

Ontario's Diabetes Strategy

From: Dr. Joshua Tepper,
Executive Sponsor
A newsletter for diabetes
stakeholders

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Introductory Engagement Session

An Introductory Engagement Session was held on October 26, 2009 to discuss the Ontario Diabetes Strategy (ODS). The session centred on the communication and coordination of the ODS, as well as service expansion and performance management. It provided valuable information to the project team and ODS partners. Themes and ideas that require more focused attention were brought forward for consideration.

As a result of the session, a series of stakeholder engagement sessions will be held early in 2010 aimed at increasing communication with our stakeholders and partners. A brief summary of the session follows.

Topic: Regional Coordination Centres

To facilitate an approach to improved coordination of diabetes care in Ontario, up to 14 Regional Coordination Centres (RCCs) will be established by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC).

The Regional Coordination Centres will:

- provide coordination and alignment functions, but will not deliver care directly
- support the development and operations of a system of services to achieve excellence in outcomes for people with diabetes
- be managed by MOHLTC – stakeholders suggested that funding should be tied to performance

Stakeholder Suggestions

Stakeholders suggested that a regional level committee be created to help lead the strategy and build links between each regional centre.

Topic: Delivery of Care

There are many components to the delivery of care, such as the composition of the teams that will provide care, the access that patients will have to care, how performance will be measured, and how the ODS will integrate with other strategies and implementation projects currently underway.

Diabetes Education Program (DEP) and Service Expansion

- Diabetes teams are currently comprised of an RN and an RD and may include other allied health professionals, such as a pharmacist.
- The referral process will be strengthened through RCCs so that newly diagnosed individuals are referred to appropriate DEPs to ensure a timely response.
- Service expansion initiatives will include a mobile team in the north.
- In developing the ODS strategy, the project team has worked closely with the LHINs to identify gaps in diabetes services.
- Stakeholders indicated that there was significant variability in response times between teams. The RCCs will address coordination of services and promote increased awareness of services available for individuals with diabetes.

Stakeholder Suggestions

It was suggested that improving services provided to individuals with diabetes would include supporting both the individual with diabetes and their family. Additionally, services should be provided in a timely manner – individuals need to be referred to teams as quickly as possible. Similarly, the location of the diabetes teams is critical to delivering quality care. Finally, it was also suggested that Nurse Practitioners could play a larger role in the treatment of patients, collection of data, etc.

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Topic: Performance Management

- Performance of diabetes programming and coordination will be managed by a variety of groups, including LHINs, who are a key partner.
- RCCs will promote the adoption of service standards, best practices and new information technologies. The primary care lead within each RCC will contribute significantly to the coordination of ongoing knowledge translation of best practices.

Topic: Communication Activities

A communication plan regarding the ODS was presented that included a variety of approaches such as:

- Utilizing traditional marketing tactics to invite at-risk and affected populations to “find out more” about the program by visiting a website, making a phone call, etc.
- Providing opportunities for individuals living with diabetes, friends/family, educators and providers to become informed of the strategy through as many channels as possible.

Stakeholder Suggestions

It was suggested that access to all information should be available from a central location – access to toolkits, registry, and others. As well, key stakeholders should be invited to assist with the creation of a detailed communications rollout on the ODS going forward, particularly regarding physician engagement.

Additional Stakeholder Suggestions

Further discussion during the engagement session prompted the following additional suggestions:

- Develop a drug strategy for the ODS, to assist those who cannot afford medication; this could improve performance in the areas of quality and costs
- Articulate how the Diabetes Registry would integrate with other strategies, such as existing Electronic Medical Record (EMR) systems
- Make knowledge translation a key component of the ODS
- Include information for the management of Type 1 and 2 diabetes in educational materials
- Design a demonstration project in the diabetes delivery system to assist practitioners in learning from each other and to help inform best practices and transfer knowledge across the system

Thank you to all who participated in the introductory engagement session for the Ontario Diabetes Strategy. We look forward to your continued involvement.

I would be pleased if you shared this update with others. To be added to our distribution list or to provide feedback, please send an email to: laura.silver@ontario.ca. Thank you. Joshua Tepper, Ontario Diabetes Strategy.

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