Practice-Based Learning Networks: EPIC and POPLAR

A Practice-Based Learning Network (PBLN) is a network of primary healthcare providers who collaboratively explore challenges, develop and share innovations, and use practice-based data to improve care and outcomes.

EPIC is a province-wide PBLN open to all Alliance members.

It is a sister network to the six regional PBLNs that are hosted at universities around Ontario.

EPIC stands for *Equity, Performance, Improvement, and Change.*

POPLAR is a network of networks for primary care across Ontario.

It includes all six of the regional PBLNs in Ontario as well as the Alliance's EPIC PBLN.

POPLAR stands for *Primary Care Ontario Practice-Based Learning and Research.*

- EPIC and POPLAR provide unique opportunities to take part in population-level, practical research that can improve care and outcomes for our clients and communities.

- EPIC brings together data, knowledge-creators, and knowledge-users across our sector.

- POPLAR extends the network to other sectors to expand the possibilities for collaboration, data-sharing, and spread of new innovations.

- POPLAR is a data trust that will incorporate administrative and practice data from ICES and EMR systems from all primary care sectors across Ontario.

- EPIC and POPLAR will enable rapid evaluation and improvement – EPIC at the centre and sector levels, and POPLAR at the regional, OHT, and provincial levels.

- POPLAR is endorsed and funded by the Ministry of Health.

Participating in POPLAR

- The Alliance has signed a data-sharing agreement with POPLAR, with our members' approval. EMR data is being shared with POPLAR via our Business Intelligence Reporting Tool (BIRT).

- Encourage and enable your providers to join the EPIC PBLN or your regional PBLN. Participants meet regularly to learn from each other and collaborate on research projects.

Questions about POPLAR or EPIC? Email Jennifer.Rayner@AllianceON.org

Practice-Based Learning Networks: EPIC and POPLAR

How is POPLAR different from sharing our data with ICES?

- POPLAR and ICES data complement each other, because the data is from different sources.

- Alliance data shared with ICES includes EMR data, but ICES data from other sectors is administrative (billing) data only.

- With POPLAR, EMR data for over 1.5 million primary care clients will be merged to enable meaningful evaluations of primary care for research, quality improvement, and planning.

- The POPLAR dataset will bring together data from all primary care sectors, linked to health system usage data from ICES.

- Members of the POPLAR PBLN will have timely access to this data for rapid learning, evaluation, and improvement.

Sharing your data with POPLAR is easy and secure.

- Data will be extracted in the same way and at the same time as data is extracted for CIHI – no extra work for you or your team!

- The data-sharing agreement will follow the same protocols as the agreements with CIHI and ICES, with data flowing through BIRT.

- EMR data is always de-identified, securely stored, and its access is highly controlled.

- Each client will be assigned an encrypted code, and all data will be protected according to PHIPA and other relevant privacy laws.

- Every request for accessing EMR data for research involves a rigorous evaluation process of the project, including vetting its ethical merit.

Ontario's Practice-Based Learning Networks

Primary Care Ontario Practice-Based Learning and Research Network (POPLAR)

Equity, Performance, Improvement and Change (EPIC)

University of Toronto Practice-Based Research Network (UTOPIAN)

Northern Ontario School of Medicine Research Toward Health Hub (NORTHH)

Eastern Ontario Network (Queen's University) (EON)

Ottawa Practice Enhancement Network (University of Ottawa) (OPEN)

McMaster University Sentinel and Information Collaboration (MUSIC)

Deliver Primary Healthcare Information (Western University) (DELPHI)

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