

# BRIGHT LIGHTS AWARDS



2019

## **Enabling high-performing primary health care** **Digital Coalition**

Clinton FHT, Stratford FHT, East Elgin FHT, Thames Valley FHT (sites in Elgin, London and Woodstock), Tillsonburg Family Physicians, North Huron FHT, North Perth FHT, Sauble FHT, London FHT, Four Counties FHT, Brockton & Area FHT, Maitland FHT, Happy Valley FHT, Huron Community FHT, Saugeen Shores Medical Associates, London Lambeth FHO, Wolseley Medical Clinic, London InterCommunity CHC, Elmdale FHO, Ingersoll NPLC, South Huron Medical Centre, various solo practices and Partnering For Quality Team

## **Digital Coalition – A coalition of the willing is supporting efficiency in primary care**



Thirteen FHTs and 17 other practice models in Southwestern Ontario banded together to form the Digital Coalition (DC), an active, voluntary partnership that enabled members to create shared and distributed back end digital capacity, by coordinating form creation, testing, communication and distribution

Coalition partners determined that they use about 500 forms weekly, both paper and EMR-based, while each clinic discovered that staff spend between three and five hours weekly building and distributing forms. They realized they could save time, effort and money through collaboration.

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The DC has done a great deal of legwork in developing a standardized process, design standards and testing standards for forms that all partners use. The coalition is helping change the way new/updated forms reach primary care, leading to specialists in the region now preferring to co-design new forms with the DC.

Efficiencies were achieved almost immediately upon implementation:

- Within 17 weeks of launch, about 1,900 hours of unnecessary administrative time was saved among coalition members, allowing primary care to focus this time on their patients and achieve better work/life balance.
- Service providers (acute care, etc.) have benefitted from the wide distribution of EMR-compatible and interactive PDF resources that meet a minimum standard of functionality.
- Although this initiative is still in its formative stages – only about six months old -- there is potential to impact future wait times by reducing returned or rejected referrals/requisitions (anecdotal stories of this have already surfaced)

The coalition continues to see growth in membership of ‘builders’ and ‘clinical advisors/testers’ in two main EMRs in the region. It’s developing a lessons-learned document to ensure these new tools can be spread easily and consistently throughout the region and across the healthcare sectors.

Patients are an integral part of form design, providing feedback on what works and what isn’t necessary. In addition, the coalition has already been involved in co-designing custom tools with patients/caregivers. Coalition members hope to see their system adopted as widely as possible.

## Key Facts:

- Collaboration on form design, testing and distribution
- Within 17 weeks of the DC launch, about 1,900 hours of unnecessary administrative time was saved among coalition members
- Patient feedback informs design of forms
- “My Care Plan,” a tool for clinician/patient partnership, was co-designed with patients
- Specialists in the region now prefer to co-design new forms with the DC
- Lessons Learned document in development to share with new staff, other primary care teams