

# Health Quality Ontario Ontario Genetic Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

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## **I. Background:**

Health Quality Ontario (HQO) has a legislated mandate to make evidence-based recommendations to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care regarding the Government of Ontario's provision of funding for health care services and medical devices.

Health Quality Ontario fulfills this part of its mandate through the Ontario Health Technology Advisory Committee (OHTAC), which reviews the best available evidence and then, after careful deliberation, makes recommendations. OHTAC is currently a committee of the HQO Board of Directors, and only after the Board's approval do OHTAC recommendations become HQO recommendations. The Ontario Genetic Advisory Committee (OGAC) is a standing sub-committee of OHTAC. This document sets out the terms of reference for OGAC.

## **II. Role :**

In accordance with the OHTAC terms of reference, the function of any subcommittee shall be advisory to OHTAC. OGAC's role therefore will be to advise OHTAC on the clinical utility, validity, and value for money of new and existing genetic and genomic tests in Ontario to support OHTAC's role in making recommendations.

OGAC will consider evidence that systematically appraises a genetic test in a scientifically sound and objective manner. Such evidence will include the therapeutic advantages and disadvantages of a genetic test, value for money, societal, ethical, and patient perspectives, and implications for health system resources.

## **III. Membership:**

Membership includes OGAC committee members, and the Chair and Co-Chair.

1. OGAC will consist of between 10-12 committee members, including the Chair and Co-Chair
2. All members serve on OGAC on a volunteer basis.
3. All members, including the OGAC Chair and Co-Chair, are approved by the Chair of OHTAC and the HQO Board of Directors.
4. HQO shall aim to include individuals with expertise in the following areas:
  - a. Laboratory Medicine
  - b. Genetics and molecular science
  - c. Clinical and/or genetic epidemiology
  - d. Health care provision
5. At least 1 member shall be an individual who is not employed in the health care sector and who can contribute the public and or patient perspective

6. HQO shall strive to include individuals who represent the diversity of the population of Ontario.

#### **IV. Termination of Membership:**

An individual may resign as a member at any time upon written notification to the OGAC Committee Chair. At the discretion of the OHTAC Chair and upon written notification, a member's appointment may be terminated at any time within the term period.

#### **V. Nomination of Members:**

1. A public call for membership nominations will be issued to fill membership vacancies and when a term appointment has ended.
2. The nomination process consists of the following steps:
  - a. The existing membership of OGAC is reviewed with respect to the criteria referenced in Section III herein.
  - b. The public call for nominations may specify particular criteria referenced in Section III herein that are underrepresented among OGAC members.
  - c. The OGAC Committee Chair and OHTAC Chair will review qualifications of nominees.
  - d. The OHTAC Committee Chair will present the selected candidates to the Board of Directors for approval.

#### **VI. Term of Appointment:**

Each member of OGAC including the Chair and Co-Chair shall be appointed for a 3-year term, renewable up to two times at the recommendation of the Chair, for a total of 3 consecutive terms (i.e. 9 years of service).

#### **VII. Chair:**

The OGAC Chair:

1. Provides leadership to OGAC, represents OGAC on OHTAC, and to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.
2. May appoint the Co-Chair to Chair a meeting or portion thereof in instances where he/she has to recuse him/herself.
3. Shall perform such functions as are necessary to carry out the terms of reference of the OGAC. In fulfilling these responsibilities, the OGAC Chair shall have the necessary support of HQO staff. These responsibilities include:
  - a. presiding at all OGAC meetings, and being responsible for the general supervision of the affairs and business of OGAC;
  - b. ensuring all OGAC members fully commit to fulfilling their responsibilities as outlined under the OGAC Terms of Reference;
  - c. responding, on behalf of OGAC, to correspondence related to the mandate or recommendations of the Committee;
  - d. acting as the liaison between the OGAC and the OHTAC;
  - e. acting as the main liaison between OGAC and HQO staff, to maintain a constructive and collaborative relationship to maximize the impact of the Committee's work;
  - f. maintaining the integrity of the OGAC and its work, by ensuring members follow the Conflict of Interest Guidelines, in consultation with HQO staff;
  - g. acting as the primary public spokesperson for OGAC;
  - h. Reviewing each OHTAC Recommendation Report pertaining to Genetic tests before public posting;

- i. Participating in recruiting nominees for OGAC.
- j. Participate as a member of OHTAC.

**VIII. Co-Chair:**

1. The OGAC Co-Chair shall perform all other functions as are necessary to carry out the terms of reference of OGAC when the Chair is unable to do so.
2. The Co-Chair provides assistance to the OGAC Chair in carrying out the following duties:
  - a. chairing meetings in the event the Chair is unable to attend a meeting. This will include any pre-meeting planning and preparatory work that would accompany chairing a specific meeting;
  - b. chairing of a meeting for a specific agenda item in the event that the Chair should declare a conflict of interest with regard to the specific item;
  - c. assisting the Chair with the development of the meeting agenda;
  - d. assisting the Chair in a review of the OGAC Recommendation Report before public posting;
  - e. Assisting the Chair with the recruitment of nominees for OHTAC.

**IX. Ex-officio Membership:**

1. The Vice President of Evidence Development and Standards, HQO and Director of Health Technology Assessment shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of OGAC.
2. The Board will appoint 1-2 members from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, determined in consultation with the Ministry, as ex-officio, non-voting members.

**X. Attendance:**

1. OGAC members are expected to attend OGAC meetings in person.
2. A member who is unable to attend a meeting in person may request permission from the Chair to participate in the meeting via teleconference.
3. Members who are absent for more than 3 OGAC meetings per year may have their membership revoked by the Chair of OHTAC.

**XI. Frequency of Meetings:**

OGAC shall meet regularly throughout the year at the call of the Chair. Typically OGAC will meet between 4 and 8 times per year.

**XII. Quorum:**

1. The quorum for normal business of the OGAC meeting shall be 50 percent of members.
2. In determining quorum the presence of the Chair and Co-Chair is counted.
3. If a quorum does not exist, then no business shall be transacted except to adjourn.

**XIII. Votes:**

1. The decisions of OGAC will normally be arrived at by a consensus of those members present.
2. Voting will only be used when consensus cannot be reached or in exceptional circumstances.
3. Before a decision to move to a vote is made, the Chair will, in all cases, consider whether continuing the discussion at a subsequent meeting is likely to lead to a consensus.
4. Voting, where required, will be by show of hands, unless circumstances require a ballot, and decisions determined by a simple majority of those members present.

5. The identity of the voters is not generally recorded in the minutes. A member may request that his/her opinion and vote be recorded in the minutes.
6. The Chair will vote only in the event a tie.
7. Only Committee members (including the Co-Chair) present at the meeting will be eligible to vote. There will be no proxy voting.
8. Ex-Officio members are not eligible to vote.
9. No member may vote on any motion in respect of which he or she may have a conflict of interest as determined by the Chair (see section on Conflict of Interest).

**XIV. Minutes:**

1. HQO staff will prepare the minutes of OGAC meetings with the assistance of the OGAC Chair and Co-Chair.
2. The minutes shall reflect the names of the members present and shall be reviewed and approved at a later meeting of OGAC where the minutes may be corrected if necessary.
3. The minutes shall be the official record of the meeting and be an accurate record of the actual motions, resolutions, and results of deliberations including the reason(s) for any Committee recommendations.

**XV. Reasons for Recommendation:**

OGAC shall provide the reason(s) to support the advice to OHTAC concerning the evaluation of the evidence and these reasons will be made publicly available.

**XVI. Conflict of Interest**

Committee members must notify the OHTAC Chair of any actual apparent, or potential conflicts of interest related to committee business. In consultation with the OHTAC Chair, the OGAC Chair will determine what action, if any, is required arising from the conflict of interest.

**XVII. Confidentiality**

Disclosure of any data, materials or information obtained in the course of participation on the Committee that is not generally available to the public is prohibited.

**XVIII. Secretariat:**

1. HQO staff will provide secretariat support for OGAC processes and meetings. This secretariat function will include:
  - a. providing all administrative pre-and post-meeting support;
  - b. providing support during meetings including minute taking;
  - c. coordinating the preparation and distribution of meeting material including but not limited to agendas, meeting minutes, and evidence reports;
  - d. coordinating and distributing meeting material no later than 10 calendar days before OGAC meetings;
  - e. ensuring OGAC meeting proceedings and meeting venues are accessible to persons with disabilities.
2. HQO staff shall keep a permanent record of:

- a. minutes of all OGAC meetings reflecting attendance, key advice to OHTAC and actions of the Committee including results of any voting undertaken and the number of members with declared conflicts of interest during the meeting

**XIX. Communications:**

HQO staff will provide communications and issue management support. OGAC members are requested to refer all media enquiries to the HQO staff. The OGAC Chair is typically the public spokesperson for OGAC.

**XX. Expenses:**

HQO will reimburse travel/ meal expenses incurred by the member in accordance with its Travel Meal and Hospitality Policy.

**XXI. Review:**

Terms of Reference, mandate, activities, membership, and relevance of the Committee will be reviewed as needed.