

ALTERNATIVE FUNDING PLANS

An Alternative Funding Plan (AFP) is a contractual agreement between the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and a group of physicians, and may include other organizations such as hospitals and universities. The main goal of an AFP is to stabilize physician services for Ontarians through the recruitment and retention of specialists.

There are a variety of AFP models – one of which covers the services of all full-time specialists at an academic health science centre where funding is included for teaching and research, as well as their clinical workload.

AFPs provide an innovative approach to funding physician services other than fee-for-service. This approach is well suited for physicians working at Ontario's academic health sciences centres where – besides direct patient care – they are also involved in teaching and research.

AFP funding allows the participating physicians or governance group to determine the best way to meet the obligations of patient care, teaching and research. AFP funding covers a number of services – including the group's direct and indirect clinical services, on-call services, teaching and research.

The benefits of academic AFPs include:

- Assisting in the recruitment and retention of world-class physicians
- Encouraging co-ordination and integration of medical services
- Providing flexibility in funding arrangements to ensure academic health science centres have the right mix of physicians to respond to local health care needs and training doctors for the future
- Enabling physicians and the teaching hospital to work together to make sure the funding approach fits the results they need to deliver
- Rewarding physicians for the work they do treating complex cases and meeting their academic responsibilities.