

NEW

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Directions

New Directory of Networks connects ministry staffers

The ministry is evolving into an environment where networks or teams of employees from across divisional boundaries work together to meet common goals, Deputy Minister Ron Sapsford said.

Networks connect a group of people who have expertise, specific interest or who are accountable for developing content or managing information within a given subject area. They offer members opportunities for leadership and initiative and to educate their colleagues, both internally and externally, on their content area.

“Networks promote working more effectively horizontally by connecting the right people,” Sapsford explained. “No one division can do it all. We need to bring staff together from across divisions and even outside the ministry to reach our stewardship goals.”

The Ministry Management Committee (MMC) recognizes that our evolving approach to work is through networks. “Building upon existing networks and creating new ones supports and strengthens our new way of working,” said Sapsford.

A network may be temporarily established to resolve a particular challenge the ministry is facing or may be set up for on-going knowledge and information sharing. In both cases, staff may be drawn into a network on an as-needed basis.

Most ministry staff are already part of a network through a team or branch that they belong to or a project they have been involved in. Are you curious about which network you, your staff, manager or colleague belong to?

Staff can learn more about established networks in the ministry through the newly created **Directory of Networks (DoN)** on INFOweb. By providing details of current cross-divisional networks, their mandates and members, the directory supports ongoing and future collaborations.

Through DoN, staff are able to:

- Find and connect with colleagues who are working on and/or are knowledgeable in particular projects or subject areas
- Register an existing approved network and its members
- Openly share relevant documents, such as a network’s mandate.

All information in the directory is generated and updated by the user community.

Access [DoN](#) from INFOweb by clicking on the button on the home page or the link under Information Management.

There are various networks already operating successfully within the ministry. Groups are formed on a formal and an ad hoc basis to address issues. One formal example is the cross-functional project teams that have been organized to deliver results for the government’s two health care priority initiatives.

Examples of other networks in the ministry include:

- **The Strategy and Investment Prioritization Committee (SIPC)**, a sub-committee of MMC focused on making investment recommendations that align strategy, performance and budget. SIPC is made up of the ADMs of Health System Strategy, Health System Information and Investment, and Corporate and Direct Services, and is supported by staff from the three divisions. (For more details, read the [Aug. 31, 2007](#) issue of *NEW Directions*.)

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- **Colorectal Cancer Screening (CCS) cross-functional implementation team** undertook a major health initiative and developed a province-wide cancer-screening program. The CCS group involved partnerships from across the ministry, as well as many health system stakeholders. (For more details, read the [July 31, 2007](#) issue of *NEW Directions*.)
- **Emergency Department Co-ordinating Group** is made up of internal and external partners, who work together to ensure emergency rooms remain open to the public throughout the year. (For more details, read the [Nov. 22, 2007](#) issue of *NEW Directions*.)
- **Action Learning Project (ALP) teams** give senior managers an opportunity to work in cross-functional groups, applying the stewardship principles acquired through the Stewardship in Action Leadership Program. (For more details, read the [March 27, 2008](#) issue of *NEW Directions*.)

Sapsford urged staff to explore the Directory of Networks and work with their manager to see if there are opportunities to provide their expertise to the ministry’s networks where appropriate. “The directory is one example of the new approaches that will strengthen our stewardship workplace by allowing staff to readily connect with colleagues who are working on particular projects or subject areas,” he said. ■

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Executive assistant positions matched to new admin support model

In early July, the ministry announced it would implement a new administrative support model. The first stage of implementing the model has been completed. Implementation began with a review of executive assistant (EA) positions.

The review involved matching existing EA positions to EA positions within the new model. The matching process is now completed and has resulted in reporting-relationship changes for a small number of individuals. In most cases, EAs will continue to report to their current managers.

“Today we have taken the first step towards implementing our new administrative support model, which will enhance the ministry’s ability to collaborate and work cross-functionally,” said Deputy Minister Ron Sapsford. “Because executive assistants play such an important role in their interactions with administrative professionals at all levels, EA roles were the first to be reviewed and matched in the new model to ensure alignment with the transition to stewardship and the new way of

working across the ministry.”

The new administrative support model supports administrative professionals being assigned to a branch but also to be temporarily assigned to projects, teams or work across branches or other divisions. These assignments will be made on the basis of need and staff capacity.

Sapsford added that the new model ensures that administrative professionals are organized to make the most effective use of their skills and talents while at the same time ensures that administrative resources are available when and where they are needed within the ministry.

Approximately 350 administrative positions will be involved in the change to the new administrative support model. The next stage in the review and implementation process will be announced this fall. ■