

**Assistant Deputy Minister's Office
Hospitals and Capital Division**

1075 Bay Street, 11th Floor
Toronto ON M5S 2B1
Telephone: 416 327-8533

**Assistant Deputy Minister
Capacity Planning and Analytics
Division**

1075 Bay Street, 13th Floor
Toronto ON M5S 2B1
Telephone: 416 327-0913

**Assistant Deputy Minister
Ontario Health Insurance Plan
Division**

1075 Bay Street, 6th Floor
Toronto ON M5S 2B1

**Bureau du sous-ministre adjoint
Division des hôpitaux et des
immobilisations**

1075, rue Bay, 11^e étage
Toronto ON M5S 2B1
Téléphone: 416 327-8533

**Sous-ministre adjoint
Division de la planification de la
capacité et de l'analytique**

1075, rue Bay, 13^e étage
Toronto ON M5S 2B1
Téléphone: 416 327-0913

**Sous-ministre adjointe
Division du Régime d'Assurance-
santé de l'Ontario**

1075 Rue Bay, 6^{ème} étage
Toronto ON M5S 2B1



July 5, 2021

MEMORANDUM TO: Hospital CEOs

FROM: Michael Hillmer, Assistant Deputy Minister
Patrick Dicerri, Assistant Deputy Minister
James Stewart, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister

RE: Temporary Summer Expansion of Physician Locum Programs for
Physicians Working in Rural and Northern Emergency Departments in
response to COVID-19.

We are writing to advise you of an agreement reached between the Ministry of Health (the ministry) and the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) to provide temporary support to health human resources (HHR) capacity for Emergency Departments in rural and northern hospitals in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created challenges in recruiting physicians to staff ED in rural and northern Ontario. The work demands on physicians providing ED services over the past 15 months of the COVID pandemic have created significant fatigue and pent-up demand for vacation and family time.

This has led to an unprecedented reduction in the amount of coverage capacity available in rural and Northern hospitals both within local physician groups and broader locum networks.

As a result, some rural and northern communities are at risk of experiencing time limited ED closures over the two summer months.

To assist in alleviating these ED coverage issues, the ministry and the OMA have reached agreement that, **commencing on July 1 and running through September 7, 2021**, Ontario will temporarily expand the eligibility criteria and introduce a new payment structure for emergency department physicians to access coverage incentives in the highest-need rural and northern hospitals in order to maintain 24/7 ED services and to facilitate the safe operation of emergency departments (EDs) province wide.

Through this temporary premium known as the **COVID-19 Temporary Summer Locum Program Expansion (CTSLPE)**, eligible physicians will be able to claim a predetermined hourly premium for working in eligible rural and northern emergency departments, consistent with the current Emergency Department Locum Program (EDLP) eligibility parameters and Rural Northern Physician Group Agreement daily stipend.

The premium rate is applied to each and every hour of coverage provided by any physician at each eligible hospital provided except for hours paid under the Emergency Department Locum Program (EDLP) from July 1 to September 7, 2021. These temporary premiums will be paid to physicians via the hospital who requested their coverage through the COVID-19 Incremental Expense Claims process.

Further information

On Tuesday, July 6th, the ministry will host a technical briefing by webinar to provide an overview of the CTSLPE for hospital sites. An invitation to this event is forthcoming. Following the webinar, the Ministry will provide further implementation details to hospitals which have been identified as eligible for CTSLPE. Other sites that fit the eligibility criteria can contact Ontario Health at PracticeOntario@OntarioHealth.ca for further details about the program and for support in ensuring 24/7 ED coverage.

Further details about this program can be found in the attached program guide and Question and Answer document. However, should you have any questions about the CTSLPE in the meantime, please contact David Lamb, Director, Capacity and Health Workforce Planning Branch at David.Lamb@ontario.ca.

Thank you for your continued commitment to delivering high quality care to patients during this unprecedented time.

Sincerely,



James Stewart
Acting Assistant Deputy Minister
Hospitals and Capital Division



Michael Hillmer
Assistant Deputy Minister
Capacity Planning and Analytics
Division



Patrick Dicerni
Assistant Deputy Minister
Ontario Health Insurance Plan
Division

Attachments: CTSLPE Program Guide; CTSLPE Frequently Asked Questions Document

cc: Helen Angus, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health
Matthew Anderson, President and CEO, Ontario Health
Anthony Dale, President and CEO, Ontario Hospital Association
Allan O'Dette, President and CEO, Ontario Medical Association
Catherine Brown, Executive Vice President, COVID Pandemic Response, Ontario Health
Peter Kaftarian, Assistant Deputy Minister and Chief Administrative Officer, Ministry of Health
Melanie Fraser, Associate Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health
Alison Blair, Associate Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health
Michael Hillmer, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health
Elham Roushani, Chief Financial Officer, Ontario Health
Jeffrey Graham, Director, Fiscal Oversight and Performance Branch, Ministry of Health
Jim Yuill, Director, Financial Management Branch, Ministry of Health
Tara L. Wilson, A/Director, Hospitals Branch, Ministry of Health
Kristin Taylor, A/Director, Provincial Programs Branch, Ministry of Health
David Lamb, Director, Capacity and Health Workforce Planning Branch, Ministry of Health
Maria Pesce A/Director, Ontario Health Oversight Branch, Ministry of Health
Regional Leads, Ontario Health: Tess Romain (Toronto); Donna Cripps (Central); Cynthia Martineau (East); Mark Walton (West); Brian Ktytor (North)