

Strategic Plan 2024-2027

Letter from the Chief Executive Officer & Board Chair

To our Members and Sector Partners,

On behalf of the Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario (AFHTO), we are excited to present our 2024-2027 strategic plan.

AFHTO's strategic plan was developed at a time of significant change, both within our organization and across our broader healthcare system.

Ontario's primary care sector is at a critical juncture.

The healthcare system is continuing to undergo significant transformation, creating both instability as well as opportunity. Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) are establishing a new way of organizing and integrating local care delivery, with an increasing focus on connecting with primary care to advance population health through integrated and equitable approaches.

Thanks to ongoing advocacy efforts of AFHTO and our partners in primary care, we are seeing increased recognition that team-based primary care is critical to the future of healthcare in the province.

As we look to the next three years, there is a clear opportunity and need for primary care and team-based primary care to be at the centre of our healthcare system, now and in the future.

As part of this, we recognize the important role of AFHTO and our members in improving access to team-based primary care for equity-deserving populations, as well as being a leader and key partner supporting Ontario's vision for primary care and broader health system transformation.

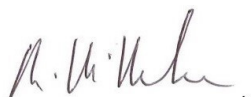
At the same time, we know our members are struggling with significant health human resources challenges, operational instability, and a need for targeted and sustained investments in the sector. These challenges create strain on the system and barriers to providing the high-quality primary care teams across the province are committed to providing.

In developing this plan, AFHTO engaged with our staff, members, and partners across the healthcare system. What we heard is a clear call for AFHTO to be laser-focused on the issues that matter most during a time of substantial change, and more supportive and responsive to the needs and challenges of our members.

We hear you – we can, and we will, do better. Better for our members, better for our partners, and better for patients of team-based primary care across the province. AFHTO is committed to being a strong voice to drive change and support our members to be leaders in their communities.

We are excited to work with our members and partners to put our strategic plan into action.

Sincerely,



Mike McMahon
Chief Executive Officer (Interim)



Dr. Kevin Samson
President & Chair, Board of Directors

“We hear you – we can, and we will, do better. Better for our members, better for our partners, and better for patients across the province. AFHTO is committed to being a strong voice to drive change and support our members to be leaders in their communities.”

COMMITMENT TO

→ Health Equity

We are committed to creating a primary care and healthcare system where everyone, no matter their background or circumstance, has access to the care they need and deserve.

We recognize that inequities, barriers and injustices exist in our society and in our healthcare system, and the essential role we play in creating an environment of inclusion and dismantling systemic racism and oppression, both within our organization and beyond.

This commitment is an important step, but we know there is more work to do to honour our commitment and work with our partners across the healthcare system to ensure health equity for all Ontarians.

COMMITMENT TO

→ Indigenous Reconciliation

We are committed to fostering a primary care and healthcare system where Indigenous voices are heard, their traditions honored, and their rights respected.

We recognize the role AFHTO, and our members play in advancing reconciliation and seeking meaningful and sustained relationships with Indigenous communities and organizations based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership.

Recognizing the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples, we commit to taking concrete actions to address these injustices and foster health equity.

Why Commitment to Reconciliation is Important

Understanding the importance of reconciliation involves acknowledging the historical and systemic barriers faced by Indigenous peoples, which have led to disparities in health and well-being.

By committing to reconciliation, we aim to:

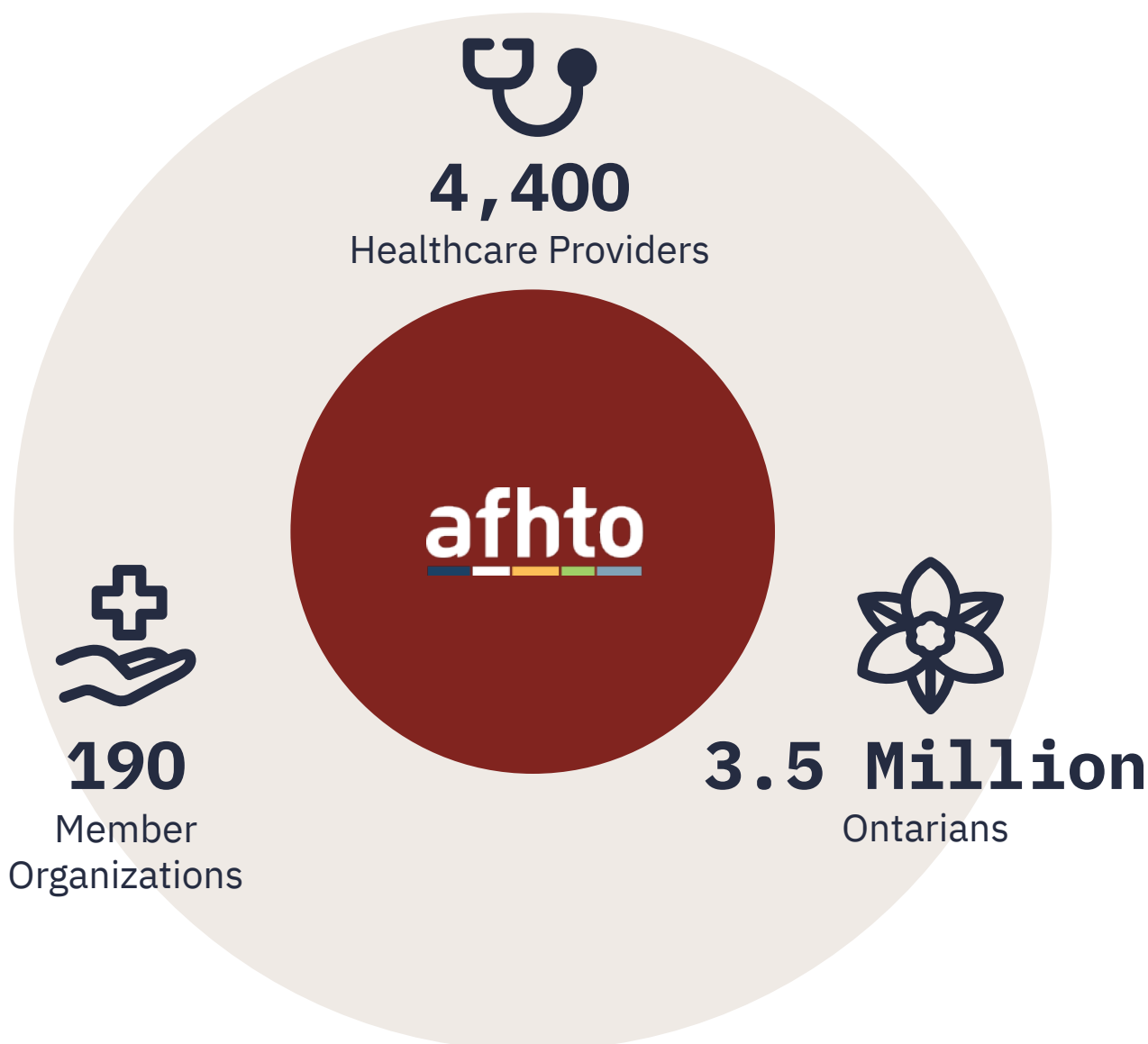
- Address and rectify historical injustices and ongoing inequities
- Foster trust and respect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities
- Promote health equity and improve outcomes for Indigenous populations
- Support the preservation and revitalization of Indigenous cultures and traditions

The **Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario** (AFHTO) is a not-for-profit association representing Ontario's interprofessional primary healthcare teams.

Team-based primary care is composed of family doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, dietitians, social workers, pharmacists and other healthcare providers who work together to provide seamless and connected care to patients.

AFHTO's **190 member organizations represent over 2,400 interprofessional healthcare providers and are affiliated with over 2,000 family physicians.** Our members operate in every region of the province, providing primary care services and supports to more than **3.5 million Ontarians** through every step and stage of life.

AFHTO envisions a healthcare system where every Ontarian will have access to equitable, high-quality, comprehensive, cost effective, integrated team-based primary care, leading to better health outcomes for patients and the communities in which they live, while reducing the burden on hospitals and emergency departments across the province.



In early 2024, AFHTO launched a new strategic planning process. This process began in the context of significant health system transformation and a recognition that there is a clear need for improvement in the support AFHTO provides our members.

We know our strategic plan must be fully aligned with our members' needs and priorities. That is why our 2024-2027 Strategic Plan is rooted in the input of our diverse membership, staff, partners, and health system leaders.

During this process we engaged both
AFHTO Members & Sector Partners

95

Individuals

From government, AFHTO membership, primary care partners and more.

7

Focus groups

Representing AFHTO member organizations from across the province.



Member Survey

We Launched a Member Survey, where we received extensive feedback from **120 respondents**.



Interviews

We conducted a series of **one-on-one** interviews with AFHTO's key partners, including individuals from the Ministry of Health and Ontario Health.

The feedback gathered from our engagements was consistent across the board and was associated with three key themes:

Advocacy

AFHTO's previous advocacy played an important role in the recent recognition of, and investments in, team-based primary care. However, the work doesn't stop there.

AFHTO needs to continue to be a leading voice in the sector and with government as our health system undergoes transformation, particularly as the maturation of Ontario Health Teams and Primary Care

Networks continues. At the same time, AFHTO needs to ensure it's regularly sharing with our members the advocacy work we are undertaking on their behalf.

Similarly, AFHTO needs to better support and equip our members with the tools to engage in grassroots advocacy on key issues in their communities.

Member Support

Our members expect more of AFHTO: more engagement, more timely and relevant communications, and more support.

At a time of extensive system change, members feel they need to be better informed of changes and what steps they can take to navigate these changes, with the ultimate goal of providing the best possible care to their patients.

To support ongoing health system transformation and to ensure AFHTO's members are helping to spearhead transformation in their communities, AFHTO must do more to support its members to adopt a health equity lens to care.

There is also an important role for AFHTO to play in providing tools, training and education that support our members to continuously improve the delivery of evidence-driven and high-quality team-based primary care.

Governance & Operational Excellence

As an organization, AFHTO has undergone significant change in recent years and, therefore, was encouraged to focus on strengthening operations over the next three years.

To deliver on our strategic plan and best support our members, AFHTO must ensure it has the right team and resources in place.

AFHTO needs to be singularly focused on the priorities most important to members, including the continued expansion of team-based primary care in the province.

This includes revisiting and evaluating what AFHTO's unique value proposition is, how we work effectively with our partners, and how we operate as an organization to best deliver on our mandate.

This also means supporting the continued improvement of the operations and governance structure of AFHTO as an organization, as well as of our members.

We take the feedback we received seriously and recognize there is much work to do. This feedback is reflected and prioritized throughout our 2024-2027 strategic plan.



ABOUT THE PLAN

AFHTO's 2024–2027 strategic plan will **guide our priorities for the next three years.**

It will position us to advocate and work effectively with government and our partners, support our members to be at the centre of a connected, comprehensive and effective healthcare system, and provide the best care possible to the patients they serve.

OUR PURPOSE

→ To empower primary care teams to be at the centre of a connected, comprehensive and effective healthcare system.



OUR VISION

→ Equitable access to excellent team-based primary care for every person in Ontario.





Service

We believe in putting our members first, responding to their needs and the needs of the patients they serve.



Collaboration

We believe in embracing partnerships and coalition-building to strengthen the collective impact of team-based care for patients.



Excellence

We believe in delivering safe, high-quality and culturally sensitive patient care and continually advancing quality and innovation.



OUR VALUES



Leadership

We believe in being a leading voice representing our members, upholding transparency and responding to emerging opportunities and challenges.



Health Equity

We believe in taking a population health approach, providing access for equity-deserving populations to team-based primary care.

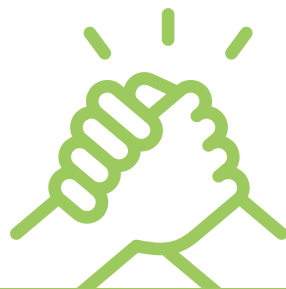
Advancing our Purpose

In this strategic plan, AFHTO commits to advance its purpose and vision in three key areas over the next three years:



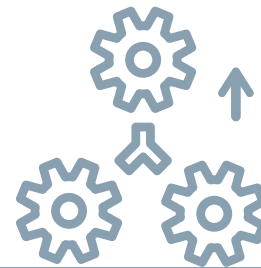
Advocate

Lead health system and primary care transformation and be an essential partner for change.



Support

Enable our members to provide equitable and integrated team-based primary care for more Ontarians.



Governance & Operational Excellence

Achieve excellence in the governance and operations of AFHTO and our members to always demonstrate value.

Advocate

Lead health system and primary care transformation and be an essential partner for change.



WE WILL

- Lead the transformation and advancement of primary care with our partners.
- Advance a health human resource strategy with provincial partners and members that addresses the wage gap in primary and community care.
- Deepen partnerships in primary care to enhance advocacy efforts that support the sustainability and strength of team-based primary care.
- Build and demonstrate the value of team-based primary care through evidence, data and outcomes to support advocacy efforts.
- Empower members to participate in effective grassroots advocacy within the communities they serve.

Support

Enable our members to provide equitable and integrated team-based primary care for more Ontarians.

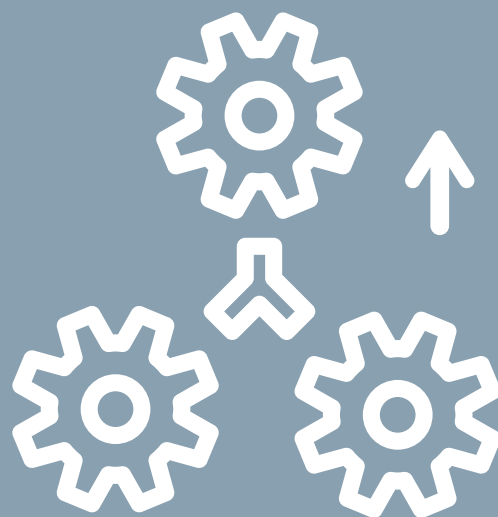


WE WILL

- Continually engage with members to deepen our understanding of their unique challenges and support their evolving needs to navigate a changing healthcare system.
- Optimize member communications for timely and purposeful information sharing and guidance, including about system-wide changes and opportunities.
- Provide the tools, training and education for the continuous improvement and expansion of team-based primary care.
- Support members to adopt a health equity lens aligned with ongoing health system transformation objectives.
- Leverage the benefits of effective and standardized data collection and analysis to demonstrate value and evidence-based care.

Governance & Operational Excellence

Achieve excellence in the governance and operations of AFHTO and our members to always demonstrate value.



WE WILL

- Build a team with the skills and capacity to deliver on the Strategic Plan and better support our members.
- Evolve and refine who we are as an association to better reflect our membership composition and unique value proposition.
- Ensure exemplary governance at AFHTO through continuous evaluation, alignment with best practices and fostering the necessary skills and experience.
- Support our members to modernize their governance structures to enable integrated and equitable approaches to care that support health system transformation.
- Leverage opportunities for enhanced and formalized strategic partnerships in primary care.


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