

# Operational Direction: Participating in the Provincial Cyber Security Operating Model

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**ISSUED TO:** General hospital corporations, as defined in Group A, B and C in the Public Hospitals Act, R.S.O. 1990

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## Introduction

The health care sector is at risk of evolving cyber threats, which can jeopardize the ability to safeguard provincial digital health assets and provide critical patient care. To address varying levels of cyber maturity and reduce the overall risk of cyberattacks across the health care sector, Ontario Health, in partnership and with funding from the Ministry of Health (MOH), has developed, piloted and evaluated a Provincial Cyber Security Operating Model (CSOM). The model creates a provincial network designed to enhance the protection of health information and strengthen continuity of patient care service delivery in alignment with existing cyber insurance, regulatory and accreditation requirements.

Through the execution of six Regional Security Operation Centre (RSOC) pilots and targeted investments over the previous two years, the model's provisions have improved financial and operational service efficiencies, increased cyber resiliency and helped health sector entities meet insurability requirements. The pilots have also broadened the scope of resource sharing and boosted the collective delivery of a holistic, risk-informed approach to cyber security that aligns with internationally recognized industry standards.

In the next phase of the Provincial Cyber Security Operating Model, existing Regional Security Operating Centre pilots will transition into Local Delivery Groups and newly designated Local Delivery Groups will form the core of cyber security shared services delivery supporting hospitals to meet their regulatory and legislative accountabilities.

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## Operational Direction

For the purposes of this operational direction, all references to general hospitals, refers to hospital corporations as classified as Group A, B and C in the Public Hospitals Act, R.S.O. 1990. [Classification of hospitals | ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca/hospitals)

Under this operational direction, all general hospitals are required to align with the Provincial Cyber Security Operating Model. The model operationalizes the provincial vision for cyber security which supports Ontario Health's mandate to securely connect, coordinate and modernize our province's health care system to ensure Ontario patients receive the best possible patient-centered care, when and where they need it.

Under the Provincial Cyber Security Operating Model, roles and responsibilities for governance and execution are as follows:

Ontario Health will:

- set the direction and vision for cyber security in the provincial health sector;
- support the execution and operationalization of the model through issuance of cyber directions, policy, standards, guidelines and funding agreements;
- ensure the integration of cyber security capabilities into all provincial and regional digital strategy and execution, with reporting into regional Digital Health Advisory Committees;
- designate Local Delivery Groups for shared cyber security services within each Ontario Health region;
- assign hospitals to Local Delivery Groups for the consumption of shared cyber security services;
- operationalize provincial cyber governance, technology platforms, incubate models and frameworks; and
- support the establishment of a regional cyber security leadership role and cyber security committees in each region.

Local Delivery Groups will:

- support Ontario Health to execute its mandate and to operationalize the Ontario Health Cyber Security Operating Model;
- provide cyber security shared service supports to health service providers in coordination with Ontario Health qualified managed security service providers;
- align technology and cyber security practices with the direction set by Ontario Health and the Ontario Health Cyber Security Operating Model, including procurement and governance;
- develop co-investment strategies with shared service members to support continuity and progression of services;
- rationalize and harmonize on cyber capabilities across the shared service membership as it relates to people, process, technology and data; and
- support shared service members to align with and implement Ontario Health's cyber security direction, guidance and requirements, including alignment with the Ontario Health Cyber Security Operating Model.

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General Hospitals will:

- consume shared cyber security services from an assigned Local Delivery Group and align with provincial cyber priorities;
- continue to operate effective information security management systems and privacy programs;
- continue to be accountable for the protection of assets, data, insurance and legislative requirements;
- follow the Incident Response Notification Guidance published by Ontario Health, as updated from time to time, and submit information as required by Ontario Health to Ontario Health's Cyber Threat Intelligence Exchange;
- align technology and cyber security practices with the direction set by Ontario Health and the Ontario Health Cyber Security Operating Model, and the assigned Local Delivery Group;
- continue to make ongoing and required investments in cyber security capabilities over time in accordance with the Provincial Cyber Security Operating Model;
- develop co-investment strategies and participate in shared service contributions with an assigned Local Delivery Group, to support continuity and progression of services;
- ensure executive-level support for the Ontario Health Cyber Security Operating Model and its implementation within the organization; and
- execute, monitor and enforce cyber security initiatives.

## Timeline for Participation

Fiscal 23/24: By June 30, 2023

- Ontario Health will designate Local Delivery Groups in each region
- Ontario Health will assign each general hospital to a Local Delivery Group

Fiscal 23/24: July 2023 to March 2024

- Each general hospital will participate in shared services co-planning and design with their assigned Local Delivery Group
- Local Delivery Groups will establish a shared services model, inclusive of governance, member co-investment strategy, technology roadmaps and hybrid security operations centre supports
- Each general hospital will sign onto a Local Delivery Group shared services agreement
- Each general hospital will begin onboarding and actively participating in Local Delivery Group provided cyber security shared services

Fiscal 24/25 and onwards

- All general hospitals shall work within the Provincial Cyber Security Operating Model and in accordance with the operational direction.

Other health service providers, as defined by the *Connecting Care Act 2019*, will be issued a separate operational direction in the future.

For any questions about the operational direction, please [contact](#) the Ontario Health Cyber Security Centre.