

Ontario eConsult Service

Eligibility for Specialist Participation

Purpose

To provide guidelines on eligibility of specialists to answer eConsults through the Ontario eConsult Service.

Background

The Ontario eConsult Program enables physicians and nurse practitioners to ask clinical questions to a specialist electronically and receive a response within days, often eliminating the need for an in-person patient visit. Accessed primarily through the secure OTNhub (otnhub.ca), the program is led by the Ontario eConsult Centre of Excellence (eConsult COE), housed at The Ottawa Hospital in partnership with the Bruyère Research Institute. Delivery partners are Ontario Health (OTN) and OntarioMD with the support of the Ministry of Health. The Ontario eConsult Program constitutes the four services: The Ontario eConsult Service, the Champlain BASE™ Service, Teledermatology and Teleophthalmology

The Ontario eConsult Service serves as the province-wide multi-specialty eConsult platform and involves participation of specialists from across the province. Currently only physicians can participate as specialists. The Ontario eConsult Service offers two models which specialist may participate in:

- BASE™ Managed Specialty Model (accessed through regional or provincial BASE™ managed specialty groups)
- Direct to Specialist Model (accessed as individual specialists or through a self-managed specialty group)

Guidelines

The Ontario eConsult Program is funded through the support of the Ontario Ministry of Health. As such, the eligibility for specialists to participate in the program to answer eConsults is based on the following criteria.

- The specialist physician must hold a valid certificate of registration with CPSO.
- The specialist physician must be in good standing with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO).
- The specialist physician must have a primary practice location in Ontario as listed in their CPSO registration.
- The specialist physician must not be in an active training program (residency or fellowship) in the specialty for which they wish to provide eConsults.

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- The specialist physician must hold one of the following, in the specialty for which they wish to provide eConsults:
 - Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) Certification
 - Certificate of Added Competence
 - Focused Practice Designation
 - and/or special permission by the Specialist Lead/Executive Director of the Ontario eConsult Centre of Excellence which is based on their scope of practice and recognition of their expertise through receiving referrals in their office practice from other physicians for this area of practice.

All specialists who meet the above criteria are eligible to participate in the Direct to Specialist model of eConsult, either as an individual specialist or through a self-managed specialty group.

Specialists may be also be invited to participate in Regional or Provincial BASE™ Managed Specialty groups at the discretion of the Ontario eConsult Centre of Excellence. This decision is based on identified need and community of practice.