



2013-2014

Summary Corporate Plan

The need to communicate stretches across human history. Innovations such as language, the printing press and the silicon chip have fundamentally changed not only how and how much information is communicated, but also societal norms, culture and possibilities.

Nowhere is harnessing this potential more important than in health care, particularly given the torrent of new clinical research produced each year and the increasingly complex patterns of care for individuals with long-term health problems. **That's why Infoway, in collaboration with our many partners, is focusing on improving health and health care through innovative digital health solutions.**

Together, we have already made significant progress. For example, almost all x-rays, MRIs, CTs and other imaging tests in Canada's public hospitals are now filmless. This has boosted the productivity of existing resources, including adding the equivalent of up to 500 radiologists, which would enable as many as 11 million more exams annually. Drug information systems are now being used in about half of Canada's emergency rooms and one-third of community pharmacies. The result is safer medication use, fewer harmful drug interactions and less prescription fraud. In addition, patients have to travel less often for care thanks to telehealth – 47 million fewer kilometres in 2010.

Together, independent studies estimate that these three areas alone have led to access, productivity and quality benefits valued at \$6.2 billion over the past five years. In addition, the Conference Board of Canada's assessment is that the latest round of federal funding grants to Infoway in 2010 is creating more than 10,000 jobs.

The views expressed herein represent the views of Infoway (or other persons as indicated), not the Minister of Health or any representative of the Government of Canada.

Many of these benefits stem from significant investments in a total of 371 projects that have focused on deployment of electronic health records, electronic medical records, telehealth solutions, public health systems and consumer health solutions, as well as projects to support architecture and standards and those that increase the adoption and use of these systems. To date, Infoway has approved 97 per cent of its total available \$2.1 billion in funding, of which \$1.3 billion or 65 per cent has been expensed based on deliverables completed and milestones met.

While these gains are significant, Canada is still lagging other countries in several critical areas. For instance, more than half (56 per cent) of Canadian family doctors now use electronic medical records (EMRs). That's double the rate six years ago, but still well behind the UK, Australia, New Zealand and the Netherlands. In these countries, more than 90 per cent of primary care doctors use EMRs. They are also moving more quickly to provide e-services for consumers, such as being able to book appointments, contact health care providers and request prescription refills online. Without continued focused efforts we risk falling further behind, so momentum built in recent years must be maintained and accelerated.

Now is the time to advance and capitalize on investments in the infrastructure for sharing core health information and in tools for use at the point of care, so as to deliver direct value for patients and clinicians. This plan outlines our corporate objectives for 2013-2014.

About Canada Health Infoway

Canada Health Infoway (*Infoway*) is an independent not-for-profit corporation funded by the Government of Canada. *Infoway* jointly invests with every province and territory to accelerate the development and adoption of health information technology projects in Canada. Fully respecting patient confidentiality, these secure systems will provide clinicians and patients with the information they need to make better health and health care decisions. Accessing this vital information will help foster a more modern and sustainable health care system for all Canadians.

Opportunities for Action to Improve the Patient Experience Using Digital Health: What We Heard

Over the past year, we spoke with hundreds of Canadians, clinicians, governments and health care administrators about their future health and health care needs. Their answer: healthy living, access to services, person-centred care, continuity of care, quality improvement, and efficiency improvement. These directions translated into five key opportunities for action.



Bring Care Closer to Home – Mobile patient monitoring solutions, personal health records and other consumer health solutions will help consumers maintain good health and monitor their health conditions.



Provide Easier Access – Canadians will be able to electronically book appointments, communicate with their providers, renew their prescriptions and easily access a provider to help them navigate the health care system so they no longer feel lost.



Support New Models of Care – Continued use of electronic health records, electronic medical records and increased use of electronic referrals, electronic discharge summaries, tele-pathology, chronic disease management and other point-of-care solutions will give providers the timely information they need to provide quality care and communicate and collaborate with the rest of the health care team who may work in different settings.



Improve Patient Safety – Extending medication management solutions, such as e-prescribing and medication reconciliation, into physician offices, hospitals and other care settings will make consumers more confident that the medications they take are safe. Providers will be more confident that their prescribing practices are evidence-based and administrators will see a reduction in preventable adverse drug events and avoidable hospitalizations, as well as more efficient daily work processes.



Enable a High-Performing Health System – Clinical analytics and health system analytics will give administrators the information necessary to monitor key indicators and proactively prevent unnecessary hospitalizations. Governments will be able to determine what services yield the best value for money and then allocate current and future funding accordingly.

Key Objectives for 2013-2014

What stakeholders said in recent consultations (see sidebar) drives our understanding of the priority opportunities for action to improve the patient experience, as well as our four specific objectives and associated performance expectations for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

1. Explore New Ways to Improve the Patient Experience

Over the past year, we sought advice from more than 500 individuals on how best to improve the patient experience using digital health. Our challenge in 2013-2014 is to work with them and others to move forward in priority areas that were identified. Fully delivering on the benefits for individuals and their care providers will take time and require an ongoing commitment to practice improvement from clinicians across the country; renewal of investments; and strong alignment of legislation, regulation and policy.

Performance Expectations

- Extend and expand outreach to sustain awareness of the value of digital health to Canadians.
- As finances permit and in collaboration with partners, seek to capitalize on opportunities to position the digital health agenda for the future and support emerging health care priorities.
- Invest in the new generation of clinicians through projects with faculties of medicine, nursing and pharmacy to help ensure that graduates are prepared to participate in technology-enabled environments.
- Promote the benefits of health system use data analytics to enable a high-performing health system.

2. Invest in Innovation

Active engagement of consumers to manage their health and interact with their health care team is increasing through a province-wide patient portal in Alberta and a number of other innovative projects. A recent Conference Board of Canada study concluded that Canadians would have saved nearly 70 million hours in 2011 had they been able to book appointments, access their health information, request medication refills and communicate with health care providers online.

Performance Expectations

- Spread the use of consumer health and clinical innovations through investments in more than 25 demonstration projects across the country.
- Complete the *ImagineNation Outcomes Challenge*, incenting participating teams to exceed two million uses of their innovative solutions and to share their results.
- Deliver insights on emerging technologies, such as health system analytics or consumer health solutions/devices.

3. Build Electronic Health Records for Canadians

Recent polling has shown that Canadians are very interested in and supportive of the innovation that electronic health records (EHRs) can bring to their care. Ninety-two per cent support their development, and 73 per cent agree that sharing electronic health information will improve the quality of their health care. Electronic health records are key to meeting these expectations. More than 50 per cent of Canadians currently have their electronic health record available to their authorized health care providers. In collaboration with our jurisdictional and other partners, we aim to have the final components of the electronic health record in place so that all Canadians will have their electronic health record available. In parallel, we will continue to focus on accelerating the adoption and use of these systems, as well as the measurement of benefits gained.

Performance Expectations

- Work with jurisdictions and other partners so that EHR data is available for 58-60 per cent of Canadians by March 31, 2014.
- Support jurisdictions in their implementation and adoption efforts, e.g., in the areas of privacy and security, architecture and standards, and change management.
- With our partners, stimulate the Canadian economy through investment expenditures. The Conference Board of Canada estimates that every \$1 invested adds \$1.48 to GDP.
- Share and gain knowledge and best practices nationally and with other countries.

4. Get Key Information to the Point of Care

Despite having substantially increased the advanced use of electronic medical record systems, Canada, like the US, lags many other OECD countries in this regard. However, with upgraded EMR solutions and increasing EMR-EHR interoperability which supports sharing information among authorized care providers across the continuum of care, Canada is now in a much better position to accelerate clinical value.

Together with the jurisdictions, we will continue to provide support to clinicians in the areas of change management, clinical process transformation and knowledge transfer.

Performance Expectations

- Increase the number of clinicians using EMRs in ambulatory clinics and in community-based practice.
- Incent more comprehensive use of EMRs so that 80 per cent of participating clinicians meet clinical value targets that promote the effective use of EMRs.
- Engage clinicians through peer support networks, reference groups and other mechanisms.
- Complete new benefits evaluation studies, e.g., on early use of ambulatory EMRs, and share the results of evaluations completed in 2012-2013.

Benefits of Electronic Medical Records

In 2011, 11 community-based primary care clinics representing 21 individual physician practices participated in a one-day practice challenge. Primary care practices with electronic medical records (EMRs) identified patients who needed preventive or follow-up care approximately 30 times faster than paper-based clinics performed their full practice review (1.4 hours versus 40 hours). These results suggest that in primary care, EMR use is critical to supporting proactive disease management.

EMRs also offer greater administrative efficiencies and productivity for health care providers and more timely care for patients. Take lab tests. Paper-based practices take an average of 16 steps and almost 18 minutes to order, sort, archive and retrieve a single lab report, according to a recent study. That falls to six steps and about two minutes for practices with fully integrated EMRs.



To achieve these outcomes and continue to advance *Infoway's* 12 investment programs, the stretch target for investment expenditures for 2013-2014 is an estimated \$150 million. *Infoway's* success in this regard depends, of course, on the pace with which the provinces and territories can move to meet their plans and schedules for the deployment and use of digital health solutions. In meeting these targets, *Infoway* will continue to maintain its due diligence and public accountability

commitments for the use of taxpayers' dollars, as well as report quarterly to its Board of Directors on the status of program risks, issues and achievements.

An independent performance evaluation and audit (i.e., value for money) has been commissioned for completion by March 2013. Any action required as a result of findings and/or recommendations will be addressed in 2013-2014.



Consumer Health

In Ontario, someone is diagnosed with cancer every eight minutes. For many patients, going through the cancer diagnosis journey, from when it is suspected, to when it is diagnosed or ruled out, can be a confusing and anxious time. This is largely related to dealing with numerous tests, appointments and the wait in between. As well, this is often the time when many patients express a desire for information and support from family and friends. For health care providers, the diagnostic process continues to be primarily manual and paper-based, relying on faxes and telephone activities to complete and track a patient's diagnostic journey. In addition, patient information cannot be easily shared amongst providers.

To help address these issues and transform the diagnostic phase of the cancer journey for patients, health care providers and the health care sector, Cancer Care Ontario has developed Diagnostic Assessment Programs (DAPs) across the province to improve the coordination of a patient's diagnostic journey. DAPs consist of multi-disciplinary health care teams who provide diagnostic and supportive care services in a patient-focused environment, improving access to care.

The Diagnostic Assessment Program-Electronic Pathway Solution (DAP-EPS) is a joint initiative between Cancer Care Ontario, the Canadian Cancer Society and Canada Health Infoway.

Here is an overview of what the DAP-EPS provides:

- Secure real-time access to personal information such as referrals, appointments and test results notification.
- Support tools including a medical encyclopedia and healthy living tips from the Canadian Cancer Society.
- A Disease Pathway Map that provides an overview of the care a typical patient should expect to receive based on best scientific evidence.
- Information about all members of the care team – all of the patients' health care providers.
- Ability to invite friends and family to log in and follow along the patient's journey to see information the patient and providers see.