



Association of Family
Health Teams of Ontario

2022 Ontario Election
ORGANIZING A TOWNHALL
WITH CANDIDATES
IN YOUR RIDING

BACKGROUND

Another great way to get involved and advocate for AFHTO's policy priorities is by organizing a townhall for your local candidates. You may choose to lead this or you may choose to partner with your Ontario Health Team, other family health teams, or other primary care providers. This gives you an opportunity to get the candidates from each political party in the same room, and to ask them about their views on team-based primary care.

Now that many of our meetings are taking place virtually, organizing a townhall with candidates in your riding is easy!

STEPS

1 Finding your local candidates

Most local candidates will start promoting right away and you should start seeing their promotional materials online and in your region. A quick search should bring you to their campaign website where you can find contact information. You can also find listings of party candidates on party websites:

[Ontario Liberal Party Candidates](#)

[Ontario Conservative Party Candidates](#)

[Ontario New Democratic Party Candidates](#)

[Ontario Green Party Candidates](#)

To request a meeting, send the email template at the end of this tutorial to the email address provided on your local candidate's website.

2 Send out invitations requesting candidates to participate in your virtual townhall

Once you have identified the candidates in your riding, you will need to send out invitations requesting them to participate in your townhall. When you send out your invitation, make sure to introduce yourself and explain why it is important for constituents to understand the candidate's views on team-based primary care, as well as how it affects HHR, mental health, and other issues.

We recommend trying to get candidates from every party in your riding to attend. At minimum, it's best to make sure candidates from the four main parties attend (Ontario Liberal Party, Ontario Progressive Conservatives, Ontario New Democratic Party, and the Ontario Green Party).

Tip: If you have already confirmed one candidate, make sure to include this in your email to other candidates, as they will feel a little more obligated to attend. See below for a template email.

3

Create a Zoom or other online platform meeting event

Create a Zoom or other online platform meeting event and ensure that you share the information with all of the candidates who have confirmed. Make sure that the date chosen works for all candidates.

4

Promote your event

Once candidates are confirmed, now is your time to promote the event! This can be done on your office social media accounts, personal accounts, community social media accounts (many towns and communities have local Facebook groups or pages), through your newsletters to patients, and in your local newspaper. It is also a great idea to invite local media to attend.

ON THE DAY OF THE EVENT

5

Preparation

Make sure that you have chosen a moderator for the event and that they have prepared questions related to team-based primary care in your community to ask each candidate.

6

Technical issues

You may want to ensure that only the moderator and candidates are able to unmute themselves so that there is minimal disruption from other attendees. You can select these settings when creating a Zoom or other online platform meeting.

7

Format

Give each candidate one minute to introduce themselves, followed by a 20-30 minute Q&A period using the prepared questions. Following the prepared Q&A, the moderator can open the discussion to the attendees and ask them for questions, either live or through the chat function (roughly 60 minutes for a whole session).

8

Make sure to thank all candidates for sharing their time with you



AFTER THE MEETING

9 Additional questions

After the meeting, should you have additional questions, you can always follow up with the candidate's campaign team directly.

10 Upload the townhall to social media

It also makes sense to keep a recording of the townhall, so that you can upload it to social media. Always make sure to inform the candidates that the townhall will be recorded!

11 Send a follow-up letter (via email) to each candidate thanking them for their participation

If you are hosting an in-person event, the steps are generally the same!

In addition to the above, ensure you have booked a location, are following COVID-19 protocols, and that your candidates and the public know where the event is being held.





INTRODUCTORY EMAIL TEMPLATE

Subject: Invitation: Townhall with all Candidates in [insert riding name].

Dear [insert candidate's name],

I am reaching out to you today on behalf of [insert your team's name].

With the 2022 election soon approaching, constituents in the riding of [insert riding name] understand the importance of investing in team-based primary care.

Team-based primary care is family doctors, nurses, social workers, pharmacists, and others, all working together to support a patient and their needs. It has proven to offer more timely access to care, better coordination of care for patients, and cost savings for our health system. However, only one in four Ontarians have access to this care. This needs to change.

Seniors managing multiple conditions, people suffering from mental health challenges, and parents caring for children with chronic conditions are just three examples of constituents in this riding who could need access to team-based primary care. We are organizing a virtual townhall for all candidates in [insert riding name] to hear where you stand on this important issue.

We are planning to hold the townhall on [insert date] over Zoom. You can find more details below:

When: [Date]

Where: [Virtual / Zoom]

We would welcome your attendance at the event. Please let us know if you are able to make it.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

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