

Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

Narrative for Health Care Organizations in Ontario

March 28, 2025

OVERVIEW

The Beamsville Medical Centre Family Health Team (BMCFHT) is committed to delivering exceptional, patient-centered care through an interdisciplinary approach. By fostering collaboration within our team and with external organizations, we are better equipped to serve both our patients and the wider community. We continuously strive for growth and improvement, aiming to elevate the quality of care we provide.

We honour the dignity, privacy, and contributions of every individual, upholding the highest standards of integrity and accountability. Our goal is to offer an outstanding care experience and ensure equitable access to our services, all while delivering care with excellence through a collaborative, team-based approach.

We recognize that quality improvement is a continuous journey. This journey involves identifying challenges, implementing effective solutions, evaluating outcomes, and building on our successes. In recent years, improving access to care has been a primary focus, and we have made significant progress with notable achievements.

BMCFHT has developed quality-driven programs and services within both our clinic and the broader community. We prioritize exceptional experiences for both patients and providers, seamlessly integrating into the broader healthcare system while enhancing our organizational capacity and performance.

In addition, we are deepening our understanding of diverse communities through ongoing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) education and relationship-building. Our patients and the community will continue to guide this work. This commitment to

quality improvement aligns with our strategic pillars: improved patient care and satisfaction, access to services, community integration, organizational development, and physician engagement.

Our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is essential to advancing our mission and vision. Aligned with the province's Quality Agenda, it focuses on improving access to care by regularly assessing the balance between supply and demand, ensuring timely service delivery (same-day or next-day), and capturing client feedback. Client experience is at the core of our service delivery and program development, guiding our ongoing improvement efforts.

Our administrative team, in collaboration with the Board of Directors, regularly evaluates key objectives and performance indicators to maintain high standards across all levels of service.

BMCFHT looks forward to continued growth and development, deeply appreciating the ongoing support and guidance from Health Quality Ontario as we progress in our quality improvement journey.

ACCESS AND FLOW

Our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) supports our mission and vision, aligning with the province's Quality Agenda. We are committed to improving access to care by measuring both the supply and demand for services, evaluating our clients' experiences with same-day or next-day access, and gathering feedback on how they access services.

At BMCFHT, timely access to care is a priority. In the 2024/25 patient survey, 87% of respondents reported that they were able to

secure an appointment when needed.

Our quality initiatives in health promotion and prevention have led to significant progress. One such initiative involves our Research Assistant, who tracks individuals eligible for preventive cancer screenings but who have not yet participated. Through regular follow-ups, screening rates for cervical cancer have improved, placing us in the top 25th percentile of Family Health Teams (FHTs).

For colorectal cancer screening, 80.1% of eligible individuals are up-to-date with their tests as of March 2024, this is well above both the LHIN average (64.6%) and the provincial average (60.9%), as per PCP reports. We are committed to continuing efforts to enhance disease prevention and improve community health.

To ensure continuous high-quality care, our Board of Directors, composed of nine physicians, reviews quarterly performance reports. These reports compare our metrics to those of other FHTs and provincial/national averages. They help us monitor our progress, identify improvement opportunities, and benchmark key indicators such as the percentage of patients seen within 7 days of hospital discharge.

We maintain strong partnerships with McMaster University and other institutions, hosting residents, medical students, and nurse practitioner students. Our multidisciplinary team—including social workers, dietitians, diabetes educators, pharmacists, hypertension nurses, chiropodists, and nurse practitioners—collaborates to meet the diverse needs of our patients, providing both in-person and virtual care.

BMCFHT operates across two levels in the afternoon to maximize care efficiency: Level 1 "Wellness Clinic": Focuses on well-baby visits, prenatal care, preventive care appointments, injection clinics, and lab visits. Level 2 "Illness Clinic": Provides assessments for potential illnesses, including viruses such as COVID-19. This dual-level approach ensures safe, effective management of patient care, especially for vulnerable populations.

Our physicians are actively involved in hospital care, serving as the most responsible physicians for patients admitted to our local hospital, the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital. This involvement ensures seamless continuity of care, with follow-up support after discharge, including house calls when necessary. Additionally, our Obstetrical Care Team, which includes four physicians, provides prenatal and obstetrical care to both our patients and unattached OB patients in the community.

We continue to partner with The Best Care Practice Program to provide evidence-based care through its RRT/CRE team. This program includes diagnosis, prescription education, action plans, and case management. Patients also receive spirometry results, which research has shown reduces COPD-related emergency visits and hospitalizations while improving quality of life.

Our partnership with the Niagara Medical Group Family Health Team further enhances our ability to offer in-house referrals to the Community Health Prosperity Program, providing additional support for our patients.

As part of our ongoing commitment to improving healthcare access and quality, BMCFHT will continue the Measuring Health Equity

Survey in 2025-2026. Distributed via the Oceans Platform, this survey will help us gather valuable insights into the needs of our diverse patient population, enabling us to further enhance the care we provide.

EQUITY AND INDIGENOUS HEALTH

Equitable access to care is central to BMCFHT's mission. We are dedicated to removing barriers to service and ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their social, economic, or cultural background, have access to quality primary healthcare. Our focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion drives us to provide healthcare services that promote wellness, community, and social justice.

We support this mission in various ways, including offering online appointment booking for individuals who face challenges scheduling appointments, providing a French-speaking physician to serve our Francophone clients, offering home visits when necessary, ensuring timely access to care, and organizing group sessions to improve access. We strive to ensure that individuals receive the support they need as quickly as possible.

In our rural community, there are a limited number of visible minorities and even fewer who self-identify as Indigenous. However, with the arrival of refugees in our area, some of our providers are now offering primary care services to this population. Building relationships with refugees has helped them engage in their healthcare and feel more comfortable in the community.

A core function of the FHT is identifying areas where health equity may be compromised and developing initiatives to address these gaps. To support this, our research assistant continues to track

trans male patients with a cervix to ensure they receive the necessary care, including Pap smear checks.

BMCFHT also provides ongoing care to migrant agricultural workers who are not part of our FHT. These workers face a variety of health challenges, including chronic and infectious diseases, mental health issues, and occupational and environmental health concerns. When required we collaborate with Quest Community Health Centre to offer care when required on a Thursday evening at St. Alban's Anglican Church in Lincoln, making healthcare more accessible to this population.

We continue to identify and address issues in our rural community, such as financial barriers to medications, housing, food insecurity, and geographic barriers to specialists. Through the Community Health Prosperity Program, we work to connect patients with local resources and eliminate these obstacles.

At BMCFHT, we believe that the link between health equity and community capacity-building initiatives is essential. This approach not only strengthens our organization but also removes barriers for our patients. Our team is committed to integrating equity, diversity, inclusiveness, and anti-racism principles into our services, continually gathering data to ensure our care remains responsive to the needs of our diverse patient population.

PATIENT/CLIENT/RESIDENT EXPERIENCE

Since 2006, we have consistently conducted patient engagement surveys to gather valuable feedback from our clients. This feedback has been instrumental in shaping and enhancing our programs and services. Patient engagement is essential to the success of these

efforts, and we ensure that the insights we gather are shared with our patients, staff, and Board of Directors.

Our Allied Health Professionals have also been actively involved in community outreach, successfully conducting workshops at the local Community Centre and at the local High School. These workshops, aimed at both rostered and non-rostered patients, as well as community members, align with our commitment to improving the well-being of both our patients and the broader community. We take great pride in our continued efforts to enhance health outcomes and celebrate the well-being of those we serve.

A notable initiative we recently offered was the four week Women's Health Menopause Workshop, hosted by BMCFHT. This collaborative effort provided attendees with essential tools and insights into navigating the challenges of pre and post-menopause. The workshop covered various aspects, including effective treatment options and how hormonal changes during menopause can impact mental and physical health. Participants also received valuable strategies for managing anxiety during this life stage.

Our ongoing partnership with The Best Care Practice Program further strengthens the services we provide. Through this program, our Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) offers evidence-based care, which includes diagnoses, prescription education, action plans, and case management. Patients also receive spirometry results during visits. Studies indicate that this program reduces COPD-related emergency department visits and hospitalizations, while significantly improving patients' quality of life. Our patients consistently express appreciation for this partnership.

In addition to our in-clinic services, we continue to collaborate with the Niagara Medical Group Family Health Team through the Community Health Prosperity Program. This program provides critical support for a range of services, including housing and transportation applications, assistance with medication costs, addressing social isolation, and offering support for income security, food security, family needs, literacy, education, and employment.

We also remain dedicated to providing specialized support through various health initiatives, such as the STOP program for smoking cessation, nutrition challenges, cholesterol and diabetes education, and hypertension management—both in-person and virtually. We are proud of the diverse support we offer and are optimistic about the positive, ongoing impact these programs will have on our patients and the community.

While virtual care has become an essential tool for our physicians, nurse practitioners, and allied health professionals, the majority of our patients still prefer in-person appointments, which we continue to prioritize.

Client experience plays a central role in guiding our service delivery and program development. We will continue to monitor and review client feedback to ensure we maintain high standards of service responsiveness. Quality remains one of our strategic priorities, with relevant objectives and indicators being closely tracked by both our administrative staff and Board of Directors.

We are committed to transparency and quality improvement in all

that we do. To access our clinic statistics, please visit <http://www.beamsvillefht.com/information-2/clinic-statistics>.

PROVIDER EXPERIENCE

Over the past few years, BMCFHT staff have demonstrated remarkable strength, resilience, and adaptability. Our leadership team, including the Lead Physician, Board, and Executive Director, is dedicated to fostering a work environment where staff feel connected, supported, and empowered in their daily roles. Despite budget freezes that have prevented salary increases, we remain committed to exploring innovative solutions for improving recruitment and retention.

Staff are supported not only by the organization but also by one another. We continue to hold quarterly department meetings, providing a forum for staff to connect, discuss issues, and collaborate on solutions. Staff are encouraged to seek opportunities to improve processes, programs, and patient care. We also emphasize the importance of monitoring personal health and well-being, allowing time for rest and regeneration as needed. Resources are available to support staff whenever required. The Executive Director and Lead Physician maintain an open-door policy, welcoming team members to share concerns and suggestions for improvement.

As an organization, we prioritize meaningful initiatives, such as our Mid-Summer Annual Staff Dinner, where staff are celebrated and recognized for their accomplishments. This event has been well-received, with staff expressing gratitude and enthusiasm, which has positively impacted overall team morale.

BMCFHT is not immune to the workforce challenges currently faced by the healthcare system, particularly in relation to employee health, wellness, and retention. We deeply value each team member and recognize that part of maintaining well-being involves minimizing frustrations in the workplace. To this end, we have implemented numerous improvements, including upgrades to technology, workstations, and the overall ease of use of our EMR system.

Looking ahead, we are committed to future quality initiatives in health programming. Our green initiatives have diverted 389 pounds of PPE waste—such as face masks, disinfectant wipes, and gloves—from landfills. Our clinic was awarded the Green Office Challenge, Top 3 in 2024.

Our practitioners continue to work collaboratively to deliver the highest quality of care to our patients and community.

SAFETY

At the Beamsville Medical Centre Family Health Team (BMCFHT), we are committed to continuously improving the patient experience by implementing quality and safety initiatives. Our team regularly evaluates our services to ensure that the communities we serve have access to safe, high-quality care in a patient and family-centered environment.

The physicians at BMCFHT receive regular primary care practice reports that compare their opioid prescribing habits to other physicians within our Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and across the province. These reports encourage physicians to assess their prescribing practices and consider reducing opioid

prescriptions when appropriate. Prescription renewals often involve patient screening, and medications are dispensed only during in-person appointments. Additionally, we encourage non-narcotic treatment options for chronic pain, including referrals to pain clinics for nerve blocks.

To enhance patient safety, we introduced a new indicator in 2024 to monitor high-dose opioid use. This indicator tracks the percentage of non-palliative patients who have been prescribed a daily dose of more than 90 Morphine Equivalents (MEQ) within the last six months. Our target for the 2024/25 period was to lower our previous performance of 0.9%. In 2025, we achieved 0.7%, and we are pleased with this progress. We expect further improvements over the next one to two years.

BMCFHT places a high priority on both patient and staff safety. We strive to maintain a unified primary care voice and foster strong community connections. We are committed to respecting and engaging the dignity and well-being of everyone in our workplace.

Our policies and procedures are continually evolving to comply with public health guidelines and ensure the safety of patients and staff. The Workplace Violence, Harassment & Disruption Prevention Policy is reviewed annually, focusing on updates to legislation related to harassment and workplace violence. Staff education on anti-racism, as well as addressing abusive or violent encounters, is conducted annually. We also provide ongoing training in diversity, equity, and inclusion, which has fostered a positive culture and open conversations within our workplace.

At BMCFHT, improving the patient experience is a central focus. We

encourage patients to provide feedback on their care, whether through our website's complaint form or by contacting the clinic directly. The Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) meets quarterly to ensure our policies align with safety guidelines and to review incident reports for trends or potential risks requiring attention.

We remain dedicated to delivering exceptional care and maintaining a safe, respectful environment for both our patients and staff.

PALLIATIVE CARE

At BMCFHT, we believe that palliative care is about more than just managing symptoms; it's about ensuring patients and their families feel supported, respected, and empowered during a deeply personal time. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for individuals facing serious illness while preserving their autonomy and dignity at every stage.

Our care integrates not only medical treatment but also emotional, psychological, and cultural support. We work closely with patients and their families to develop personalized care plans, ensuring that their values, beliefs, and preferences guide every decision. This collaborative approach helps patients maintain control and navigate their journey with confidence, knowing their needs are heard and honoured.

Palliative care at BMCFHT is a continuous, evolving process. Our providers, in collaboration with Allied Health Professionals and community partnerships such as St Elizabeth's Health Care & McNally House Hospice, ensure that each patient's care is not only

effective but also compassionate and tailored to their unique circumstances. We recognize the significance of culture and traditions in healthcare, and wherever appropriate, we adapt our care to reflect and respect these important elements.

To measure the impact of our care, our research assistant provides valuable data that helps identify individuals who may require palliative care throughout the year. Regular follow-ups ensure that care plans are proactive, comprehensive, and adaptable to meet evolving needs, providing the best possible support.

At BMCFHT, we are committed to helping patients live fully, comfortably, and with peace of mind until the end of their lives. Our focus is on making every moment matter, ensuring patients feel seen, supported, and always valued.

POPULATION HEALTH MANAGEMENT

BMCFHT remains committed to developing high-quality programs and services, both in-person and virtually, that meet the evolving needs of our patients and community.

Our Allied Health Professionals deliver workshops at the local high school on Healthy Choices, specifically addressing eating disorders and anxiety. Additionally, small group sessions with student parents at a local elementary school have been highly successful addressing healthier choices. The dietitian also continues to educate residents at Lincoln Lodge (patients with mental health disorders) on making healthier choices.

We are dedicated to promoting a unified voice within primary care, building strong community partnerships, and ensuring seamless

collaboration with external organizations. As an active participant in the Greater Hamilton Health Network (GHHN), we foster relationships with primary care providers, social agencies, hospitals, and public health organizations, expanding our programs to serve both rostered and non-rostered patients. Our ongoing collaboration with Executive Directors from other Family Health Teams (FHTs) and Community Health Centres (CHCs) in the region has been instrumental in enhancing the care we provide to our patients.

Attending the Ontario Health West Interprofessional Primary Care Teams Quarterly Webinars offers valuable updates on Primary Care Networks (PCNs), as well as insights into ongoing assessments, developments, and initiatives that are shaping the future of primary care.

Our mental health social workers continue to work closely with other mental health professionals in the community. They've initiated quarterly in-person meetings and monthly impromptu groups and chats to foster better support for one another, ensuring continuity of care within Niagara's mental health landscape.

As mentioned previously, our partnership with the Best Care Practice Program at the clinic provides patients with respiratory disorders comprehensive, evidence-based care. This includes spirometry results, treatment education, personalized action plans, and dedicated case management.

Additionally, our on-site collaboration with Niagara Medical Group further supports our patients by addressing a wide range of social determinants of health. This includes assistance with housing, income security, transportation, food security, medication costs,

family support, social isolation, literacy, education, and employment.

Our 12-week 'Lifestyle Medicine' Chronic Disease Program has been successful in empowering participants with the knowledge and skills needed to prevent and manage chronic diseases. Each session connects participants' habits to their health, educating them on the impact of lifestyle behaviours on chronic disease development and promoting powerful lifestyle changes for disease prevention and reversal.

As we continue to measure health equity, we aim not only to expand access to programs and services but also to enhance the overall quality of care at BMCFHT.

ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN

At BMCFHT, our physicians and nurse practitioners regularly use e-consults to collaborate with specialists, reducing the number of specialist referrals and expediting patient care. They also offer house calls for acute, chronic, palliative, and post-discharge care, especially for our elderly and vulnerable populations. Additionally, some of our Allied Health Professionals provide virtual appointments, which benefit patients who face barriers such as lack of transportation, childcare, or the inability to leave work for in-person visits.

Our clinic is fully computerized, which enhances the quality of care we provide. Every three months, we conduct data searches to assess our performance on key indicators like diabetes and hypertension. We compare our results to provincial and national averages to identify areas for improvement.

We are also focused on expanding digital health initiatives. The Oceans patient portal allows us to communicate securely with patients, offering services like secure messaging, online appointment booking, and reminders. We continue to explore new features in Oceans to keep patients well-informed and connected. Furthermore, we are committed to broadening our digital health projects to improve both patient care and clinicians' work-life balance.

Oceans e-Referral has been instrumental in streamlining the referral process, making it easier to track patient referrals and improving overall efficiency. The system offers bilingual email notifications in English and French, ensuring accessibility for all patients.

Some of our physicians are participating in a pilot project through the Greater Hamilton Health Network, funded by Ontario Health, with the goal of reducing administrative burdens and improving efficiency. This project introduces AI Scribe technology, which automates documentation tasks, allowing healthcare providers to focus more on patient care and less on administrative work. Ultimately, we hope that AI Scribe will streamline workflows, enhance productivity, and improve overall practice efficiency.

Additionally, we utilize PrescribeIT for eRenewal prescriptions, which facilitates collaboration with pharmacists and ensures safe, appropriate treatment options. This tool also secures patient data through multi-factor authentication.

Finally, we continue to provide access to community resources, all

of which are available on our website for patients' convenience.

CONTACT INFORMATION/DESIGNATED LEAD

Trudy Schroeder
Executive Director,
Beamsville Medical Centre FHT
4279 Hixon Street,
PO Box 430
Beamsville, ON
L0R 1B0
Office: 905 563 5315 ex 4
Fax: 905 563 0933

Bernhard Volz
Lead Physician
Beamsville Medical Centre FHT
4279 Hixon Street,
PO Box 430
Beamsville, ON
L0R 1B0
Office: 905 563 5315
Fax: 905 563 0933

OTHER

The Beamsville Medical Centre Family Health Team is committed to providing high-quality, accessible, and equitable care to our community. Through continued collaboration, innovation, and a deep focus on patient-centered care, we aim to strengthen our services and improve the overall health and well-being of the populations we serve.

We remain steadfast in our mission to provide excellent care, promote health equity, and foster a positive environment for both patients and staff.

SIGN-OFF

It is recommended that the following individuals review and sign-off on your organization's Quality Improvement Plan (where applicable):

I have reviewed and approved our organization's Quality Improvement Plan on **March 28, 2025**

Bernhard, Board Chair

Volz, Quality Committee Chair or delegate

Lead, Executive Director/Administrative Lead

volz@vaxxine.com, Other leadership as appropriate
