

Quality Performance Measurement and Monitoring Meetings: Summary Document

Emerging Issues and Themes: Volume Activities and STEMI Care

Q2 November 2021/22 Discussions | Document Distributed May 2022

Introduction:

The Quality Performance Measurement and Monitoring (QPMM) meetings are dedicated to discussing the CorHealth QPMM Quality Scorecard. This Q2 meeting focused on STEMI indicators. All 20 cardiac hospital programs were attendance for their respective QPMM call.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to highlight emerging issues and themes shared during the Q2 21/22 meetings. Discussions with the Cardiac Programs were framed around the following questions:

- How is your program doing with regards to health human resources? If there are shortages, what has your program been doing to leverage its staff pool and meet current needs?
- Does your cardiac program currently use ECG transmission technology to connect EMS with clinicians when STEMI cases have been identified?

Future QPMM Meetings

The next QPMM meetings are planned for October 2022. Final agenda decisions will be distributed closer towards this date.

Key Words

To summarize the discussions at a high level, key phrases and meeting notes were compiled and added to a word cloud generator (see Figure 1: Q2 21/22 Word Cloud). A word cloud is a visual representation of text data, used to depict key words used during discussions or free form text. The importance of each key word is depicted by size – the bigger the word, the more frequently that word was repeated during the discussions.

Figure 1: Q2 21/22 Word Cloud



Provincial Emerging Issues and Themes

Notable issues and themes that emerged from this QPMMM discussions have been highlighted below. Previous summaries can be accessed on the [CorHealth Website](#).

Infrastructure and Expansion
Several hospitals highlighted CATH labs building extensions and renovations were underway at their organizations. Some sites are operating with only 2 labs presently, creating challenges on managing volumes and waitlists.

Delayed Treatment
Patient acuity and burden of disease is higher. There was a sense that patients were coming in sicker due to being backlogged or because of delaying treatment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Access to primary care providers continues to also be a challenge.

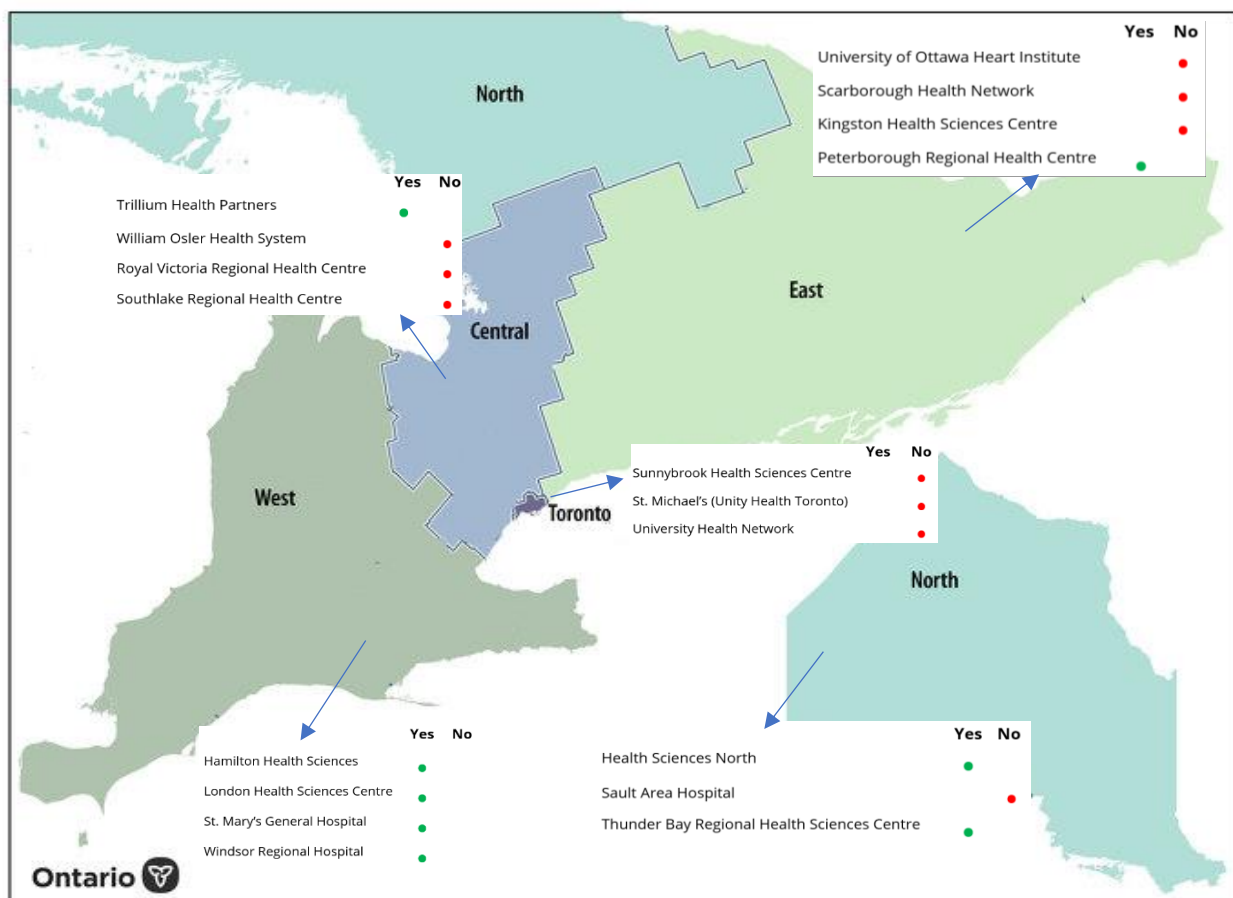
Patient Transportation
There have been some challenges with accessing ambulances and transportation particularly during the pandemic, there is not enough to keep up with the demand. Access to EMS ACLS crews is stretched.

Health Human Resources
Staff are burnt-out, retention and resignation have been an issue. The pandemic has exacerbated this, leading to staff shortages in areas requiring specialty training i.e., CATH lab. Strategies such as cross-training, bringing in externs and pre-grad students (which wasn't previously done) into the CATH labs, have been used as a temporary solution. There are also some challenges with vaccine mandates amongst staff.

COVID-19 Recovery
The system is rebuilding from the COVID-19 pandemic, though there continues to be ongoing concerns. Hospitals are addressing waiting lists; backlogs and they are working to get back to their pre-pandemic volumes.

STEMI CENTRES with ECG Electronic Transmissions

ECG transmission technology has been a promising strategy for improving door to balloon times, avoiding false activations, and improving communication between EMS and clinicians. During this QPMM call, we surveyed the 17 STEMI hospitals to determine which sites were utilizing this ECG technology. Below is the summary of our findings:





	Yes	No	Details
CENTRAL			
Trillium Health Partners	✓		EMS has created a direct line to cardiac interventionalist. There is also a STEMI button within the ED to support no lost time registration.
William Osler Health System		X	Presently this system does not exist, but in the future, they plan to integrate it.
Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre		X	
Southlake Regional Health Centre		X	
EAST			
University of Ottawa Heart Institute		X	
Scarborough Health Network		X	
Kingston Health Sciences Centre		X	
Peterborough Regional Health Centre	✓		EMS invested in technology which sends de-identified patient data to the hospital for review.
NORTH			
Health Sciences North	✓		Sends ECG through a Zoll to an iPhone.
Sault Area Hospital		X	
Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre	✓		When a STEMI is requested, a de-identified email is transmitted, internal cardiologist is paged and reviews the case. Communication is then sent over radio before patient arrival.
TORONTO			
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre		X	
St. Michael's (Unity Health Toronto)		X	
University Health Network		X	
WEST			
Hamilton Health Sciences	✓		Has a plan to roll out a STEMI app through Niagara Health and Hamilton over next 1-2 year with EMS who have smartphone capabilities. This comes after doing a 1-year pilot project that was successful.
London Health Sciences Centre	✓		Has had an ECG transmission for a while (tested with EMS in Huron county). Trucks have been updated which has resolved Wi-Fi issues.
St. Mary's General Hospital	✓		There is one number to call.
Windsor Regional Hospital	✓		Early adopters of limiting false positives in ECGs and STEMIs. Has been using the Life Net initiative for transmitting ECG to interventionalist since 2018/2019.

Appendix A: Additional details regarding STEMI Centres with ECG Electronic Transmissions

ⁱ Ministry of Health, "Ontario Taking Next Steps to Integrate Health Care System" (November 13, 2019), Government of Ontario, available: [Government of Ontario Newsroom](#).