

Ontario Health Technology Advisory Committee



Terms of Reference

I. Background

Ontario Health has a legislated mandate to manage health service needs across Ontario, consistent with the Ministry of Health's health system strategies, to ensure the quality and sustainability of the Ontario health system.

Ontario Health partially fulfils its mandate through the Ontario Health Technology Advisory Committee (OHTAC), which reviews the best available evidence on the provision of funding for health care services and medical devices and then, after careful deliberation, makes recommendations. OHTAC's recommendations receive approval from Ontario Health management before being finalized.

This document sets out the terms of reference for OHTAC.

II. Role

OHTAC's role is to make recommendations about public funding of health care services and medical devices.

In making these recommendations, OHTAC relies on reviews that systematically appraise the available evidence in a scientifically sound and objective manner. For each recommendation, OHTAC considers the clinical benefits and harms; cost effectiveness; societal, ethical, and patient perspectives; and implications for health system resources.

OHTAC also:

- Publicly discloses the reasons for every recommendation
- Considers feedback provided through a standardized public commenting process on each draft recommendation before issuing a final recommendation
- Establishes and maintains an appeals process that allows for changes to Ontario Health-approved recommendations, where appropriate

III. Membership

Membership includes voting and non-voting members. The non-voting members include the ex-officio representatives from Ontario Health and the Ministry of Health. All other members, including the chair and vice-chair, are voting members.

- OHTAC generally consists of 15 to 20 voting members, including the chair and vice-chair
- All members serve on a volunteer basis
- All voting members are approved by Ontario Health Management
- Ontario Health aims to include individuals with expertise in:
 - Health care provision

- Health economics
 - Clinical epidemiology
 - Ethics
- At least 3 members are individuals who can contribute patient, caregiver, family member perspectives and who are not current or former health care professionals
- Ontario Health strives to include:
 - At least 1 individual with current or recent experience in the health care technology industry
 - Individuals from a variety of health care sectors
 - Individuals who represent the diversity of the population of Ontario

IV. Termination of Membership

An individual may resign at any time via written notification to the committee chair. At the OH management's discretion and upon written notification, a member's appointment may be terminated at any time within the membership term.

V. Nomination of Member

- A public call for membership nominations is done periodically as needed.
- The nomination process consists of the following steps:
 1. The existing OHTAC membership is reviewed with respect to the criteria referenced in "Membership," above
 2. The public call for nominations may specify particular criteria if the criteria referenced in the "Membership" section are underrepresented among OHTAC members
 3. Nominations are reviewed and by Ontario Health staff in conjunction with the OHTAC chair and vice chair
 4. The nominees are approved by Ontario Health management

VI. Terms of Appointment & Appointment Process

- Each member of OHTAC is appointed for a 3-year term, renewable up to 2 times for a total of 3 consecutive terms (i.e., 9 years of service).
- All initial appointments, including chair and vice chair, are approved by senior Ontario Health management or designate
- Appointments of OHTAC members and vice-chair are renewed at the recommendation of the OHTAC chair
- Appointment of the OHTAC chair is renewed at the recommendation of Ontario Health management or designate

VII. Chair

The OHTAC chair:

- Provides leadership to OHTAC and represents OHTAC to the Ontario Health management or designate.
- May appoint the vice-chair or an alternative committee member to chair all or part of a meeting in instances where the chair must recuse themselves
- Performs the functions necessary to carry out the OHTAC terms of reference (with the support of Ontario Health staff):
 - Presides at all OHTAC meetings and is responsible for the general supervision of the affairs and business of OHTAC

- Ensures that all committee members fulfill their responsibilities as outlined under the OHTAC terms of reference
- Acts as the liaison between OHTAC and the Ontario Health management or designate
- Acts as the main liaison between OHTAC and Ontario Health staff, to maintain a constructive and collaborative relationship that maximizes the impact of the committee's work
- Maintains the integrity of OHTAC and its work by ensuring members follow the Ontario Health Conflict of Interest Guidelines, in consultation with Ontario Health staff
- Reviews each OHTAC recommendation document before public posting
- Participates in committee membership selection process

VIII. Vice-Chair

The OHTAC vice-chair performs the functions necessary to carry out the OHTAC terms of reference when the chair is unable to do so. If the chair is unable to attend a meeting, the vice-chair assists the OHTAC chair with any pre-meeting planning and preparatory work and chairs the meeting.

The vice-chair also:

- Chairs meetings when the chair declares a conflict of interest with regard to a specific meeting agenda item
- Helps the chair develop the meeting agendas
- Helps the chair review the OHTAC recommendation document before public posting
- Participates in committee membership selection process

IX. Ex-officio Membership

Two Ontario Health staff should be ex-officio, non-voting members of OHTAC. These positions are delegable

Two Ministry of Health staff should be ex-officio, non-voting members of OHTAC. These positions are also delegable

X. Attendance

OHTAC members may attend OHTAC meetings in person or remotely via teleconference or video conference. Members who are absent for more than 3 OHTAC meetings per calendar year may have their membership revoked by Ontario Health management.

XI. Frequency of Meetings

OHTAC meets regularly throughout the year at the call of the chair. Typically, OHTAC meets 6 to 12 times per year.

XII. Quorum

The quorum for normal business of OHTAC meetings is 50% of voting members, including the chair and vice-chair, either in person or via teleconference or video conference. If a quorum does not exist, then no business is transacted, and the meeting is adjourned.

XIII. Voting

- OHTAC's decisions are typically made by consensus of those members present
- Voting is used only when consensus cannot be reached or in exceptional circumstances

- Before a decision to move to a vote is made, the chair, in all cases, considers whether continuing the discussion at a subsequent meeting is likely to lead to consensus
- Voting, where required, is by show of hands, unless circumstances require a ballot, and decisions are determined by a simple majority of those members present
- Generally, voters' identity is not recorded in the minutes; however, members may request that their opinion and vote be recorded
- The chair votes only in the event of a tie
- Only committee members present at the meeting are eligible to vote. There is no proxy voting
- Ex-officio members are not eligible to vote
- No member may vote on any motion if they may have a conflict of interest, as determined by the chair (see "Conflict of Interest," below)

XIV. Minutes

Ontario Health staff prepare the minutes of OHTAC meetings with the assistance of the committee chair and vice-chair. The minutes reflect the names of the members present and are reviewed and approved at a later OHTAC meeting, where they are corrected, if necessary.

The minutes are the official record of the meeting and an accurate record of the actual motions, resolutions, and results of deliberations, including the reasons for any committee recommendations.

XV. Rationale for Recommendation

OHTAC provides the reasons supporting every recommendation made, and these reasons are made publicly available.

XVI. Subcommittees

- OHTAC may establish subcommittees as required, and the function these subcommittees will be to advise OHTAC
- Each subcommittee will have a term of reference subject to approval by OHTAC
- Members of OHTAC subcommittees require endorsement by the OHTAC chair and appointment by Ontario Health management

XVII. Conflict of Interest

Committee members will complete a conflicts of interest declaration annually. In addition, as standard process OHTAC members are required to declare any actual, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest related to committee business at the start of each meeting. Mitigation strategies for identified conflict of interests will be determined in consultation with chair and OH staff.

XVIII. Confidentiality

It is prohibited to disclose any data, materials, or information obtained in the course of committee participation that is not generally available to the public.

XIX. Secretariat

Ontario Health staff provide secretariat support for OHTAC meetings. This secretariat function includes:

- Providing all administrative pre- and post-meeting support
- Providing support during meetings, including minute-taking

- Coordinating the preparation and distribution of meeting materials, including but not limited to agendas, meeting minutes, and evidence reports
- Coordinating and distributing meeting materials no less than 7 calendar days before the meetings
- Ensuring OHTAC meeting proceedings and meeting venues are accessible to people with disabilities

XX. Communications

Ontario Health staff provide communications and issue management support. OHTAC members should refer all media enquiries to Ontario Health staff.

XXI. Expenses

Ontario Health reimburses travel and meals expenses incurred by the members, in accordance with its Travel, Meal, and Hospitality Policy.

XXII. Honorarium

Ontario Health may provide honorariums to voting members as a gesture of goodwill in recognition or acknowledgement of their gratuitous contributions, in accordance with the Ontario Health Honorarium Policy.

XXIII. Review

Terms of reference, mandate, activities, membership, and relevance of the committee are reviewed annually.

Date approved: September 29, 2023