



Home Care Ontario welcomes report on digital health care

November 24, 2016: Home Care Ontario welcomes the report, *Value and Opportunities Created by Ontario's Digital Health Assets*, by Ed Clark and recently released by Minister Hoskins.

"It is gratifying to see the alignment with the recommendation of Home Care Ontario's Technology Policy Paper "*Bringing Home Care into Ontario's Technology Strategy*" released on October 26, 2016," said Sue VanderBent CEO. "Our report's premise is that all members of the care team, including patients and home care providers, should have access to the necessary patient health information required to improve care."

Home Care Ontario supports

- The goal of achieving full access by all authorized care providers to electronic patient information within five years. This must include front line home care providers who can provide vital information about the patient experience at home.
- Establishment of a Digital Health Secretariat to set strategy and enforce common data and interoperability standards. Home Care providers are grappling with different data standards and definitions as part of diverse CHRIS implementations in the province.
- The Secretariat working with stakeholders including Associations to improve adoption of digital health technology and "standards relating to the input of data" in health care.
- Dedicated funding to health care providers for IT modernization, renewal and upgrades. This is entirely consistent with the call by Home Care Ontario for targeted financial incentives to the home care sector to invest in new solutions to support home care delivery and information exchange.

The Association also agrees with Mr. Clark's assessment that while the permissive approach have resulted in different systems "we should not do away with those systems". Members of Home Care Ontario support maintaining the home care program, CHRIS and agree that steps should be taken to "phase in minimum standards for connectivity, inter-operability, and performance moving forward, which would improve the experience of patient care."

Home Care Ontario looks forward to working with government as a system partner to implement the recommendations of the Clark report and to facilitate linkages to the strategies outlined in the Association's paper.

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About Home Care Ontario

Home Care Ontario, *the voice of home care in Ontario™*, is a member-based organization with a mandate to promote growth and development of the home care sector through advocacy, knowledge transfer, and member service. Home Care Ontario members include those engaged in and/or supportive of home-based health care. In Ontario, Home Care Providers are responsible for delivering nursing care, home support services, personal care, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, social work, dietetics, speech language therapy and medical equipment and supplies in the home to individuals of all ages. An estimated 58 million hours of publicly and privately purchased home care service is provided annually across the province.

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