

**To:** Hon. Doug Ford, Premier  
Hon. Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier, Minister of Health

**Cc:** Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ministry of Health  
Matthew Anderson, CEO, Ontario Health  
Helen Angus, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health (outgoing)

**Re: Directive 6 must apply to patient-facing team-based primary care providers during COVID-19**

September 3, 2021

Dear Premier and Deputy Premier,

First, we want to take the opportunity to thank your government for the leadership you've shown with the introduction of the vaccine certificate and Directive #6, which requires the implementation of a mandatory vaccine policy for employees, staff, contractors, volunteers and students in certain health care settings. As associations representing team-based primary care providers and other front-facing health professionals in every community of Ontario, we see Directive #6 as integral to protecting as many people as possible while giving options to our providers to mandate policies that work best for their organizations' environments.

Directive #6 is also an approach that allows us to take seriously and respond empathically to concerns about mistrust in the health system from populations and communities who've faced discrimination in the health system, while still making it clear to Ontario health care workers that getting vaccinated is a top priority in keeping health care settings safe for everyone. Every serious illness and death we can prevent, every outbreak we can prevent, every ICU admission we can prevent – will bring us closer to the end of the pandemic.

So we're writing to you today to ask you to expand Directive #6 to include team-based primary care settings that include our organizations – community health centres, family health teams and nurse practitioner-led clinics. Premier, Deputy Premier, as you know, our organizations deliver primary health care and social services to many of the populations most vulnerable to COVID-19 and its related impacts. Our members' staff do outreach, both in shelters, urban areas and to isolated seniors; we provide harm reduction services and supports, often meeting people where they're at; and our providers are also on the front lines of testing, community supports and vaccination rollout efforts. Simply put, providers at our member organizations are face to face with the virus, working with people most vulnerable to it, on a daily basis.

Our members stand ready to implement Directive #6 and its guidance on how to encourage staff and related workers to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Many are ready to use their authority as laid out by the Chief Medical Officer of Health to, like University Health Network, go beyond the minimum requirements of the Directive. Your leadership can help enable this vital path of actions to get key Ontario health care settings to the highest levels of vaccination possible, and to protect more vulnerable Ontarians.

We hope to hear back from you as soon as possible about the inclusion patient-facing primary care providers in Directive #6, and we are ready to meet to address any concerns or questions.

Sincerely,

Sarah Hobbs, CEO, Alliance for Healthier Communities  
Katie Hogue, President Elect, Nurse Practitioner-led Clinic Association  
Kavita Mehta, CEO, Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario (AFHTO)