



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OCFP and OTN partner to help physicians leverage virtual care solutions

TORONTO, June 29, 2016 – The Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN) and the Ontario College of Family Physicians (OCFP) are teaming up to support the educational and patient care needs of Ontario's family physicians by leveraging virtual care solutions.

Through this partnership, OCFP members will have access to an evolving choice of online educational content, as well as a number of virtual healthcare tools and services to build competency and enhance capacity in family medicine. The partnership is effective July 1, 2016.

"OTN is focused on igniting and fostering innovation in Ontario," says OTN CEO Dr. Ed Brown. "We're excited to have the opportunity to work with the OCFP to maximize access for family physicians to our core telemedicine services as well as to a growing number of innovative evidence-based virtual care tools. We're committed to working together to make it easy to find and use virtual healthcare technologies that provide access to education, enable family physicians to get faster advice from specialists and enhance care delivery for their patients."

Over the next 12 months the OCFP and OTN will undertake a number of initiatives, including distance educational events and virtual townhall discussions, to provide family physicians with practical information on how to leverage virtual care tools and incorporate telemedicine into their practices.

One of the key platforms is the OTNhub ("Hub") – otnhub.ca -- where Ontario's healthcare professionals practise telemedicine and access solutions such as:

- **eCare:** Apps and programs like Telehomecare to monitor and coach patients to manage their chronic conditions at home
- **eVisit:** Real-time video visits with patients and peers
- **eConsult:** Access to specialist consults in three to five days in over 27 areas of care
- **eLearning:** Extensive library of resources, including archived Grand Rounds, learning videos and peer-reviewed papers
- **ePodium:** Live learning events from providers on a range of topics, some for credit, and ability for members to webcast their own live events

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"In Marathon, which is on the north shore of Lake Superior, we have been using telemedicine for almost 20 years, mainly to access our specialist colleagues who work in larger urban centres and reduce travel time for our patients. More recently we've been using OTN extensively for education and have embraced Teledermatology," says Dr. Sarah Newbery, a family physician and OCFP President.

"Telemedicine allows family physicians to directly and efficiently serve the needs of our patients while continuing to coordinate care through their 'medical home'. There is tremendous potential – for patients, for family docs and for system efficiency."

Both OTN and the OCFP are excited to be strengthening ties to support the delivery of quality and accessible primary care and the use of virtual healthcare solutions that put patients first.

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About OTN

A world leader in telemedicine, OTN helps Ontarians get more out of the healthcare system by bridging the distance of time and geography to bring more patients the care they need, where and when they need it. Using innovative technology, OTN streamlines the healthcare process, while also expanding the way knowledge is shared and how the medical community interacts with each other and with patients. An independent, not-for-profit organization, OTN is funded by the Government of Ontario and Canada Health Infoway. For more information please visit www.otn.ca.

To arrange an interview with Dr. Ed Brown, please contact Gillian Wansbrough, 416-446-4110 x4004 or gwansbrough@otn.ca.

About OCFP

The OCFP provides high-quality, evidence-based education, promotes family doctor leadership and advocates for the vital role of family doctors in Ontario's health-care system. With more than 10,500 members, the OCFP is the provincial Chapter of the College of Family Physicians of Canada and an essential voice for family medicine in Ontario. For more information, visit www.ocfp.on.ca.

To arrange an interview with Dr. Sarah Newbery, please contact Heather Howe 416-867-9646 or hhowe@cfpc.ca.