

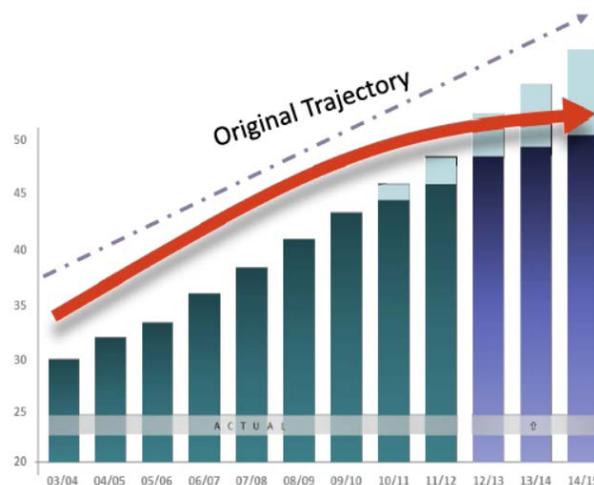
Challenges Facing the Ontario Health Care System

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) has defined four challenges facing the Ontario Health Care System:

1. Fiscal Challenge

The government cannot afford to continue to fund health care the way they have in the past. As the chart shows, previous levels of investment and growth in health care funding were not sustainable.

Before the province introduced the health system funding reform in 2011, health care was already consuming 42 cents of every tax dollar. Health care costs in general were increasing at about 7% per year. This high inflation was caused by more patients with increasing health care needs, and by more expensive technology and drugs being introduced every year.



At this rate, health care would have been consuming 80% of all government spending by 2030. This would have taken vital money away from education, policing, social services and infrastructure.

With the implementation of health system funding reform in Ontario, the provincial government has reduced health care spending increases to about 2% and been successful in “bending the cost curve” of health care expenses in this province.

2. Demographic Challenge

Ontario is aging as a population and the cost of caring for a senior is three times higher than the average age. Changing demographics alone will add \$24 billion in spending within 20 years.

The population in the South East LHIN is older than the provincial average, which leads to more people requiring the health care system and higher costs. By 2025, over 27% of the population in the south east will be over 65 years of age. This means that health care providers in our region need to ensure the services are better meeting the unique needs of the seniors.

3. Unhealthy Lifestyle Challenge

As a society, we are unhealthier than ever. On average, people in the south east smoke more, drink more, are overweight, and eat less healthy compared to the provincial average. This leads to more chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer and lung problems.

4. Complex Health Needs Challenge

A small number of patients in Ontario use an unequal amount of health care resources. In fact, just 5% of Ontarians account for 66% of health care costs in Ontario. These are people with

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multiple conditions who have complex health care needs. A new initiative across Ontario – called Health Links – is providing these individuals with more coordinated care. Health Links brings together the hospital, family doctor, long-term care home, community organizations and others to work on an individual care plan for each patient that better meets their needs.

