

Family Health Teams

Advancing Primary Health Care

Family Health Team Implementation Checklist

Updated April 2007
Version 3.0

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Introduction

Family Health Teams will improve access to primary health care through the introduction of interdisciplinary health teams. These teams will be developed with input from both the community and health care providers.

A Family Health Team (FHT) will build on the successes of existing primary health care models, but may be different in size and offer programs tailored to the needs of the local population it serves.

Family Health Teams will:

- Provide better access to care, closer to home;
- Consist of interdisciplinary teams working together to keep patients healthy [teams will include physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses and additional members, such as dietitians, pharmacists or other health care professionals who may be added to a team, depending on the needs of the community];
- Provide extended hours and after-hours access to a registered nurse through the Telephone Health Advisory Service [patients can speak to a registered nurse with access to patient information and, if necessary, a member of the Family Health Team will contact the patient];
- Help patients navigate their way through the health care system;
- Provide primary health care, chronic disease management, and self-help tools to improve health; and
- Use “state of the art” information technology, giving providers access to patient information and test results.

Purpose

The Primary Health Care and Family Health Teams branch of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (the ministry) has developed this implementation checklist to assist groups interested in establishing Family Health Teams to keep track of their progress throughout the six stages of planning and development.

Stages of Development and Associated Activity	
1. Initial Application Stage	Obtaining information to submit your initial application to the ministry
2. Formative Stage	Establishing your Family Health Team governance structure
3. Strategic and Program Planning Stage	Planning for a long-term approach to services and how your Family Health Team will address population health needs
4. Business Plan Application Stage	Developing your Family Health Team’s multi-year business plan
5. Pre-Operational Stage	Starting to acquire resources and space to run the Family Health Team after having received “Year One” approval of your business plan
6. Operational Stage	Developing and implementing targeted programs for patients based on defined needs, after having acquired your Family Health Team’s health providers

Depending on the current status of your group, some steps in the process may be skipped, but the group should seek the ministry's consent before doing so.

The ministry has prepared the following Family Health Team guides to assist you through the various stages of planning and development identified in this implementation checklist.

FHT Guide Names	
1	<i>Guide to Governance and Accountability</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_governance2.pdf
2	<i>Guide for Development Grant Application</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_devgrant_application.pdf
3	<i>Guide to Strategic and Program Planning</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_strategic.pdf
4	<i>Guide to Chronic Disease Management and Prevention</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_chronic_disease.pdf
5	<i>Guide to Health Promotion and Disease Prevention</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_health_promotion2.pdf
6	<i>Guide to Business and Operational Plan Development</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_business_guide.pdf
7	<i>Guide to Physician Compensation</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_compensation.pdf
8	<i>Guide to Collaborative Team Practice</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_collab_team.pdf
9	<i>Guide to Interdisciplinary Provider Compensation</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_inter_provider.pdf
10	<i>Guide to Interdisciplinary Team Roles and Responsibilities</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_inter_team.pdf
11	<i>Guide to Integrating French Language Health Services in Family Health Teams</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_flhs_guide.pdf
12	<i>Guide to Community Funding Partnerships and Program/Service Integration</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_community_funding2.pdf
13	<i>Guide to Transitional Funding</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_transitional.pdf
14	<i>Guide to Information Technology</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_it_guide.pdf
15	<i>Guide to Patient Enrolment</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_enrolment.pdf
16	<i>Guide to Telephone Health Advisory Service (THAS)</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_thas.pdf
17	<i>Guide to Independent Health Facilities Licensing</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_independent.pdf
18	<i>Guide to Communications</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_communications2.pdf
19	<i>Guide to Accessibility Planning Information and Resources: Addressing the Needs of Ontarians with Disabilities (in progress)</i>

Other Reference Materials
<i>Family Health Team Development Grant Agreement</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/development_agreement.pdf
<i>Operational Plan Funding Application Template</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_business_plan.xls
<i>Business and Operational Plan Examples</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_business_examples.pdf
<i>Business and Operational Plan Evaluation Matrix</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_bop_matrix.pdf
<i>Business and Operational Plan Checklist Requirements</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_bop_checklist.pdf
<i>Visual Identity Guideline Introduction Letter</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_visual_ltr.pdf
<i>Family Health Team Visual Identity Guidelines</i> http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/fht/guides/fht_visual.pdf

Initial Application Stage

At this first stage, you will obtain the information needed to submit an initial application to the ministry. This is a simple application process that will help you decide on the team you may require to deliver the type of services you would like to provide. The ministry will use this information to decide whether you will be asked to proceed further in the development of your Family Health Team.

You are invited to:

- Read information documents available from the ministry's website at:
<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/familyhealthteams> or contact the ministry at 416-325-3575 or 1-866-766-0266;
- Discuss proposal requirements with co-sponsors; also discuss local health care needs with other health care providers and community organizations;
- Submit the *FHT Application Form* to the ministry by the deadline; and
- If eligible, request seed funding for completion of the *FHT Application Form*.

A maximum of \$2,000 in one-time seed funding is available to you. Refer to the *Application for Financial Assistance (Seed Funding)* on the ministry website. The grant will be provided following receipt of a completed *FHT Application Form*, not in advance.

If your group is selected, you will receive a letter of confirmation from the ministry providing your Family Health Team with conditional approval to proceed to the proposal development and implementation stage. At this time, you will also be assigned a ministry contact (a Family Health Team Coordinator) who will guide you in moving through the stages required to plan, develop and implement your Family Health Team.

Formative Stage

At this second stage of development, you will have been invited by the ministry to proceed to the next stage of Family Health Team development. At each stage of development, you will be required to do additional work, and will be provided with support and guidance from ministry staff.

In the Formative Stage, you will be establishing your governance structure that will set out the responsibilities for managing your Family Health Team. A governance framework also includes provisions for financial management, which is necessary so that the ministry can provide you with funding, and ensure accountability and reporting.

You are now asked to:

- Obtain the ministry's *Guide to Governance and Accountability*;
- Review governance options and decide on the framework that is best suited for your organization;
- Establish a local Family Health Team Development Committee (which should include other health care/community organizations that will be involved with the Family Health Team during the development and/or operational stage);
- Contact your ministry Family Health Team Coordinator to a) set up an inaugural meeting and ensure all current Family Health Team guides/toolkits have been made available to the group, and b) review the development process steps and timelines (roles and responsibilities of the ministry and Family Health Team proponents); and
- Review the ministry's *Guide for Development Grant Application* and complete the *Family Health Team Development Grant Agreement*.

This grant will provide you with initial funding to hire appropriate resources to assist in completing your Business and Operational Plan, as well as governance and incorporation related activities. It is necessary to enter into a contract/agreement in order to receive these development grant funds. You are expected to observe due diligence and fiscal prudence when expending ministry funding. Unspent funds will be returned to the ministry.

Family Health Team funding requests are subject to the following four principles:

1. *Additionality* – Funding is limited to the additional costs incurred by becoming a Family Health Team;
2. *Proportionality* – Funding is proportional to the eligible number of approved Family Health Team members;
3. *Eligibility* – Funding is limited to eligible items; and
4. *Reasonableness* – Eligible items are funded within approved benchmarks.

Other steps:

- Open a separate bank account in the name of your FHT in which developmental funding and future operational funding will be held, and provide the necessary banking information to your Family Health Team Coordinator;
- You may wish to consult various reference sources provided in the ministry guides to assist you in making a decision on appropriate governance arrangements [if you are a physician-led group, you can consult with the Ontario Medical Association legal counsel who will provide guidance and template governance agreements];
- Take appropriate steps to formalize the legal arrangements for your governance option – this may include incorporation for non-profit and professional groups; and
- Develop by-laws that will assist your decision-making processes.

Strategic and Program Planning Stage

Strategic planning is a part of governance that focuses on planning for the long term. The strategic planning process includes setting long-term objectives, developing plans and procedures to achieve these objectives, and determining if these objectives have been met. Planning for the long term will assist Family Health Teams to develop an approach to services, including how the team will address population health needs and determine if they are met.

At this point:

- Refer to the ministry's *Guide to Strategic and Program Planning* for more information [this guide includes a link to the Statistical Profile of Canadian Communities maintained by Statistics Canada to assist in determining community demographics];
- Further develop, together with your Development Committee, the Family Health Team vision, mission and goals to help define what your Family Health Team's role will be in your community [and as new members join your team, you will want to ensure that all members understand and share the vision, mission and goals of your Family Health Team];
- Further define the population you will be serving, including their demographics and health needs, and your plan to address these needs [refer to the *Guide to Chronic Disease Management and Prevention* and the *Guide to Health Promotion and Disease Prevention* for more information]; and
- Develop a list of programs and services your Family Health Team wishes to provide to address the health needs of your patient population, setting realistic objectives to improve health outcomes.

Your list of programs and services should reflect a two-to-five-year development plan to become fully operational. Change and program development takes time, so you will need to be realistic in program implementation.

Business Plan Application Stage

At this stage, you will be required to develop a multi-year (two-to-five-year) business plan for your Family Health Team. This plan will initially be at a general level. As you acquire resources, refine program needs and continue to consult with your community and health delivery partners, it will evolve and become more refined.

Your next steps are to:

- Review the ministry's *Guide to Business and Operational Plan Development*;

[At this stage you will also be required to develop staffing plans and make choices on compensation models for providers. You should refer to the following: the *Guide to Physician Compensation*, *Guide to Collaborative Team Practice*, *Guide to Interdisciplinary Provider Compensation* and *Guide to Interdisciplinary Team Roles and Responsibilities*. The ministry will closely monitor the forecasts and projections made in the Business and Operational Plan.]

- Prior to completion of the Business and Operational Plan, consider applying for early implementation (Early Win) funding for some allied health providers and/or an administrative lead position in order to begin delivering some programs and services to address identified patient health needs;

[If approved, Early Win funding can be flowed before your Business and Operational Plan is completed. The ability to hire additional allied health providers will demonstrate progress to your team and community, and will allow these providers to deliver programs and participate in the overall planning of your Family Health Team.]

- Prepare a detailed “Year One” Business and Operational Plan and a draft “Two-to-Five-Year” plan;

[This plan will set staffing requirements for your Family Health Team and will indicate resource supports coming from your community – refer to the *Guide to Community Funding Partnerships and Program/Service Integration* and the *Guide to Transitional Funding* for further information.]

- Once the ministry has approved your “Year One” staffing complement, plan and submit a detailed overhead budget, space plans, including site renovations, and one-time costs for program/medical equipment, IT equipment, office furnishings and associated equipment; and
- A specific transitional funding request, based on your Family Health Team’s approved staffing complement, will need to be prepared soon after your team’s Business Plan has been approved by the ministry.

When submitted, your Business and Operational Plan will be assessed by the ministry. Your Family Health Team Coordinator will meet with you to discuss your plan and may request some revisions.

Pre-Operational Stage

At this stage, you will have completed all of your plans, had discussions with the community and other local providers, and will be starting to acquire resources and space to run your Family Health Team.

The ministry will have reviewed your Business and Operational Plan, and your Family Health Team will have received approval for the “Year One” allied health provider and administrative staff complement. You will have met with your Family Health Team Coordinator to discuss your Business and Operational Plan approval, and the key tasks required to implement your Family Health Team. Each Family Health Team will need to prepare an implementation plan based on its own unique set of circumstances.

The key steps involved in making your Family Health Team operational include:

- Your Family Health Team will be requested to provide a revised “Year One” overhead and one-time cost budget request, based on the approved complement of allied health providers and administrative staff;
- Your Family Health Team should recruit an administrative lead to carry out and/or lead the key activities required to make the team operational;

[This could include such tasks as human resources recruitment, as well as acting as a key contact for communications with your Family Health Team’s internal and external stakeholders, including the ministry.]

- Your Family Health Team will need to acquire appropriate space to accommodate your approved “Year One” staffing complement, as well as complete and document your space plan and related capital improvement costs on the *Facility Improvements Phase 1 Checklist* found in the *Guide to Transitional Funding*;

[These two tools will guide your team as you prepare floor plans, space utilization charts and document details concerning your lease arrangements at each team site. Your Family Health Team Coordinator will be available to assist you through this process.]

Some teams will need to find and enter into interim space arrangements pending the completion of a detailed capital expansion/improvements planning process. Your Family Health Team Coordinator will be available to answer questions, discuss alternatives, and advise on the information required to consider and approve appropriate interim space arrangements for your team.]

- Your Family Health Team Coordinator will prepare an *Interim Funding Agreement* (IFA) following approval of your business plan and staffing complement for “Year One”;

[The IFA will be tailored to your Family Health Team’s governance model. The preliminary budget usually includes the salary and benefits for the “Year One” approved staff complement of your team. One-time funding is also included for appropriate recruitment costs. Once the IFA is completed, funding can flow to your team to assist in your recruitment efforts and pay your approved allied health providers and administrative staff once hired.]

- Additional funding for overhead and one-time costs will be approved and provided to your Family Health Team through a budget amendment to the above IFA, once the ministry has reviewed and approved your revised overhead and one-time funding request for “Year One” operations; and
- If you have successfully recruited a new physician(s) to your Family Health Team, you will need to obtain the appropriate forms and materials required for patient enrolment – refer to the *Guide to Patient Enrolment* and the *Guide to Telephone Health Advisory Service* (THAS) for further details.

[If participating in a patient enrolment model is new for your Family Health Team, consider requesting your Family Health Team Coordinator to arrange an orientation session for the physician(s) and administrative support staff, who are new to patient enrollment, billing and payment activities.]

Other pre-operational stage activities:

- Ensure you have taken appropriate steps to establish your Family Health Team’s visual identity on signage, letterhead and other related materials [refer to the *Guide to Communications* and the *Family Health Team Visual Identify Guidelines* for details];
- Select and acquire an appropriate employee benefits package;
- Ensure you have established personnel policies and procedures;
- Plan and arrange for appropriate training to meet staff needs;
- Acquire supplies and equipment as needed;
- Determine your clinical information needs and select your team’s clinical information systems [refer to the *Guide to Information Technology* for more details (and see the **Operational Stage** section below, third bullet point)];
- Once your team has selected a clinical information system, please forward a detailed IT funding request to your Family Health Team Coordinator;
- Obtain appropriate insurance for the Family Health Team premises and operations;

[Eligible insurance costs for Family Health Team funding include contents/property insurance, director/board liability, and malpractice insurance for allied health providers.]

- Once you have completed your competitive search process for insurance, please forward a listing of your insurance coverage and related costs to your Family Health Team Coordinator;
- Arrange for a certified external auditor to audit financial statements and compliance with agreements – you are required to submit annual audited financial statements to the ministry;
- Establish systems and processes for physicians and other clinical staff to complete required information for ministry reporting and payment purposes;

- Consider establishing a) a Community Advisory Board to assist in advising your Family Health Team, as well as b) an internal committee structure to facilitate communication and decision-making for your team; and
- Obtain the proper licence for teams intending to provide services that require licensing under the *Independent Health Facilities Act* [refer to the *Guide to Independent Health Facilities Licensing*].

Operational Stage

At this stage, the Family Health Team will have acquired its health providers and will be building a collaborative team to:

- Develop and implement programs for targeted patient populations based on defined needs;
- Ensure that programs include defined and measurable objectives to enable your team to assess results and adjust programs as necessary;
- Consider your data collection needs in selecting your Clinical Management System [refer to the *Guide to Strategic and Program Planning*, the *Guide to Health Promotion and Disease Prevention*, and the *Guide to Chronic Disease Management and Prevention*];
- Ensure service delivery systems and administrative operations are in full compliance with terms set out in the *Family Health Team Agreement*; and
- Submit service and financial reports to the ministry according to schedules set out in signed agreements.

Most Family Health Teams will require between several months to several years to become fully operational. Teams will be implemented as health providers are recruited, patients are enrolled, and programs are developed.

Larger teams planning diagnostic and surgical services will require licenses under the *Independent Health Facilities Act*. This process may take several months to complete.

Where to Get More Information

As indicated earlier, all potential Family Health Teams will be assigned a Family Health Team Coordinator. This ministry contact will be your guide to assist you and work through the details and options of establishing a Family Health Team.

If you have not yet been assigned a Family Health Team Coordinator, please contact the ministry at:

Primary Health Care and Family Health Teams
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
1075 Bay Street, 9th Floor
Toronto ON M5S 2B1

Telephone: 416-325-3575
Toll Free Telephone: 1-866-766-0266

For more information on Family Health Teams in general, please refer to the Family Health Team Fact Sheets or the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's website at: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/familyhealthteams>.

