Teams.

Learn about [Family Health Teams](#) in Ontario.

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