Discussing the problem

Panel participants identified four challenges related to enhancing access to patient-centred primary care in Ontario: 1) patients have inconsistent access to primary-care providers (e.g., primary-care practices not accepting new patients and providing care when needed); 2) primary care does not comprehensively address patients’ needs (e.g., challenges accessing needed services in the home and community-care sector); 3) individuals are not always accountable for their own health (e.g., lack of responsibility for engaging in unhealthy behaviours); and 4) technology is adopted slowly, and is inconsistently implemented across primary-care settings (e.g., inconsistent use of interoperable electronic health records to share information between providers).
Discussing the implementation considerations

Throughout the deliberations, participants highlighted two factors as the most important for implementation: 1) moving forward with the implementation of electronic health records to support coordination across the system, and personal health records to help patients be more informed about their care and to take a more active role in it; and 2) improving the level of citizen engagement in planning and implementing patient-centred primary-care reforms.

Panel deliverables

To learn more about this topic, consult the citizen brief that was presented to participants before the panel and the summary of the panel. For an electronic copy of the citizen brief or panel summary, visit our website www.mcmasterhealthforum.com and click on ‘Products’ along the sidebar.