

February 5, 2015

Re: [Eric Hoskins' best chance to fix ailing health system](#)

Let's take this a step further. The most cost-effective solution – the one we'd all prefer – is care that keeps us as healthy as possible.

This starts with primary care, the on-going care we receive throughout our lifetime to stay healthy, deal with common illnesses, keep chronic ones under control, and coordinate with others when more specialized care is required. Evidence from around the world, and more recently from Ontario, demonstrates the introduction of primary care teams is providing people with better care, at the best value.

But this approach to primary care has been grossly undervalued in Ontario. While CCAC workers are striking for their first pay raise since 2012, the staff needed to deliver comprehensive primary care – the teams of nurses, nurse practitioners, dietitians, social workers, pharmacists, therapists working alongside doctors – are stuck in a Ministry-imposed salary rate from 2006. With salary gaps of up to 30%, it's no wonder primary care workers leave for more lucrative parts of the health system.

Premier Kathleen Wynne committed during the election to improve the recruitment and retention of community-based primary care teams. We believe Minister Hoskins recognizes that team-based primary care is the foundation of a sustainable health system. So now we need government action to make this a reality.

Sincerely,

Angie Heydon
Executive Director
Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario
60 St. Clair Avenue East, Suite 800
Toronto, ON M4T 1N5