

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL FOR MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22



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ABOUT US

Our Vision

Healthy pregnancies, babies, children and families for lifelong health in Ontario.

Our Mandate

To provide evidence-based and strategic leadership for reproductive, neonatal and paediatric health services in Ontario.

Our Values

Individual and Family-centred Collaborative Inclusive Equitable Evidence-informed Innovative Systems and Results-focused Transparent

We achieve our mandate through collaboration with provincial government agencies and organizations, regional reproductive and child health networks, care providers, and patients and families

PCMCH is funded by the Government of Ontario.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND AND FIRST PEOPLES

PCMCH acknowledges the territory of the Haudenosaunee, Wendat and Anishnaabe people on which it operates. This land is governed by the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, which is a nation-to-nation agreement committing these nations to share the territory in peace, friendship and respect. All newcomers are symbolically included in this treaty and in the spirit of these obligations. Today, Toronto is home to Indigenous Peoples from across Turtle Island.

PCMCH recognizes that Indigenous practices of health and well-being have been in place in this territory since time began and are maintained to this day. PCMCH's members and stakeholders are located on traditional Indigenous territories across Ontario. PCMCH is grateful for the opportunity to work and live on this land. We encourage all to reflect on, and acknowledge, the harms and mistakes of the past and to consider how we can each, in our own way, move forward in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

PCMCH remains committed to, and acknowledges responsibility for, building and improving relationships with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND GOVERNING COUNCIL CHAIR

Throughout 2021, Ontario's dedicated healthcare providers continued adapting to a system that has been irrevocably changed by COVID-19. The pandemic has made us reconsider how we deliver care to those who are most at risk of negative outcomes if they contract the virus, including pregnant individuals, babies and children, people with compromised immune systems and the unvaccinated. It also drew attention to the stark inequities faced by too many Ontarians, not just in healthcare but in other aspects of their lives as well.

Over the past year, PCMCH remained focused on providing healthcare professionals with reliable evidence-based information and resources to help them keep Ontario's pregnant, newborn, child and youth, and family populations healthy within our current context. But, because our vision encompasses people's "lifelong health", we also worked to ensure that the initiatives we pursued and resources we developed throughout 2021-22 support Ontarians' physical and mental health now and into the future

In this report, you'll read about our most significant achievements of the past year. You will also learn about PCMCH's commitment to fostering a more equitable and inclusive healthcare system. In 2021, we took steps that, moving forward, will help ensure that PCMCH's work reflects Ontario's

diverse populations and their different needs. This includes implementing recruitment strategies that will expand the composition of PCMCH's staff, Governing Council and committees to ensure our work is informed by a wider range of professional, cultural and lived experiences, reviewing our communications through an equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) lens, as well as several other actions

PCMCH would not be as successful in the work we do without the dedication and expertise of our Governing Council and Committee members. Their knowledge, skill and passion, shared so generously with us, ensures that the initiatives, resources and information we produce will effectively support care providers, pregnant people, children, youth and families as they make important decisions around health and well-being. We also thank the PCMCH Secretariat staff for another year of bringing their outstanding leadership to PCMCH's initiatives.

At the time of writing, Ontario was experiencing COVID's sixth wave, and the future continues to feel uncertain for many. Regardless of what the coming months may bring, PCMCH will remain committed to being an organization whose work promotes the respect, dignity and good health of every Ontarian.



Sanober Diaz Executive Director

Janusel,



Dr. Jackie Schleifer Taylor Governing Council Chair



OUR COMMITMENT TO EDI

PCMCH has made advancing equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) within Ontario's reproductive and child health system a high priority. In the past year, we built upon our previous work to help ensure EDI is further integrated into the organization and in how care is provided in the reproductive and child health system We did this by:

- · Convening the Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity and Access Advisory Group (IDEA), which helped PCMCH identify ways to advance culturally safe, accessible and equitable healthcare services across the reproductive and child health system.
- Making sure Ontario's diverse population is reflected in our staff, Governing Council and committee membership by including questions about diversity and equity in our recruitment processes and giving weighted consideration to candidates with experience in equity and diversity.

- Examining how we can better ensure diverse perspectives, including those of patients and families with lived experience, Indigenous healthcare organizations, providers and Elders; organizations and care providers working with BIPOC, marginalized and racialized communities, and other equity-deserving groups are heard on our Council and committees
- · Advancing Indigenous health equity through increasing knowledge and action related to Canada's colonial history and its impact on current systemic realties by looking at how relevant components of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action could be advanced/incorporated into PCMCH's work and by providing Indigenous cultural safety training for Governing Council members and staff

- Embedding a health equity lens into our work by:
 - developing and piloting a PCMCH-specific health equity impact assessment tool that looks at whether there are any unintended impacts for disadvantaged populations when developing recommendations and guidelines;
 - conveying inclusivity in the language we use in our communications; and
- creating a safe forum, held quarterly, in which staff can discuss the impact of racism, have uncomfortable conversations about EDI, and identify ways to move forward with PCMCH's EDI activities.

Our work is ongoing, and we recognize that meaningful change only comes from a sustained long-term focus on addressing health equity and valuing diversity. Follow our journey towards a more equitable, diverse and inclusive organization and healthcare system in the EDI section of our website.



New or updated clinical resources for healthcare providers and families released 43%

Increase in followers on social media platforms





2021 **BY THE NUMBERS**



300

Ontario hospitals, community clinics and health organizations with representatives on our Council and Committees



1,900+

Attendees at our webinars

COVID-19: SHARING THE FACTS

"Really appreciated the most up-to-date information presented! My family doctor did not specifically recommend COVID-19 vaccination when I became newly pregnant because they said there isn't enough information. They told me the decision is mine to make. This [webinar] provided very helpful information to guide me to get the vaccine."

Webinar attendee

COVID-19 continued to have a significant impact on the mental and physical health of Ontarians and the delivery of healthcare services throughout the past 12 months. As Ontario entered into the fifth and sixth waves of the pandemic, PCMCH maintained its commitment to ensuring healthcare providers, perinatal patients, and families with newborns, children and youth had access to information and resources based on current and reliable research

Supporting Care Providers

In July 2021, we updated our Maternal-Neonatal COVID-19 General Guideline and Pregnancy Care *Guideline* to provide frontline care providers with guidance reflecting the evolving context around care for perinatal patients. Our statement regarding the use of N95 respirators and the importance of vaccination in December 2021 was in response to the rise in COVID-19 case counts related to Omicron

Engaging Patients and Families

In January 2022, updates to our *I am pregnant or* breastfeeding. Should I get the COVID-19 Vaccine? patient information sheet reflected the growing evidence that vaccination is a pregnant person's safest choice to protect themselves and their baby against the known risks of COVID infection. The importance of booster doses and research highlighting that vaccinated breastfeeding individuals pass protective antibodies onto the baby were emphasized in the revisions

In addition, we hosted our first COVID-related webinar in June for pregnant people. Clinical experts and people with lived experience answered viewers' questions about the potential implications of a COVID infection during a pregnancy and the safety of COVID-19 vaccines.. We also hosted four COVID and Pregnancy webinars for healthcare providers throughout May 2021.



"I appreciated hearing from both experts and someone who spoke to their firsthand experience."

- Webinar attendee

Recognizing that children with medical complexities (CMC) are at heightened risk of adverse effects from COVID-19 infection, PCMCH also released 5 Things to Know About COVID-19 Vaccines for Children with Medical Complexities. Produced for distribution at Complex Care for Kids Ontario program clinics, the handout addresses questions and concerns families and caregivers may have about vaccinating CMC against COVID-19.

As of spring 2022, COVID-19 had not subsided in Ontario, which means our work is not done. In the coming months, PCMCH will follow the research on the virus, updating and revising our guidelines and resources, and developing new ones as needed, in our efforts to support care providers and help Ontario's perinatal patients, newborns, children, youth and families maintain their health and well-being.

Expanding Engagement

Effectively sharing information and building connections with stakeholders through social media plays an important part in meeting our goals. Throughout 2021-22, our timely, relevant and evidence-based posts helped us grow our followers on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn by up to 43 per cent. Through these platforms, and a new Instagram account, we expanded our reach to new audiences of care providers, patients, researchers and policy makers, as well as reproductive health, community care and family-centred clinics and agencies across Ontario.

Our expanded online presence also resulted in:

- an over 100 per cent increase in mentions of PCMCH on Twitter, and
- an average increase of 18 per cent in post re-shares on Facebook.

In October, we partnered with the Ministry of Health on a social media campaign to promote COVID vaccination for pregnant individuals. Our social media activity also contributed to growth in webinar registration numbers. In 2021-22, PCMCH hosted 17 webinars that were attended by over 1,900 people, with the three most highly attended webinars for healthcare professionals being:

- COVID-19 in the Third Wave and the Maternal-Neonatal Population
- · Safe Administration of Oxytocin
- Starting the Conversation: Perinatal Mental Health

Lastly, March saw the relaunch of a streamlined and reorganized PCMCH website that will help healthcare providers, Ontarians at any stage of pregnancy, families and other stakeholders find the information they need when making decisions about healthcare.

SUPPORTING HEALTHY PREGNANCIES

Did you know?

Approximately 300 different organizations from across Ontario including hospitals, community clinics, healthcare agencies and associations, are represented by approximately 500 healthcare professionals who sit on PCMCH's Council, committees and work groups. These individuals cover a wide range of disciplines, from paediatrics, family medicine, midwifery and research, to name a few.

With the goal of making Ontario the best and safest place to give birth, PCMCH's work supports the health of pregnant people from preconception through to the postpartum stage. We do this by ensuring that the resources and information we provide to healthcare providers, patients and families are timely, relevant and based on current evidence.

During the past year, we supported healthy pregnancies for Ontarians by relaunching our Safe Administration of Oxytocin guideline report first developed in 2019 – with the introduction of revised tools and a new implementation toolkit. The report outlines the best practice recommendations for the safe management of pregnant patients whose labour is induced or augmented with oxytocin, a high-alert medication that can cause harm if misused or administered incorrectly. The toolkit supports the implementation and sustained use of the report's recommendations while also promoting standardization of approaches across the province. Concurrent with the release of the implementation toolkit was an informational video outlining the 11 best practice recommendations presented in the guideline report, and a webinar featuring presentations by experts in the fields of patient safety, health insurance and perinatal health.

Updating Hospital Levels of Care

Currently, 96 hospitals in Ontario provide birthing and newborn care. Applying standardized definitions around levels of care to Ontario's hospitals helps ensure pregnant patients and newborns are referred to facilities that have the staff and resources necessary to provide the required care, especially if the pregnancy is high-risk or complications arise for the birthing individual or baby following birth. Ensuring that Ontario's hospitals safely provide care to perinatal patients and newborns was the focus of our work in updating the Standard Maternal Levels of Care Definitions. (Note: a new name for the Levels of Care Definitions containing more inclusive language is currently being reviewed.) Critical Care Services Ontario (CCSO) revised definitions and criteria related to Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Levels 2 & 3. Care providers should access CCSO's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Levels of Care Guidance Document as the information related to Newborn Levels of Care for Levels 2 & 3 in PCMCH's Care Definitions document are no longer applicable. The neonatal level 1 definitions will be updated by PCMCH in 2022/23.



BUILDING SYSTEM CAPACITY

Many of PCMCH's initiatives aim at improving healthcare delivery systems and standardizing procedures across the province to better support healthcare providers in their practices, and assist patients and families navigate Ontario's healthcare system and get the care they need.

Paediatric Palliative Care

PCMCH recognizes that paediatric patients have unique needs when it comes to palliative care. In 2021/22, PCMCH, in our ongoing partnership with the Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario (POGO) through the joint Provincial Paediatric Palliative Care Steering Committee, contributed to the paediatric palliative care section of the Ontario Palliative Care Network's provincial framework for the delivery of palliative care. The framework was revised in response to the passing of Bill 3 (Compassionate Care Act).

In addition, this joint PCMCH and POGO committee worked towards increasing knowledge around paediatric palliative care (PPC) in the province. Work undertaken to identify and define

data elements related to paediatric palliative care will contribute to care quality for infants, children and youth with a serious illness, as well as in perinatal palliative care. Data related to perinatal infant, child and youth consults for palliative care were identified, including the primary reason for the consult, information about barriers to care that exist in homes, hospices and hospitals, and the range of support services offered not only to the child but to their families and siblings as well.

Enhancing the data

PCMCH also coordinates the Ontario Paediatric Bariatric Network (OPBN), which is comprised of 11 specialized outpatient clinics and is leading the collection of paediatric bariatric data for a provincial data repository. For two years, the OPBN has been working towards improving the quality of the dataset to reflect the medical and mental health co-morbidities this population faces. In 2021/22, these enhancements were completed and include a new OPBN Patient Experience & Satisfaction Survey and a revised dataset structured around the Edmonton Obesity Staging System (EOSS-P), a clinical

tool used to help stratify patients according to the severity of obesity-related co-morbidities and barriers. Enhancements also include additional data points on health equity, social determinants of health, and a comprehensive section on surroundings and social environment (milieu) and mental health. This data repository will provide pertinent clinical information as well as information on the everyday barriers patients and families encounter

Addressing Transport Needs

Ensuring the safe transfer of newborns between facilities, specifically in emergency situations, is another of our key functions. In 2021/22, PCMCH's Triage and Dispatch Work Group worked to define criteria for the specialized transport of urgent/emergent neonatal and paediatric patients, which will facilitate timely access to acute care services and improve patient outcomes. The group developed preliminary criteria and definitions for the transport of urgent/emergent paediatric patients that have been put forward to CritiCall Ontario, Ornge and other relevant stakeholders with final goals of producing comprehensive guidelines and of informing future decisionmaking around refining processes.

To address the need for timely access to care for critically ill children and newborns in Northern Ontario, PCMCH supported Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre in its planning to establish a specialized transport team in the region. Currently, all existing specialized teams are based in children's hospitals in southern Ontario, making it difficult for a specialty trained transport team to arrive to a patient in Northern Ontario from the south in a timely fashion. The Work Group recommended

that a specialized transport team for Northern Ontario be established out of a base hospital in Northern Ontario. A specialized team in the north would ensure urgent and emergent neonatal and paediatric patients receive care closer to home and, more importantly, receive a rapid response for transport to a tertiary centre in an emergency.

In addition, PCMCH supported proposals that led to government funding for the expansion of paediatric critical care transport services out of McMaster Children's Hospital and SickKids. These proposals for expanded service were in response to these regions' growing populations and the increased volume demands for this service for critically ill newborns and children. The expanded service went into effect in January 2022.

Building a New Network

Lastly, improving and coordinating healthcare delivery across Ontario is the goal of the Regional Networks Operational Forum (RNOF), which PCMCH established in May 2021. This newly convened community of practice consists of representatives from the six maternal, newborn and child health regional networks across Ontario, five Ontario Health regions, the Ministry of Health, BORN Ontario and PCMCH. Together, the members of RNOF aim to support local planning, coordination among healthcare providers and facilities, and promote the implementation and dissemination of evidence-based guidelines that will enhance the quality of reproductive, newborn and child healthcare. In 2021/22, RNOF identified shared priorities and goals and examined how services are currently being delivered to reproductive-child populations across Ontario.



PROMOTING HEALTHY FUTURES

PCMCH aims to help Ontarians maintain good health throughout their lives. Some initiatives and resources we introduced within the past year are geared toward helping healthcare providers and families sustain their children's good health into adulthood. Our partnerships with other organizations on initiatives also support future enhancements in child and youth healthcare through data collection and policy development.

New Care Transition Resources

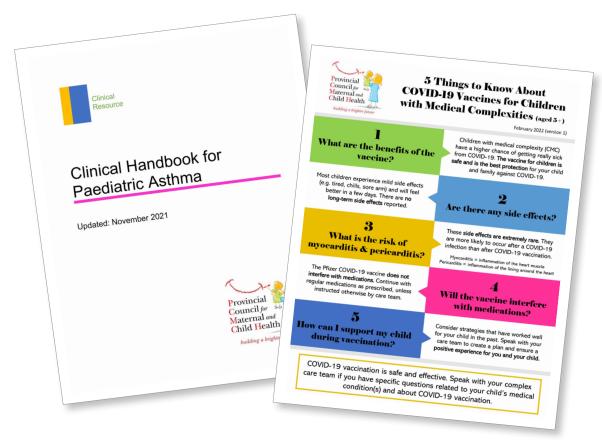
PCMCH partnered with Ontario Health in developing a new Transitions From Youth to Adult Health Care Services quality standard. An advisory committee was convened, comprised of young people and parents who provided insights into their lived experiences, and clinical leaders from a broad range of sectors. Drawing on evidence from clinical guidelines and expert consensus, the quality standard includes six quality statements that address areas that have the potential to improve transitions from the child and youth health system to adult care.

Additional challenges can arise when the person transitioning to adult healthcare from the paediatric system has multiple and/or complex medical conditions. To address the needs of these patients, PCMCH developed the Complex Care for Kids *Ontario Youth Transition to Adult Care Toolkit.* This resource supports patients receiving care from complex care teams and fosters collaboration among the care providers and with the patient and their family through an age-based checklist. A Transition Resource Guide was also compiled that provides information on setting up services and supports in advance of the youth moving into the adult care system.

Improving health outcomes

In 2021/22, the Paediatric Diabetes Network (PDN) created a specialized data task force comprised of clinical experts and system partners across Ontario to provide guidance on paediatric diabetes data collection. The Paediatric Diabetes Data Collection initiative is a partnership between PCMCH and BORN Ontario, where the province's prescribed Maternal-Child Registry will be expanded to include robust paediatric diabetes-related information. The development of the indicators is a key milestone and critical path and helps move Ontario one step closer to a systematic method of collecting information about every child living with diabetes in Ontario, allowing the PDN to monitor the quality of care, benchmark performance and identify patterns of treatment – ultimately improving health outcomes and reducing variations in care.

To ensure healthcare providers, patients, families and caregivers have access to the most current information and care recommendations, PCMCH regularly reviews and updates its resources. This year, in partnership with the Lung Health Foundation, we released an updated Clinical *Handbook for Paediatric Asthma*. The handbook provides clinicians with evidence-based recommendations around the management of asthma in children and youth in emergency department settings and for episodes of in-patient care. The updates focused on reducing inappropriate ED revisits and in-patient admissions by emphasizing the importance of children and their parents/ caregivers receiving asthma management education and appropriate follow-up and referrals and having an asthma action plan in place following discharge from the hospital.



GOVERNING COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Governing Council

Jackie Schleifer Taylor (Chair)

Jennifer Churchill

Jane Cleve

Marilyn Crabtree

Aderemi ('Remi) Ejiwunmi

Kelly Falzon

Astrid Guttmann

Julia Hanigsberg

Bernard Lawless

Judy Linton

Leanne McArthur

Alex Munter

Sean Murray

Stephanie Redpath

Paul Roumeliotis

Prakesh Shah

Bruce Squires

Child & Youth Committee

Eyal Cohen (Co-Chair)

Irene Andress

Tihana Antic

Teresa Bruni

Darcia Curtis

Crystal Edwards

Ronald Cohn

Eyal Cohen

Shelley Dougan

Anna Greenberg

Cynthia Maxwell

Gareth Seaward

Ru Taggar

Kristin Taylor

Vicki Van Wagner

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Bruce Squires (Co-Chair)

Michael Casas

Rebecca Cooper

Bonnie Fleming-Carroll

Michelle Gordon

Anna Gunz

Kerri Hannon

Mona Jabbour

Leanne McArthur

Kimberley McClean

Kaysee McCracken

Angelo Mikrogianakis

Caryn Nero

Julia Orkin

Jennifer Proulx

Shannon Reaume

Rhea Taplan

Joshua Tepper

Margaret van Beers

Brenda Weitzner Ian Zenlea

Maternal-Newborn

Committee

(Co-Chair)

Marilyn Crabtree

Ru Taggar (Co-Chair)

Ellen Blais

Jon Barrett

Tali Bogler

Elizabeth Brandeis

Shelley Dougan

Crystal Edwards

Susan Ellis

Kerri Hannon

JoAnn Harrold

Wendy Katherine

Cynthia Maxwell

Kate Miller

Christine Moon

Darlene Rose

Gareth Seaward

Kristin Taylor

Nisha Walibhai Mark Walker

Transport Committee

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(Co-Chair)

Teresa Bruni

Cynthia Cupido

Jessica Davis

Sonny Dhanani

Julie Gordon

Anna Gunz

Iackie Hubbert

Linda Lalani

Kyong-Soon Lee

Indra Narula

Caryn Nero

Melissa Parker

Michael Sanderson

Bruce Sawadsky

Danielle Trigatti

Nisha Walibhai

Wendy Whittle Hilary Whyte

Cleft Lip and Palate

Operational Advisory

Committee

Mazen Almaoui

Rahil Begg Tonia Bryans

Rob Carmichael

Stephanie Carter

Michael Casas

Lucy Coppola

Lillian Ciona Enza Dininio

Kerry Fahey

Gabriella Garisto

Karen Kinnear

Bala Kumbakonam Carrie Laskey

Stephanie Lauziere

Karen Margallo

Christina Mellies

Susan Nall

Becky Olacke

Thomas Oper

Jeannie Panagiotonpoulous

Peter Pannozzo

Olaf Plotzke Sharon Samaan

Kimberly Taylor

Cleft Lip and Palate

- Dental Directors

Sub-Committee

Robert Carmichael

Michael Casas

Gabriella Garisto

Stephanie Lauziere

Becky Olacke Thomas Oper

Peter Pannozzo Olaf Plotzke

Complex Care for Kids

Ontario Leadership Table

Irene Andress

Teresa Bruni

Jennifer Churchill

Eyal Cohen

Paula Crotteau

Kathryn Eager

Kimberley Floyd Lara Keable-John

Kate Langrish

Sophia Lawson

Audrey Lim Nathalie Major

Lvnanne Mason

Sue Mendelsohn

Siobhan McEwen Sean Murray

Sophia Lawson Rahul Ojha

Julia Orkin Tanja Patry Shannon Reaume Ioanna Soscia Lisa Webster

Complex Care for Kids Ontario Youth Transition to Adult Care **Toolkit Working Group**

Dara Abells Erin Alcaide Sherri Adams Erin Brandon Jessica Carter Jon Greenaway Audrey Lim Megan Henze Melanie Hetu Samadhi More Sovernia Laura Thompson Sydney Truelove Sabrina Umpherson Judith Wong

Emergency Department Paediatric Readiness

Mona Jabbour

Inclusion, Diversity, **Equity and Access** (IDEA) Advisory Group

Anna Banerji Ellen Blais Elizabeth Brandeis Wendy Katherine Cvnthia Maxwell Sara Wolfe

Maternal Levels of Care (MLOC) Task Force

Nicole Blackman Katie Forbes Philip Hough Lorena Jenks Kate Miller Iulie Pace Lauren Rivard Nisha Walibhai Monica Weber Arthur Zaltz

Maternal-Neonatal Clinical Advisory Group (MNCAG)

Siobhan Chisholm Tammy LeRiche Kavita Parihar Lauren Rivard Modupe Tunde-Byass Simone Vigod Brenda Weitzer Georgina Wilcock Connie Williams Gillian Yeates

Maternal-Neonatal COVID-19 General Guideline Task Force

Mark Walker (Co-Chair) Jon Barrett (Co-Chair) Aderemi (Remi) Ejiwunmi Kelly Falzon Jonathon Gubbay JoAnn Harrold Wendy Katherine Nicole Le Saux Kate Miller Deborah Money Prakeshkumar Shah

Ann Sprague Connie Williams

Maternal-Neonatal COVID-19 Pregnancy **Guideline Task Force**

Kate Miller (Co-Chair)

Cynthia Maxwell (Co-Chair)

Jon Barrett Suzannah Bennett Ellen Blais Elizabeth Brandeis Janet Brownlee Wendy Carew Barbra deVrijer Crystal Edwards Catherine Gascon Sarah Gower Jonathon Gubbay Wendy Katherine Diane Lalonder Leanne McArthur Daisy Moores Michelle Science Wendy Whittle Connie Williams

Ontario Paediatric **Bariatric Network Advisory Committee**

Jane Rutherford (Co-Chair) Ian Zenlea (Co-Chair) Janice Austin Sarah Barker Sanjukta Basak Tara Baron Caroline Brown Teresa Bruni Becky Burton Annick Buchholz Craig Campbell

Mary Dyck Alessandro (Alex) Gabriele Jennifer Green Carline Gutierrez Stasia Hadjiyannakis Kate Hamilton Carla Illoa Audra Jesso Allison Lougheed Gina Maloney Charmaine Mohipp Katherine Morrison Rebecca Noseworthy Haley Nyboer Kyna Patterson Sarah Patterson Kelly Proulx Andrea Regina Michela Savoia Tara West Angelina Wiwczor Jennifer Yu

Ontario Paediatric **Bariatric Network** (OPBN) Performance Measurement and **Evaluation Working** Group

Katherine Morrison (Co-Chair) Ian Zenlea (Co-Chair) Janice Austin Sanjukta Basak Matthew Belviso Annick Buchholz Alessandro (Alex) Gabriele Alice Haasdyk Jill Hamilton Audra Jesso Charmaine Mohipp

Gina Maloney Haley Nyboer Sinthu Panchadcharadevan

Kelly Proulx Andrea Regina

Jane Rutherford Michela Savoia Alene Toulany Tara West

Iennifer Yu

Paediatric Asthma **Expert Panel Group**

Donna Goldenberg (Co-Chair)

Mona Jabbour (Co-Chair)

Liz Brunato Lori Chen Kristine Fraser Ram Gobburu Karen Grewal

Muhammed Akhter Hamid

Danica Irwin

Jennifer MacKinnon

Joanna Massam

Danielle McKinlay

Zoe Nugent Susan O'Farrell

Padmaja Subbarao

Angelina Wiwczor

Paediatric Diabetes **Network Data Collection Task Force**

Ian Zenlea (Chair) Riley Aldrich Dan Collins Shelley Dougan Rose Gelinas Ellen Goldbloom Jessica Kichler Alanna Landry Sarah Lawrence Renee Lebovitz Pelletier

Michael McBride Danielle McKinlay Paula Morrison Hoda Osman

Ethan Parikh Denise Penny Rayzel Shulman Hasmita Singh

Ryan W. Smith Erin Thompson Alanna Weisman

Paediatric Levels of Care

Teresa Bruni Peter Fitzgerald

Perinatal Mental Health

Christina Cantin Jaime Charlebois Cindy-Lee Dennis Simone Vigod

Provincial Paediatric Palliative Care Steering Committee (PCMCH and Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario)

Mark Greenberg (Co-Chair) Adam Rapoport (Co-Chair) Susan Blacker Deanna Bryant

Robert Connelly Julie Drury

Cathy Hecimovich Lynanne Mason

Valerie McDonald Erin Redwood

Bruce Squires Megan Wright

Quality Standard Committee - Transition from Youth to Adult **Health Services (PCMCH** and Ontario Health)

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C.J. Curran Scarlett Davidson

Crystal Edwards Navreet Gill Tasha Hamilton Natalie Kennedy Afsana Lallani Yona Lunsky Laura MacGregor

Megan Henze

Robert More Zubin Punthakee

Sterling Renzoni Julia Vanderheul Amanda Woo

Regional Networks Operational Forum

Jon Barrett (Co-Chair)

Tihana Antic Lise Bisnaire Wendy Carew Rose Cook

Angèle Desbiens Crystal Edwards Kelly Falzon

Kerri Hannon Cheryl Harrison Linda Hunter

Ian Joiner

Natalie Kennedy Marnie Lightfoot

Renee Lebovitz Pelletier

Leanne McArthur Caryn Nero Julia Orkin Jennifer Proulx

Darlene Rose Tina Sakr Kim Sontag Susan Swartzack

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Jill Allan

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Adam Thurston

Danielle Trigatti

Homer Yang

Brent Winchcombe

Triage and Dispatch Work Group

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Fabiano Medugno Todd Mortimer Kristie Newton Mike Peddle Stephanie Redpath Shirley Roddick

Lisa Webster

PCMCH Secretariat

Sanober Diaz (Executive Director)

Hibaq Ali

Yaminee Charavanapavan

Bill Clarke Brittany Groom Beverly Guttman Allison Hall Lilian Lin Tracy Morris Sidra Nadeem Lisa Osqui

Alexandra Thorp Jennifer Tin Laura Zahreddine

