

Minister's Statement on the External Evaluation of the Family Health Team (FHT) Initiative

"Our government is committed to ensuring that every Ontarian has access to a primary care provider – either a family doctor or a nurse practitioner. We've made tremendous progress, and 93 percent of Ontarians now have a primary care provider – but we know there's more work to do. During the election we put forward a "Primary Care Guarantee," and as we deliver on that commitment, Family Health Teams will be absolutely crucial to getting there.

"On the whole, this report shows that Family Health Teams are performing very well in terms of improving access to the care patients need. When it comes to getting same-day appointments, Family Health Teams are delivering results that are among the best in the world. Timely access to services is important for patients, and I'm proud that Family Health Teams are delivering on that.

"As we work to ensure that all Ontarians have access to primary care, Family Health Teams are just one model, but it's a model that I believe is delivering strong results and this report validates that. Family Health Teams are an excellent example of care that puts patients first, bringing together health care professionals from a variety of areas to treat the individual needs of patients. Our Community Health Centres share a similar inter-professional approach, but are focused on high-needs populations. This report clearly shows that there is room for both Family Health Teams and Community Health Centres and that they both have important roles to play in improving primary care.

"I look forward to the progress we will make as our Family Health Teams mature and as more patients are connected to a primary care provider. Family Health Teams are currently serving 206 communities across Ontario through teams of 2,674 physicians and close to 2,200 interdisciplinary health professionals such as Nurse Practitioners, Social Workers, Dietitians, and Pharmacists. Over 3 million Ontarians are now enrolled in Family Health Teams, including 870,235 who were previously unattached. As we work to ensure that every Ontarian has access to primary care, Family Health Teams will continue to be an important partner."

*Hon. Dr. Eric Hoskins
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care*