

Digital First for Health Strategy: Evidence2Practice Ontario Program

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Background

The **Evidence2Practice Ontario** program, developed by the Centre for Effective Practice, the eHealth Centre of Excellence, and North York General Hospital, translates evidence-based quality standards into decision support tools, digitally embedded into frontline clinical information systems. This program is aligned with the Ontario Ministry of Health's Digital First for Health Strategy, which is being implemented through Ontario Health and other partners.

The first Use Case is a heart failure tool to be piloted in 1 Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system and 1 Hospital Information System (HIS), targeting 125 primary care clinicians, 100 acute care clinicians, and 2 acute care sites across 2 Ontario Health Regions.

In Ontario in 2017, roughly 280,000 people were diagnosed with heart failure, nearly 2% of the province's population¹. However, these patients accounted for roughly 17% of hospital resource use. Heart failure is 1 of 5 leading causes of hospitalization and 30-day readmission, and the most common cause of hospitalization for those over 65².

Guided by existing quality standards to address known gaps in quality of care in Ontario, subsequent Use Cases will be anxiety disorders, major depression, and diabetes.

Objective

The purpose of the program is to support equitable access to evidence-based decision support tools at the point of care, and thus enable better patient outcomes. This program promotes adoption of evidence-based clinical guidance by embedding decision support tools into clinical workflow and supporting implementation with a coordinated and tailored approach.

Use Case Design



Discover

Use case HIS/EMR scope confirmed: clinical and technical opportunities, evaluation metrics and logic model



Validate

HIS/EMR clinical content and requirements confirmed, prototypes developed



Develop

Technical build, privacy review, and quality assurance



Pilot and Implement

Initial technical deployment, change management, and continuous metrics collection

Evaluation

Key Performance Indicators will provide early insights into the impact on the Quintuple Aim through administrative program data, surveys and interviews, focus groups and usability sessions, and EMR data. Formative and summative evaluation will be conducted in collaboration with the Centre for Digital Health Evaluation and will allow for continuous monitoring and adaptation to optimize meaningful impact across all domains.



Results

Critical success factors of the program include:

Early and persistent engagement

- Strategic engagement with system stakeholders to drive adoption
- Formation of a governance structure
- Cross-sectoral communication and influence on clinical content and product design
- Focused discussion on promoting coordination of care

Tailored approach in acute care

- Gap analysis to understand localized differences and inform HIS functionality updates specific to each hospital
- Scalable methodology that enables implementation of quality standards in acute settings

Flexible modular design in primary care

- Moves beyond single visit/checklist medicine
- Accommodates clinician's workflow and enables person-centered and team-based care

Conclusions

The **Evidence2Practice Ontario** program is designed through a patient-centered approach and ensures clinicians have access to evidence-based decision support tools at the point of care within their EMR/HIS.

Collaboration with clinicians, patients, and experts in the field ensures the development of tools that will bring evidence-based quality standards to primary and acute care settings.

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1. Heart Failure Cohort (Schultz SE, et al.), 2017/18, provided by the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES). Table 17-10-0086-01, Statistics Canada 2. Inpatient Hospitalizations, Surgeries and Newborn Indicators, 2016-2017, Canadian Institute for Health Information.