

Ontario Health and Boehringer Ingelheim Digital Health Care Transformation Challenge

FY 2025_26 Funding Criteria

Guidelines Ver 1.0 May 2025

1. Introduction

Collaboratively with Boehringer Ingelheim (Canada) Ltd.'s Winning Aspirations program, the Ministry of Health has approved funding for health service providers. This funding is intended to support new and innovative changes to how care is delivered, and for the broader health sector to build digital health maturity. Ontario Health (OH) welcomes submissions from Ontario Health Teams (OHTs), Family Health Teams (FHTs), Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinics (NPLCs), Community Health Centres (CHCs) and other primary care organizations. Indigenous health care organizations, including those serving First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban Indigenous persons (e.g., Indigenous Primary Health Care Organizations) are encouraged to apply. Funding is to address specific health care challenges, barriers and/or health inequities among patients living with chronic diseases through the innovative use of digital care solutions. Chronic diseases eligible are type 2 diabetes, chronic kidney disease, cardiovascular diseases, and heart failure.

Primary care providers who may have limited capacity to initiate such projects may wish to consider partnering with institutes, hospitals, and other Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) members who may be able to share capacity and resources.

1. Funding Requirements

Identify and implement, for the purposes of a proof of concept, digital health technology for use by Primary Care Providers in an innovative way to inform holistic clinical decision making at point of care, and/or support optimization of treatment for patients living with chronic disease(s) who are receiving care in the community.

Successful applicants should ensure the proposed project:

- i. Is led or co-led by Primary Care Provider(s) **and**,
- ii. Leverages Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies to advance diagnostics or clinical decision making **and**
- iii. Demonstrates implementation of evidence-based care, including Quality Standards and clinical practice guidelines that drives action toward holistic management of people with type 2 Diabetes, chronic kidney disease, cardiovascular diseases and/or heart failure.

AI technologies refer to AI systems, which are machine-based systems that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infer, from the input they receive how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or

*BI Canada in-kind on-the-ground support may also include coordinating, setting up and supporting the project plan, bridging technology/digital solutions with health care organizations, sharing implementation expertise and experience, participating on steering committees, supporting networking opportunities, facilitating educational/training needs, and/or co-developing external communications / press releases.

decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments. Different AI systems vary in their levels of autonomy and adaptiveness after deployment (OECD, 2023). For example, these technologies can analyze medical data, adapt to new clinical information, and assist healthcare providers in performing complex tasks such as diagnosing conditions and supporting clinical decision-making.

2. Technology Criteria

- Successful applicants will need to include a focus on AI technologies that advance diagnostics or clinical decision making to be considered for funding.
- Submissions are to request funding for a Health Canada-approved (if required for the kind of technology), off-the-shelf/turnkey digital care solution that can address the barriers experienced by patients living with chronic disease(s) receiving care in the community. This funding is for **net-new** use case(s) and/or implementations of the technology. Any technology that is in-development will not be considered in the evaluation process.
- Out-of-scope technologies for the purposes of this opportunity are:
 - AI Scribes (see Appendix B - Question #1)
 - Technologies that only encompass basic automation, systems based on fixed rules without learning capabilities, or traditional computational algorithms that do not exhibit adaptive or cognitive behaviors.

3. Funding & Support

Successful applicants will not only receive funding to address the innovation challenge but will also receive in-kind on-the-ground support* from Boehringer Ingelheim Canada (BI Canada) to support project planning regarding strategies, technology implementation, and communications.

All applicants can submit a **one-time funding request** that includes an implementation plan and a detailed budget for FY2025-26 (April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026). Ontario Health and/or Boehringer Ingelheim Canada will enter separate agreements with successful applicants.

4. Objectives

- To advance digital strategies to improve patient experiences and health outcomes.
- To advance diagnostic or clinical decision making in primary care.
- To advance local, regional, and provincial digital maturity in primary care.
- Measure and evaluate innovations against Quintuple Aim objectives to determine impact.

5. Eligibility

- This funding is intended to support health service providers and/or organizations that serve patients in Ontario and demonstrate alignment with one or more health system priorities.

6. Mandatory Project Requirements

- Clearly indicate a project manager resource that will be accountable for the execution of the project from initiation to completion including the deliverables agreed upon.

- Provide a list of health care providers and organizations that have committed to participate.
- Provide service for health care organizations/groups who would agree to signing funding agreement(s) that would include performance targets and monthly reporting requirements.
- Demonstrate increased collaboration between existing health human resources.
- Shortlisted proponents will be required to meet with the evaluation team for a virtual meeting to present their proposal and present a demonstration of the solution if requested.
- Provide an estimate of the number of health care providers and/or organizations, and patients who will be impacted by the initiative by March 31, 2026.
- Describe how the digital care solution will directly address the barriers experienced by patients who are living with the eligible chronic disease(s), and how the project will improve the patient's experience.
- Describe how the current clinical state and patient care workflows will be improved because of the digital care solution.
- Submit a completed logic model to demonstrate how the intended inputs, activities, and outputs of the proposed project will translate into short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes (impact) that address the problem identified.
- Outline a plan to implement the digital care solution including the identification of project milestones and how they will be measured and achieved.
- Outline a project plan to sustain the initiative post-project funding (March 31, 2026).
- Describe all the in-kind support that will be provided to enable the success of the initiative.
- Align/demonstrate alignment with the Digital Standards in Healthcare. Digital standards can be accessed here: <https://www.ontariohealth.ca/system-planning/digital-standards>
- Confirm that participating providers have the necessary infrastructure in place to implement and/or use the digital care solution prior to proposal submission.
- Propose an approach to communicate with and engage participating providers throughout the project.

7. Recommended Project Considerations

- Demonstrate commitment to care partnerships/integration (e.g., via the Ontario Health Team model).
- Support the advancement of health equity.
- Clearly identifying, if applicable, a resource to support data analysis of the project

8. Funding

- This funding is competitive in nature and provides a one-time funding opportunity for innovative initiatives. Up to 3 to 5 applications will be awarded.
- For each successful applicant, a range of up to \$100,000 to \$125,000 per project is available for fiscal year 2025-26 (ends March 31, 2026).
- To receive funds, successful applicants will enter into a Transfer Payment Agreement with Ontario Health **and** a funding Agreement with Boehringer Ingelheim which includes contractual provisions.
- Budget submissions should be itemized and clearly define net-new technology and/or capability costs.

9. Ineligible Costs

- Existing technology being used (more of the same)
- Additional deployments and expansion of existing programs

-
- Operational expenses (e.g., cell phones, iPads, computers, internet, grocery store vouchers, meals, or travel costs for participants).
 - Administrative overhead (e.g., office supplies, rent, lighting, renovations, or new building infrastructure)
 - Clinical role (new or existing)
 - Projects requiring Research Ethics Board approval during the funding period.

10. Submission and Approval Process

Submissions must be documented using the **approved** Ontario Health and Boehringer Ingelheim Digital Health Care Funding proposal template and sent to your associated region at:

Central	OH-Central_DigitalVirtual@ontariohealth.ca
East	OH-East_DigitalVirtual@ontariohealth.ca
North	OH-North_DigitalVirtual@ontariohealth.ca
Toronto	OH-Toronto_DigitalVirtual@ontariohealth.ca
West	OH-West_DigitalVirtual@ontariohealth.ca

Proponent Submissions MUST be submitted to your regional contact by: June 20, 2025

The review panel appreciates the time and effort invested in each proposal. Proponents successful at proceeding to the next stage of the evaluation process will be contacted directly regarding next steps. Due to the high volume of requests, the panel is unable to provide individual feedback on proposals that are not selected.

Appendices

Appendix A: Question and Answer - Boehringer Ingelheim (Canada) Ltd.

1. Who is Boehringer Ingelheim (Canada) Ltd.?

Boehringer Ingelheim is a family-owned enterprise that is one of the world's leading 20 pharmaceutical companies. Founded in 1885 in Ingelheim, Germany, BI's products are marketed in 145 countries with a focus on six therapeutic areas: cardiometabolic diseases, central nervous system diseases, immunology, oncology, respiratory diseases, and retinal health.

Based in Burlington, Ontario, Boehringer Ingelheim (Canada) is committed to supporting better health and health care outcomes for patients, families, and health care providers throughout Ontario and across Canada.

2. Why did the Ministry of Health partner with Boehringer Ingelheim Canada?

The Ministry of Health (MOH) is always looking for new partnerships that can support better patient outcomes. Boehringer Ingelheim Canada has experience supporting digital health care innovation initiatives across the province which provides an opportunity to further support Ontario Health Teams and health care delivery partners in addressing their local priorities.

3. What is the Winning Aspirations program?

In 2020, Boehringer Ingelheim Canada created the Winning Aspirations Program, which is an approach to connecting Ontario-based health technology entrepreneurs with health care providers, administrators, and leaders. The Winning Aspirations Program establishes partnerships that provide financial assistance and in-kind resources to support hospitals, speciality care clinics, Ontario Health Teams, and other health care providers to plan for and implement health technology platforms that enable better patient care.

4. What are the goals of the Winning Aspirations Program?

The Winning Aspirations Program partnerships in Ontario are reflective of 4 primary goals:

- Increasing access to digital health tools for Ontarians with complex chronic disease(s).
- Showcasing the potential of Ontario-made digital health technologies to provide system value.
- Demonstrating approaches to support scalability of digital health technologies to the MOH/OH; and
- Highlighting the opportunities that exist to strengthen Ontario's health care system through public-private partnerships.

Appendices

Appendix B: Question and Answer - General

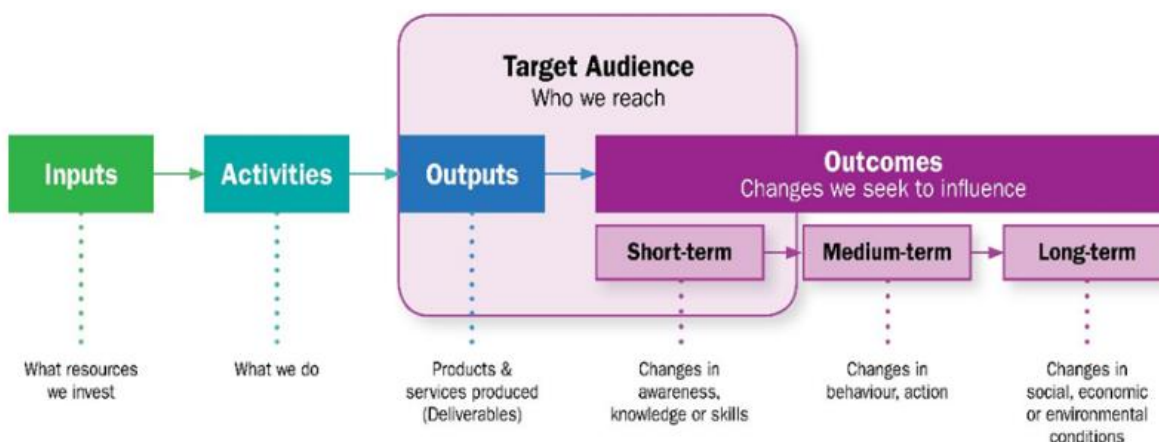
1. Why are AI Scribes out of scope for this funding opportunity?

While the technology is recognized as tools of high potential to alleviate administrative burden and improve the quality and completeness of clinical documentation, this funding opportunity is focused on applications of AI in the areas of diagnostics and/or clinical decision-making. The ministry, Ontario Health, and Boehringer Ingelheim Canada aim to avoid duplicating funding efforts.

2. What is a logic model? Why are proponents asked to complete one?

A logic model is a visual representation that outlines the relationship between a program's resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes. Proponents seeking funding are asked to complete a logic model to clearly demonstrate how their program's resources (inputs) will be utilized through planned activities to achieve specific, measurable outcomes. A well-constructed logic model serves as a pathway from inputs to long-term impacts, helping all parties involved understand the rationale behind the proposed interventions. It also aids in identifying potential challenges, assumptions, and contextual factors that could influence program success. By providing a structured framework, a logic model enhances transparency, facilitates communication, and supports effective planning and evaluation.

Logic Model: Linking inputs, activities, and outputs to outcomes performance measures should help us decide



Government of Ontario. (n.d.). Stage II: Identify outcomes using a logic model. Ontario.ca. Retrieved April 24, 2025, from [https://www.ontario.ca/document/performance-measurement-agriculture-agri-food-and-economic-development-organizations/stage-ii-identify-outcomes-using-logic-model​;contentReference\[oaicite:0\] {index=0}](https://www.ontario.ca/document/performance-measurement-agriculture-agri-food-and-economic-development-organizations/stage-ii-identify-outcomes-using-logic-model​;contentReference[oaicite:0] {index=0})