

# Ontario Health Technology Advisory Committee

## INFORMATION SHEET

### Eligible Technologies

For the purposes of the Ontario Health Technology Advisory Committee (OHTAC), health technology includes a wide range of clinical procedures, devices and equipment applied to the maintenance, restoration and promotion of health, but excludes drugs on the Ontario Drug Benefit Program or Information Systems/ Information Technology related technologies.

- Technologies may include new and existing diagnostic and treatment related medical devices, equipment and supplies, laboratory tests and clinical procedures used in any health care service delivery setting.
- Technology encompasses interventions at any stage of health care, including primary prevention, early detection of disease and risk factors, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care.

### Ineligible Technologies

- Information Technology/ Systems Technologies.
- Prescription drugs currently under the jurisdiction of the Drug Quality & Therapeutic Committee (DQTC) or the Common Drug Review.
- Technologies mandated to be appraised by other Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) mandated bodies, such as the Quality Management Program-Laboratory Services Test Review Committee (QMPLS), and the Cancer Care Ontario new drug program.
- Preference will be directed to new technologies, rather than those that have already diffused unless the diffused technology is being considered as the alternative to a new technology or for a new application, or significant issues regarding a diffused technology are considered by OHTAC to warrant assessment.
- Any technology currently being appraised by OHTAC, or which has been assessed by MOHLTC or OHTAC during the past 18 months.

### OHTAC Criteria

OHTAC uses the criteria below to assess whether a health technology improves health outcomes such as length of life, quality of life and functionality:

- Technology must improve the net health outcome and/or safety for patients and/or providers or improve health systems efficiency.
- Technology must be at least as beneficial as any established alternative. If the technology is not better but equivalent to an existing technology, it must be shown to be effective and cost-effective.
- Technology must be licensed by Health Canada and have received other applicable licensing or approvals from appropriate governmental or regulatory bodies (e.g. the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission).
- Opinions and evaluations by national or provincial medical associations, consensus panels, or other technology evaluation bodies are evaluated according to the scientific quality and strength of the supporting evidence and rationale.

Preference will be directed to new technologies, rather than technologies that have already diffused unless a diffused technology is being considered for a new application or significant issues regarding a diffused technology are considered by OHTAC to warrant assessment. Any technology currently being appraised by OHTAC, or which MOHLTC or OHTAC has assessed during the past 18 months is also ineligible.

### OHTAC Application Process

- Applications for review must be endorsed by a potential purchaser of the technology, such as a hospital, home care program, or long-term care facility.
- The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the materials submitted comply with all applicable privacy and intellectual property regulation.
- The applicant should be aware that the Health Quality Ontario's (HQO) Medical Advisory Secretariat (MAS) might be required to share submitted materials with experts.
- The applicant should be aware that any materials submitted might be subject to freedom of information requests made to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.
- OHTAC will notify the manufacturer (s) of the technology if it prioritizes the technology for review.
- Available scientific evidence that would permit conclusions concerning the impact of the technology on health outcomes and inform decisions concerning their introduction into use must accompany the submission.
- Proven accuracy if a diagnostic technology, e.g. sensitivity & specificity.
- Available information as to whether the new technology will replace or reduce an existing comparable funded technology. If available, a description of current technologies and advice to inform decision makers regarding potential utilization interplay between the new and existing technologies.
- Available information on safety for patients and providers.

In addition, the applicant must submit:

- An acknowledgement that the applicant understands that all confidential, personal or proprietary information submitted to MOHLTC is subject to the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act.
- Permission to reviewers to discuss the review with other governments, Health Canada, and/or provincial government agencies and advisory bodies.
- A list of individuals at MOHLTC that the applicant has previously contacted in connection with this technology.
- An acknowledgement that the onus is on the applicant to ensure that there is approval by a manufacturer to submit information provided to them to OHTAC, if submitted.

### Mandatory Application Contents

Application attached or available from MAS at 416-314-1092 or MASinfo@hqontario.ca

Applicants will be asked to provide the following information:

- Verification that the technology has received applicable federal and provincial approvals or licenses from relevant regulatory bodies, and for what indications.
- Description of the new technology, including indications for use.
- Description of how the new technology will benefit patients, providers, or health systems efficiencies or cost savings.
- Description of patient population who will benefit and number of patients projected to benefit.

Technology manufacturers will be informed if their technology is being reviewed by OHTAC and will be invited to offer information regarding the technology. Other manufacturers of similar devices and experts in their use may also be invited to provide appropriate information to better inform this process.

## Discretionary Application Contents

If available, the applicant may submit:

- A literature review summarizing studies on the effectiveness and/or cost-effectiveness of the technology being presented, especially as this relates to currently funded alternative technologies.
- Information about whether the technology is insured in the health delivery system of other jurisdictions.
- Information regarding guidelines for appropriate utilization and whether the guidelines are consensus or evidence-based.
- Implications for health human resources, professional regulatory and licensing requirements, and education/training needs.
- Implications, if any, on the use of physician resources, and potential changes to the schedule of benefits.
- Information regarding consultations with other experts in Ontario regarding this technology.
- Information regarding alternative technologies in development.
- Any other information which the applicant may wish to submit.

## Practicalities

Submissions to be sent to the attention of:

Medical Advisory Secretariat  
Health Quality Ontario  
130 Bloor Street West, 10th Floor  
Toronto, ON M5S 1N5

Upon receipt, the application will be reviewed to ensure that all requirements are met and the technology is eligible for OHTAC review.

An acknowledgement of receipt and a status update will be sent to the applicant. Sixteen weeks is the average time expected for the assessments to be developed.

## OHTAC Review

The Ontario Health Technology Advisory Committee (OHTAC) was announced by Minister Smitherman October 30, 2003. It is a committee of stakeholder representatives and experts that provides advice to HQO, MOHLTC and the health care system regarding the uptake and diffusion of new health technologies in Ontario.

The committee reviews prioritized new health technologies as requested by hospitals, community-based health services and any other potential purchaser of health technology for the delivery of health care services in Ontario.

Technology assessments and reviews are prepared for OHTAC by MAS. It conducts evidence-based analyses of effectiveness of technologies, including in the context of existing health care delivery in Ontario. The analyses include systematic literature reviews concerning new health technologies in addition to reviewing the evidence submitted with the applications.

MAS will also contact manufacturers and experts nationally and internationally to request additional information.

OHTAC recommendations are evidence based, taking into account evidence of effectiveness, economic and human resource considerations, societal impact, regulatory and ethical considerations, and medical expertise regarding the introduction of new health technologies into health services in Ontario. This process is intended to maximize opportunities for the people of Ontario to have equal access to new effective technologies, underpinned by careful analysis.

As of April 2011, OHTAC and MAS became part of the newly formed Health Quality Ontario where they continue their important work.

## OHTAC Recommendations

OHTAC makes recommendations concerning adoption of reviewed technologies to the Board of HQO and the MOHLTC. Recommendations may consist of or include recommendations for health facilities to adopt the technology, or to adopt the technology accompanied by utilization guidelines. Recommendations may also be against adoption of a technology as an insured service at this time. A recommendation not to adopt a technology may be accompanied by a request that MAS review the status of the technology periodically to update the health technology assessment for OHTAC's re-consideration based on any new findings.

OHTAC may also recommend a field evaluation and/or human factor usability testing if the quality of evidence is insufficient for it to advise MOHLTC to commit to a long-term investment but the technology looks promising nevertheless. (If MAS agrees to fund a field evaluation on the advice of OHTAC, the field evaluation will be undertaken by a third party and the results of the evaluation shared with OHTAC for the purpose of submitting a later recommendation to HQO and MOHLTC based on the results of the evaluation).

When OHTAC makes a recommendation favoring uptake of a technology, the Ontario Guidelines Advisory Committee (OGAC) may be asked to review and endorse guidelines along with providers for the use of the technology. These guidelines will be evidence based and underpinned by OHTAC's recommendations and the associated health technology assessment.

If MOHLTC agrees to fund a particular technology, this information will be communicated by MOHLTC to OHTAC and to the providers of the service.

## Challenge/Appeal of OHTAC decisions

If an appellant believes new evidence should be presented to OHTAC, the appellant should contact HQO's Medical Advisory Secretariat to request an appearance before OHTAC. The appellant will be invited to make a twenty-minute presentation to the committee followed by discussion.

Please note that applicants are asked not to approach members of OHTAC directly regarding a particular technology. All queries will be handled through the Medical Advisory Secretariat, HQO.