

HEALTH TECHNOLOGY ANALYSIS EXCHANGE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Health Technology Analysis Exchange (hereinafter the “Exchange”) is a network of Health Technology Assessment (“HTA”) producers, who through sharing HTA information and leveraging existing HTA capacity, will coordinate the gathering of evidence and policy advice regarding health technologies to support the needs of the federal, provincial, and territorial (F/P/T) jurisdictions. The Exchange will use an open, inclusive and flexible model that builds on current capacity and grows as the pan-Canadian capacity builds.

In these Terms of Reference, unless otherwise provided, the definitions set out in Appendix 1 attached hereto shall apply herein.

1.0 Mandate

The mandate of the Exchange is:

- a) To support the health technology information needs of the F/P/T jurisdictions and their stakeholders, including the Policy Forum.
- b) To provide a forum for producers of health technology assessment and policy analysis information to share knowledge, information, and experience.
- c) To coordinate and leverage resources for HTA and policy analysis work.
- d) To coordinate the sharing of health technology assessment and policy analysis information across Canada.
- e) To facilitate continuous quality improvement in the production and use of evidence-based information and policy analysis on health technologies.

2.0 Responsibilities

The key responsibilities of the Exchange include:

- a) Support a systematic, collaborative approach to scanning the technology horizon and identifying the priority needs of the health system.
- b) Provide HTA and policy analysis information on issues of jurisdictional and/or pan-Canadian interest.
- c) Provide communication mechanisms to accept relevant evidence and policy analysis information from Exchange Contributors.
- d) Support the dissemination of HTA and policy analysis information in formats appropriate for target audiences.
- e) Strengthen information sharing and improve access to HTA information.
- f) Identify health technologies that may be suitable for field evaluation trials and

- provide advice on the feasibility of undertaking such trials.
- g) Facilitate information exchange between HTA agencies, decision makers, and organizations that manage innovation and research agendas.
 - h) Support harmonization of HTA methodologies and report preparation protocols for HTA and policy analysis.
 - i) Support ongoing methodological development and a culture of continuous improvement.

3.0 Accountability

- 3.1 The CADTH Board of Directors shall be accountable for ensuring that the Exchange carries out its mandate within its Terms of Reference.

4.0 Membership

4.1 Composition

Members

Participation in the Exchange is voluntary and consists of voting members as follows:

- a) ***Voting Member:***

The Exchange is open to organizations that meet the following criteria:

- Conduct assessments of technology in health care
- Is a non-profit organization
- Relate to a F/P/T body (e.g., health ministry, regional health authority, hospital)
- Is funded by public sources
- Provide free access to their reports upon request

The CADTH Board of Directors may, at its discretion, modify these criteria.

Each organization may appoint one voting member.

Each organization may also appoint an official designate who would attend meetings in the event the voting member is not available to attend.

Organizations should appoint representatives and official designates with the appropriate background and decision making authority, given the responsibilities of the Exchange.

b) *Observers*

The Exchange Chair, in consultation with the Exchange secretariat, may invite observer(s) to attend Exchange meetings from time to time, as he/she deems appropriate.

4.2 Appointment Process

Interested organizations meeting the above criteria shall submit an application for Exchange membership (Appendix 2). A representative and his or her official designate from the organization shall be stated on the application form. The form shall be signed by a senior representative of the F/P/T body to which they relate.

The CADTH Board of Directors shall approve the appointment of Exchange members. The Exchange Secretariat shall forward an initial slate of Exchange members to the CADTH Board for approval. Once established, the Exchange will review new applications for membership and forward recommendations for new members to the CADTH Board for approval.

4.3 Term of Appointment

Each representative and official designate appointed by Member organizations serves at the pleasure of the organization appointing him/her.

Each Observer serves at the pleasure of the organization appointing him/her.

4.4 Committee Officers

The officers of the Exchange shall be the Chair and Vice-Chair.

The Member Organizations shall choose by majority vote, from their representatives, the Chair and Vice-Chair.

Regarding the term of appointment of the first Chair and the first Vice-Chair of the Exchange, the Chair shall be appointed for a term of two years and the Vice-Chair for a term of one year. Thereafter the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be for a term of two years, and may be renewed at the discretion of the CADTH Board of Directors.

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Exchange. In addition, the Chair is responsible for reporting on Exchange activities to the CADTH Board of Directors and shall act as the key liaison between the Exchange and CADTH Exchange Secretariat staff. The Chair shall be the sole spokesperson for Exchange.

The Vice-Chair shall, in the absence or disability of the Chair, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chair.

4.5 Voting Rights

Decisions and actions taken by the Exchange will predominately be in the form of common agreement amongst some or all of its members; however, in the event a vote may be needed, a simple majority of the representatives of Member organizations shall be required.

Each Member organization shall be entitled to one vote on all matters coming before the Exchange. The voting privileges are also automatically assigned to the official designate in attendance at an Exchange meeting.

Observers invited to attend Exchange meetings shall not be entitled to vote.

5.0 Exchange Meetings

5.1 Frequency of Meetings

Face-to-face meetings will be held two times per year. Additional teleconference meetings and/or face to face meetings will take place, as required.

5.2 Notice of Meetings

Meetings of the Exchange may be held at any time and place in Canada, to be determined by the representatives of the Member organizations, provided that reasonable notice of such meeting shall be given in advance to each representative.

5.3 Quorum

The quorum at meetings of the Exchange shall be a majority of the representatives and/or official designates appointed by Member organizations.

5.4 Attendance

All representatives of the Member organizations shall attend Exchange meetings. An Exchange participant who is unable to attend a face-to-face meeting may request permission from the Chair to participate in the meeting via other means, such as video conference, teleconference or other communications methods. The Chair shall have sole discretion in deciding whether to grant permission to such participant's requests, but shall only grant permission in exceptional circumstances.

5.5 Attendees

In addition to the representatives (or his or her official designate) of the Member organizations and Observers, only the following persons shall be entitled to attend Exchange meetings, but have neither the right to participate, except as noted below, nor the right to vote:

- a) the CADTH President and CEO
- b) the most senior staff member of the HTA Directorate
- c) the designated CADTH secretariat staff.

The CADTH staff attending the meeting shall serve as a resource to the Exchange. They will provide administrative and secretariat support and may actively participate in the presentation of information or discussions at the request of the Exchange Chair. They shall also assist in obtaining additional information and/or expert advice at the Exchange's request.

5.6 Agenda

The Exchange meeting agendas are developed by the Exchange Chair in consultation with the Exchange Secretariat.

5.7 Decisions

No decision can be enacted unless there is a quorum. Decisions will typically be made by consensus. If a vote is necessary, a simple majority of the representatives of the Member Organizations participating in the meeting shall be required.

5.8 Records of Meetings

The Chatham House Rule shall be applied to meetings of the Exchange. Participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant may be revealed.

A summary record of consensus decisions and follow-up actions required to facilitate the work of the Exchange shall be documented.

A copy of the decision record shall be sent to representatives of Member organizations, all official designates, and CADTH staff as outlined in Section 5.5.

6.0 Reimbursement of Expenses

The representative(s) of the Member Organizations shall be entitled to be paid by CADTH for reasonable expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties.

Teleconference expenses are paid by CADTH, as required.

The reimbursement of any additional expenses will require CADTH Board of Directors approval in advance.

7.0 General Provisions

7.1 Secretariat and Administrative Support

Secretariat and administrative support is provided by CADTH.

7.2 Amendment to Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference may be amended at any time, and from time to time, by the CADTH Board of Directors.

7.3 Confidentiality

It is the responsibility of Exchange participants to know what information is confidential and to obtain clarification when in doubt. Except as he or she may be compelled by applicable legal process, an Exchange participant must, both while having and after ceasing to have that status, treat as confidential all information regarding the policies, internal operations, systems, business or affairs of the Exchange and of CADTH obtained by reason of his or her status as an Exchange participant and not generally available to the public. An Exchange participant shall not use information obtained as a result of his or her involvement with the Exchange for his or her personal benefit. Each Exchange participant shall avoid activities which may create appearances that he or she has benefited from confidential information received during the course of his or her duties as an Exchange participant.

7.4 Sub-committees

The Exchange may:

- form sub-committees and/or task groups to fulfill its mandate
- call upon committees or task groups within its existing members structures and/or other external resources to support its work.

The reimbursement of any expenses associated with the use of the foregoing structures or resources will require CADTH approval in advance.

APPENDIX 1

Definitions

In the Terms of Reference of the Health Technology Strategy Exchange, the following definitions apply, unless otherwise provided.

Exchange Member: an organization, as outlined in section 4.1.a) which is considered a primary producer of HTA in Canada.

Exchange Terms of Reference: the Terms of Reference established for the Exchange by the CADTH Board of Directors.

CADTH: Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health, a corporate body duly incorporated under the laws of Canada.

CADTH Board/Board of Directors: the CADTH Board comprises 13 Directors appointed by the Deputy Ministers of Health of the federal government, nine provinces, and three territories. The Board is accountable to its Members, the participating federal, provincial and territorial (F/P/T) health ministries, for the delivery of CADTH's programs.

Chatham House Rule: the world-famous rule that may be invoked at meetings to encourage openness and the sharing of information. Explanation of the Rule can be found in Appendix B.

Consensus: a mutually acceptable agreement that takes into consideration the interests of all concerned parties. An agreement reached through consensus may not satisfy each participant's interests equally or receive a similar level of support from all participants.

F/P/T: federal, provincial, and territorial

Observers: observers to the Exchange are those individuals and/or organizations that may be appointed, in consultation with the Exchange Chair, but are not entitled to vote.

Voting Members: an appointed Member Organization which meets the criteria as identified in Section 4.1 and appointed as per Section 4.2. Representatives of the Member Organization or the official designate, when serving in his or her official capacity as the official designate, may vote on behalf of the Member Organization. Invited Observers do not have the right to vote.

APPENDIX 2

The Chatham House Rule reads as follows:

"WHEN A MEETING, OR PART THEREOF, IS HELD UNDER THE CHATHAM HOUSE RULE, PARTICIPANTS ARE FREE TO USE THE INFORMATION RECEIVED, BUT NEITHER THE IDENTITY NOR THE AFFILIATION OF THE SPEAKER(S), NOR THAT OF ANY OTHER PARTICIPANT, MAY BE REVEALED".

EXPLANATION of the Rule

The Chatham House Rule originated at Chatham House with the aim of providing anonymity to speakers and to encourage openness and the sharing of information. It is now used throughout the world as an aid to free discussion. Meetings do not have to take place at Chatham House to be held under the rule.

Meetings, events, and discussions held at Chatham House are normally conducted 'on the record' with the Rule occasionally invoked at the speaker's request. In cases where the Rule is not considered sufficiently strict, an event may be held 'off the record'.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q. When was the Rule devised?

A. In 1927 and refined in 1992 and 2002.

Q. Should one refer to the Chatham House Rule or the Chatham House Rules?

A. There is only one Rule.

Q. What are the benefits of using the Rule?

A. It allows people to speak as individuals, and to express views that may not be those of their organizations, and therefore it encourages free discussion. People usually feel more relaxed if they don't have to worry about their reputation or the implications if they are publicly quoted.

Q. How is the Rule enforced?

A. Chatham House can take disciplinary action against one of its members who breaks the Rule. Not all organizations that use the Rule have sanctions. The Rule then depends for its success on being seen as morally binding.

Q. Is the Rule used for all meetings at Chatham House?

A. Not often for the larger meetings (so-called Membership Events); more frequently for smaller ones, for example where work in progress is discussed or when subject matter is politically sensitive.

Q. Who uses the Rule these days?

A. It is widely used in the English-speaking world – by local government and commercial organizations as well as research organizations.