



Information Sheet

PHC is the most common health care experienced by Canadians and improvements are essential. Our goal is to establish new pan-Canadian data sources and information that can be used to better understand PHC across Canada, report on PHC indicators and inform health policy and decision-making at various levels.

Who We Are

Established in 1994, CIHI is an independent, not-for-profit corporation that provides essential information on Canada's health system and the health of Canadians. Funded by federal, provincial and territorial governments, we are guided by a Board of Directors made up of health leaders across the country.

Our Vision

To help improve Canada's health system and the well-being of Canadians by being a leading source of unbiased, credible and comparable information that will enable health leaders to make better-informed decisions.

Primary Health Care

Pan-Canadian Primary Health Care Electronic Medical Record Content Standard

Background

Primary health care (PHC) is the most common type of health care experienced by Canadians. Across Canada, electronic medical records (EMRs) are being implemented to support improvements in PHC, including improved access, quality, outcomes and chronic disease prevention and management. To ensure that this pan-Canadian effort yields the desired results, the use of standardized EMR information is essential.

Data that is standardized is not only comparable, but it also can be better analyzed to determine trends, evaluate the impact of health initiatives and support health system planning. To this end, a PHC EMR content standard for priority data elements was developed and is now available.

Our Goal

Working with jurisdictions and Canada Health Infoway, the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) led the development and release of a common and agreed-upon PHC EMR content standard in early 2011. This pan-Canadian standard is increasingly being used in EMR applications to support PHC delivery and improved health system management. Our goal is to have this standard implemented in PHC EMRs across the country.

Contact Us

For more information,
contact us at phc@cihi.ca.

Approach

To achieve this goal, a jurisdictional advisory group with representation from the jurisdictions, Canada Health Infoway and CIHI was established to help develop the Pan-Canadian PHC EMR Content Standard. This advisory group was supported by a pan-Canadian content standard working group, which provided input and advice on the standard to ensure that it was clinically relevant, aligned with existing standards where appropriate, met the needs of stakeholders and was implementable.

This EMR content standard initiative directly supports patient care improvements through both the development of more effective EMRs and health system use of EMR data. The standard was developed through a broad consultation process that engaged clinicians, standards experts, researchers and vendors to obtain their valuable expertise and insight on the PHC EMR Content Standard and its implementation.

CIHI will continue to work with stakeholders to establish additional products and services to facilitate the adoption and implementation of this standard. For example, in summer 2011, CIHI released the *PHC EMR Content Standard Implementation Guide* and the *Data Extract Specification (DES) Business View*. These products can be found on CIHI's PHC web page at www.cihi.ca/phc as well as on the Canada Health Infoway wiki at <https://emri.infoway-inforoute.ca/References/Standards/CIHI>. The complete DES, which includes all technical content, is available only on the wiki. In parallel, the longer-term governance and maintenance of the PHC EMR Content Standard are being planned to ensure that it remains clinically and technically relevant to meet evolving stakeholder needs in the years to come.