

MAKING EVIDENCE RELEVANT

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About this bulletin

This bulletin is published by Health Quality Ontario ([HQO](#)) to update you on the work of its Ontario Health Technology Advisory Committee ([OHTAC](#)), Evidence Development and Standards ([EDS](#)) branch and research collaborators.

Questions and comments

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Providing Evidence to Support Health System Funding Reform

Erik Hellsten, HQO's Senior Specialist for Quality-Based Funding, presented as part of a panel on *Health System Funding Reform: Quality-Based Procedures* (QBPs). The session was part of the Ontario Hospital Association's [Physician Leadership Summit](#) held June 25 in Toronto. HQO's Evidence Development and Standards branch (EDS) has been working with expert panels to provide evidence and recommendations to help the government implement QBPs as part of its [health system funding reform](#).

The EDS branch has produced Clinical Handbooks for congestive heart failure, stroke, hip fracture and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with several others underway, including primary joint replacement and pneumonia. The handbooks serve as a compendium of the evidence-based rationale and clinical consensus driving policy approaches for patients in hospitals. [Click here](#) to find out more.

HQO's Expertise in Evidence Development and Standards Recognized Internationally

On June 26, Dr. Les Levin, HQO's Vice President of Evidence Development and Standards, presented at the [2013 Healthcare Congress: The Future of Healthcare in New Zealand](#). Dr. Levin shared Ontario's approach to health technology assessment as part of a session that was designed to discuss how a health technology assessment process could be implemented in New Zealand. Dr. Levin also met with New Zealand ministry of health officials to discuss collaboration opportunities.

Open for Comment: Breath Test for Detecting Bacteria in Patients with Ulcer-like Symptoms

Dyspepsia is a condition that causes long-term pain or discomfort in the upper abdomen. It can be caused by a bacterium that also causes ulcers and stomach cancer. HQO's EDS branch completed an evidence-based analysis of the Carbon-13 Urea Breath Test for *Helicobacter pylori* infection in patients with uninvestigated ulcer-like dyspepsia. As well, HQO's research partner, the Programs for the Assessment of Technology in Health (PATH) Research Institute, prepared an economic analysis of the breath test and the blood test that is currently funded by OHIP.

The reviews found that both tests performed well in correctly identifying patients with the bacteria. OHTAC recommends that the blood test continue to be used as the first-line diagnostic test for this condition. For recurrent episodes where blood test results are not reliable, OHTAC recommends coverage for the breath test as well. The draft [analyses and recommendations are now posted](#) for public comment for a 21-day period.

