

NEW

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Directions

New web portal gives teams access to online, real-time collaboration with colleagues



The ministry has launched a new web portal called The Exchange that will connect teams and help them access and share a wide range of documents, data and research.

The Exchange can save you the time and frustration of e-mailing documents back and forth or searching for them across various online communities. Whether you are developing a new document, editing an existing one or exploring a particular topic, The Exchange allows you and your team to exchange ideas with your colleagues online and in real time.

“The Exchange brings together helpful document and information management tools and resources in one convenient online hub,” said Nayla Ibrahim, manager of knowledge products, Knowledge Management Branch, Health System Information Management and Investment. “Working groups can hold virtual meetings online where they can share and store files, retrieve and publish documents, and access and share the research and data they need to complete their project objectives.” The portal can be accessed through a button on [INFOweb's](#) home page.

In the ministry's collaborative environment, groups need the capability to easily discuss and jointly work on documents often from different office locations, Ibrahim added. The Exchange will help cross-functional teams, drawn from across the ministry, the LHINs and our other health system partners, work together more easily, efficiently and securely.

Tools available on The Exchange

Application for Live Interactions (ALI)

ALI is a web platform where teams can hold virtual meetings. Within ALI's online meeting rooms, documents and even computer desktops can be shared by individuals in multiple locations. Participants can talk online, work on projects and presentations and create and edit documents together, all in real time.

“Most of the document consultation work that is done in an in-person meeting can be done on ALI. The interactive software is intuitive and easy to use. The added advantage is that there are no travel or time costs and no physical meeting room to book,” Ibrahim said.

To read how June Morrison, a security policy analyst, uses ALI to deliver her Lunch and Learn presentations, see page 3.



The Journal Access Centre (JAC)

JAC links to many of the major online health care journals and databases, such as the Cochrane Collaboration and Health Business Elite. These research resources cover a wide range of topics, including business and management, clinical medicine and health services.

“JAC assists staff in making evidence-based decisions through access to the most recent and relevant scientific facts, research and data,” said Ibrahim.

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Managed Information and Knowledge Exchange (MIKE)

MIKE is a content management system that provides a single point of access for stored documents. It offers a virtual workspace for managing the creation, review and publication of documents, reports, research materials and financial and performance data.

Ibrahim said MIKE will be of great value to project managers and groups with significant document-management needs. Its search function makes it easier to systematically store, organize and retrieve all the project documents used by a team.

In addition, MIKE eliminates the need to e-mail large documents for comments and provides version control through its tracking system. It can also send a notification to project managers when a team member has reviewed a document.



Decision Enabling Business Intelligence (DEBI)

DEBI provides convenient access to key business-intelligence applications used by the ministry to make informed decisions, including: Ontario Health System Scorecard, Allocation Payment Tracking System, Provincial Health Planning Database, Community Health Centre Financial Reporting System and the Ministry-LHIN Accountability Agreement Performance Indicators Dashboard.

Users must register to access ALI and MIKE. The registration link is found on The Exchange's home page. DEBI and JAC do not require registration.

Make the right contacts with DoN

A complementary tool to The Exchange is DoN, the ministry's Directory of Networks. With almost 50 formal and informal cross-functional teams listed on DoN, it can help you find and connect with colleagues across the ministry who are working on particular projects or who are knowledgeable in subject areas.

For effective planning and decision making, let the features of The Exchange and DoN help you share information and work more efficiently with internal and external partners. ■

THE **exchange**



Meet The Exchange family: ALI, DEBI, JAC and MIKE

ALI — Application for Live Interactions

- An online tool for holding virtual meetings which provides the ability to collaborate in real time with team members and colleagues.

DEBI — Decision Enabling Business Intelligence

- Brings together a suite of business intelligence tools to support effective decision making.

JAC — Journal Access Centre

- A single location to access a range of online academic journals and databases.

MIKE — Managed Information and Knowledge Exchange

- A content management application which enables users to create, exchange, store and publish documents.

Continue the exchange of ideas with DoN

DoN — Directory of Networks

- Links to the wide range of almost 50 formal and informal cross-functional teams that are actively engaged in the ministry's work.

Let The Exchange help your team make the right connections!

From one, central online location you can:

- Collaborate in real time with colleagues from multiple office locations
- Create, store, publish and share documents
- Quickly and easily find the latest business intelligence and authoritative health system research
- Create virtual meeting and work spaces for projects
- Maintain document archives and version control
- Take advantage of existing online tools and business applications
- Share ideas, successes and expertise.

How to register for The Exchange

Users must register to access ALI and MIKE. Information on how to register is available on [The Exchange](#) website. JAC and DEBI do not require registration.

Looking for training and more information on The Exchange?

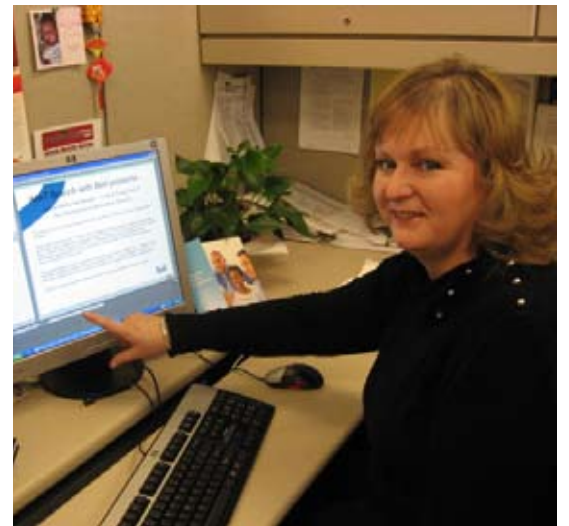
A divisional roll out of training sessions for ministry employees on The Exchange is being planned. Watch INFOweb and future issues of *NEW Directions* for notices of upcoming sessions.

For more information, contact exchange@ontario.ca.



ALI defeats distance by offering online meeting capabilities

June Morrison, right, with Health Services I & IT Cluster, took part in an advance trial of the collaboration tool, Application for Live Interactions. Also known as ALI, it is now available on The Exchange web portal. ALI gives people in multiple locations access to virtual meeting rooms, where they can share files and computer desktops, create and edit documents and give presentations, all in real time. Here, Morrison points out a chat pod. One of the many features of ALI, it allows participants to talk to each other online during a meeting.



Morrison, a security policy analyst with the Information Management, Architecture and Testing Branch, works at the ministry's Toronto offices at 5700 Yonge St. There she hosts a regular Lunch and Learn session for her colleagues on IT security topics and has used ALI on several occasions to help her deliver these presentations. For each session, about 30 people were present in the room while about 20 people in other Toronto and Kingston ministry locations attended the presentation over the Internet using ALI.

"The beauty of ALI is it lets you conduct the same range of tasks online and in real time that you would do in a live meeting or presentation," Morrison said.

People in different locations are mailed an invitation with a session link that they use to log on to the ALI site. Once online, they view any materials the host presents on their laptop or desktop computer, explained Morrison.

"I find this tool very useful because it allows you to collaborate and share content with a group of people in different locations. With ALI, people can attend meetings or presentations while staying in their own offices, saving time and travel expenses." ■

Note: To host a meeting on ALI you must register in advance. See [The Exchange](#) for registration details.

A New Direction Stewardship in Action FYI Series

Looking to improve your team's productivity and decision- making?

Plan to attend the upcoming FYI Series Session featuring The Exchange, on Feb. 25, 2009. Learn how this new web portal can help you and your partners easily find relevant information and research and exchange ideas and documents online and in real time.

[Register now](#) for The Exchange session!