

Action Plan 1: 2017 – 2020 Frequently Asked Questions

What is the role of the OPCN?

In 2016, the Ontario Palliative Care Network (OPCN) was established as a partnership of community stakeholders, health service providers and health system planners from across Ontario to develop a coordinated and standardized approach for delivering hospice palliative care in the province. Working together with LHIN CEOs, CCO Regional Vice-Presidents and the Regional Palliative Care Networks, the OPCN has set an ambitious but achievable multi-year plan to improve access to high-quality hospice palliative care services for Ontarians.

What is the OPCN Action Plan?

The [OPCN Action Plan 1: 2017 – 2020](#) is the work plan that will guide how the partners of the [Ontario Palliative Care Network](#) (OPCN) will work together to improve availability of, and ease of access to, equitable, high-quality, sustainable palliative care services for all Ontarians. It presents a way forward for palliative care services in Ontario and promotes collaboration and standardization across the regions.

Who was involved in developing the Action Plan?

More than 200 stakeholders, including Patient and Family Advisors, community organizations, volunteers, and health service providers were engaged in the development of this plan. Under the joint leadership of the LHIN CEOs and CCO Regional Vice-Presidents across the province, each of the 14 Regional Palliative Care Networks provided feedback on the proposed actions, the enablers that would be required to implement the actions at the regional level, and the system-level measurement targets.

What are the core elements of the Action Plan?

The Action Plan is comprised of 38 actions that have been organized into the following seven themes each with its own timeline:

- A. Enhancing Patient and Caregiver Engagement in Hospice Palliative Care
- B. Aligning the Planning for Hospice Palliative Care Across the Province
- C. Enabling Early Identification of People Who Would Benefit from Hospice Palliative Care
- D. Establishing Palliative Models of Care to Increase Access and Enable Adoption of the Quality Standard
- E. Identifying and Connecting Hospice Palliative Care Providers
- F. Building Provider Competencies in Hospice Palliative Care
- G. Measuring and Reporting on our Progress

What are some of the objectives of the Action Plan?

As the 38 actions outlined in the plan are implemented, the OPCN aims to move towards a system that will:

- Empower patients to identify their goals, access services, and manage their care.
- Help patients, their loved ones and care providers understand the benefits of palliative care, health care consent and advance care planning.
- Enable patients and caregivers to have access to information about the palliative care services they need.
- Allow healthcare providers to have the information they need to engage their patients in a dialogue about palliative care and know how to connect them to the services they need and want.
- Ensure that there is meaningful progress towards improving access and strengthening hospice palliative care in the province.

- Through a dedicated engagement plan with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, identify gaps in palliative care and develop recommendations that will inform future annual work plans.
- Continue to strengthen local engagement with Francophone communities.

What are some of the proposed key actions outlined in the Action Plan?

The OPCN is leveraging the knowledge and expertise of its partners to develop and implement the actions identified in the Action Plan. Some of the key actions or initiatives aimed at improving palliative care services in the province include:

- Developing a Palliative Care Quality Standard for Ontarians
- Developing recommendations on the appropriate models of care for patients receiving palliative care services within their last year of life
- Developing recommendations on the competencies required for health care providers providing palliative care
- Supporting early identification of patients who would benefit from palliative care
- Ensuring that Francophone patients and their loved ones have access to culturally and linguistically sensitive care
- Establishing a dedicated First Nations, Inuit, and Métis engagement plan
- Building stronger understanding of palliative care needs within priority populations (vulnerably housed/homeless, pediatrics)

What will the Action Plan mean to patients and their loved ones?

The OPCN Action Plan 1: 2017 – 2020 is [a plan for better access](#) to high-quality hospice palliative care services for Ontarians. Patients and their caregivers will be able to easily access information about what palliative care services are available. They will be encouraged to have discussions with their healthcare providers about palliative care to help ensure that treatment is aligned with the individual's wishes and goals.

How will the success of the Action Plan be measured?

The work outlined in the OPCN Action Plan aims to move the mark in palliative care through identifying four system level measures:

1. Percentage of caregivers of decedents who received palliative care services who were invited to respond to a CaregiverVoice survey
2. Percentage of community dwelling decedents who received physician home visit(s) and/or palliative home care in the last 90 days of life
3. Percentage of decedents who had a) 1 or more ED visits *or* b) 2 or more ED visits in the last 30 days of life
4. Percentage of decedents who died in hospital* (*Other locations of death will continue be reported, but are not system level measures)

Each of the Regional Palliative Care Networks have contributed regional targets that will determine the provincial targets.