MEMO TO: Physicians and Hospital Leadership (CEOs, Chiefs of Staff, VPs – Medical)  
FROM: The Physician LHIN Tripartite Committee, HOCC Review Working Group  
DATE: May 31st, 2010  
SUBJECT: Memorandum on the Hospital On-Call Coverage Program Review

As you may be aware, the 2008 Physician Services Agreement (2008 PSA) calls for a detailed review of the Hospital On-Call Coverage (HOCC) Program. The review is being conducted by the Physician LHIN Tripartite Committee (PLTC) with representatives from the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs), the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) and the Ontario Medical Association (OMA), with a target completion date of October 1st, 2010.

We are requesting your assistance with this review; your input will help evaluate the current HOCC program and assist to identify future directions. With your participation, we can ensure that the HOCC program meets the needs of patients, participating physicians and other health care stakeholders.

The HOCC Program review has three primary objectives:

1. To identify and examine the effectiveness of key elements of the program already in place at Ontario hospitals. These elements include eligibility criteria, compensation structures, process metrics, resource requirements, and others.
2. To develop recommendations for improving the organization and delivery of on-call services based on evidence and best practices identified through the data and information collection processes.
3. To explore specific issues outlined in the 2008 PSA: Participation of doctors in CritiCall Ontario, use of regional call networks, and coverage for long-term care, sexual assault centres, chronic care facilities and palliative care programs.

A key component of the review is to gather information from physicians and hospital leadership through two surveys:

- Physician Survey: gathers information on physician roles and responsibilities, day-to-day organization of on-call services, physician availability and response, the use of CritiCall and other regional call networks, physician compensation, and HOCC Program effectiveness
- Hospital Survey: seeks input from hospital and program leadership (e.g. Chiefs of Staff, Vice Presidents – Medical, ED Chiefs, HOCC Program Coordinators) on the structure and organization of on-call and afterhours service delivery at the hospital level, as well as compensation and on-call coverage obligations for individual physicians

Following completion of these surveys, the PLTC will conduct focus groups and targeted interviews to further supplement the information obtained through the surveys.

The physician survey will be made available to all physicians currently participating in HOCC during the week of May 31st. The survey should take an estimated 10 - 15 minutes to complete.

The hospital survey will also be distributed during the week of May 31st to all HOCC-funded hospitals (CEOs, Vice Presidents – Medical and Chiefs of Staff). Further consultation with hospital and program leadership will be conducted after an evaluation of the survey responses.

Further communication about the HOCC review surveys will be provided over the next two weeks. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Arda Ilgazli (Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care) at Arda.Ilgazli@ontario.ca or Simone Noble (Ontario Medical Association) at negotiations@oma.org.
We would like to obtain broad-based participation and support from current providers and users of the HOCC program. Your input will help to develop well-informed recommendations aimed at improving the organization and delivery of on-call services across Ontario hospitals.

We thank you in advance for participating in this important review.

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