

Capacity Planning



Capacity planning is a process for determining current and future health service requirements and for making the necessary preparations to meet those requirements. Put simply, it is planning to ensure that the system is the correct size and structured in a way that appropriately meets the population's health care needs.

Capacity planning includes a range of activities such as establishing appropriate “per-capita” benchmark levels of services required to meet the needs of different populations using these services. For example, it tells us how many long-term care beds to build; how many hospital beds are needed; how many innovative services, day procedures and outpatient treatments are needed; and how many providers we need to train in order to support people at home. Decisions are guided by the best available evidence to determine appropriate utilization levels.



Capacity Planning should identify the system's pressure points and enable alternative scenarios and solutions to be modelled and examined.

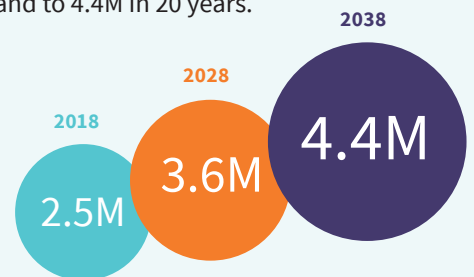
A Growing and Aging Population

Ontario's population is rapidly growing and aging, and these population changes are already having an enormous impact on the health care system. The demand for health care services will only intensify when combined with inflation and other factors such as newer and more costly treatments – worsening the current capacity challenge facing Ontario's health care system. This challenge already compromises patient care and puts pressure on front-line health care workers.

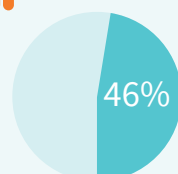
In only **10** years, Ontario's total population will grow by an additional **1.9M** people.



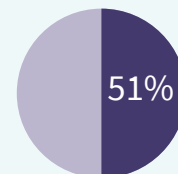
The number of seniors aged **65+** will grow from 2.5M today to 3.6M in 2028 and to 4.4M in 20 years.



In 2016, this age group accounted for:



of all health sector expenditures



of all hospital expenditures

The aging population has both a physical and financial impact on capacity.

As the 65 plus population group increases, substantial financial pressures will follow. Capacity planning can mitigate the impact.

There is an urgent need to develop and implement a health system capacity plan for Ontario in order to meet challenges in the medium-term.

Benefits of Capacity Planning



Patients and caregivers will benefit from improved access to more appropriate care and reduced wait times.

Being highly interdependent, **the system** will feel the impact of capacity planning. Non-hospital sectors should increasingly be able to provide appropriate services and at less cost than hospital care. System efficiency will improve, as the right number and mix of services will be in place to meet current demands.



For **hospitals**, capacity planning will ease seasonal and increasing trends of bed crises, emergency department (ED) back-ups, high alternate level of care (ALC) rates and increasing stress on the people who provide care. Lack of capacity outside of hospitals often still impacts hospitals as EDs are the only access points that are always open.

