



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Digital Health Strategy 2024–2029



Health PEI

Prince Edward Island's Digital Health Strategy



A message from the Minister of Health and Wellness

Prince Edward Island has made significant advancements in healthcare in recent years. As our healthcare system develops with advancements in technology and digital health innovation, it must provide improved access to reach people regardless of their community, their income, or any aspect of their identity.

The Prince Edward Island Digital Health Strategy helps us build a healthier tomorrow by investing in secure digital health technologies that will improve the availability and use of health information by the health system and residents. The strategy will serve as a guide to help us mature our digital health ecosystem and align our investments with other health priorities.

Our plan focuses on making digital health information more accessible – to residents, to support them with managing their health better; and to health care providers and health system partners, to ensure health information can be accessed seamlessly when patients transition between providers and organizations.

As we increase our digital health footprint, we promise to ensure strict adherence to the PEI Health Information Act and industry standard cybersecurity practices to ensure trusted use and storage of patient health information.

We also plan to expand opportunities for residents to access care using digital technologies, such as virtual care, appointment booking, and remote patient monitoring. These technologies will allow patients to receive care where and when they need it.

Digital health technologies offer innovative

opportunities to improve the health system. While the Department of Health and Wellness, Health PEI, and the Government of PEI's Information Technology Shared Services will lead the implementation of the Digital Health Strategy, the success of the strategy will also require the involvement of residents, health care providers, and public/private partners. We recognize ideas that can improve the health system can extend beyond those working in the system and will strive to improve our partnerships to drive innovation and address health system challenges.

By the end of this strategy, in addition to ensuring we have improved the availability, access, and use of health information, our investments in digital health should contribute to improved health outcomes for Islanders.

Let's work together to keep our Island healthy in a growing and evolving health system.

Hon. Mark McLane,
Minister Health and Wellness

Prince Edward Island's Digital Health Strategy

Prince Edward Island's Digital Health Strategy will guide the path forward for improving the use of technology to achieve safe, quality, and efficient care.

Digital health refers to the use of information technology/electronic communication tools, services, and processes to deliver health care services or to facilitate better health.

Digital health helps Canadians access better quality care more efficiently through solutions and services such as electronic medical records, telehomecare, virtual visits, and patient portals (Canada Health Infoway, 2018).

The Digital Health Strategy:

- Outlines a plan to evolve how digital health technologies support the health system.
- Will support the goals and priorities outlined in the Provincial Health Plan, and other key strategies.
- Was developed in consultation with health care professionals, residents, provincial agencies and associations, and equity-deserving groups.

What we heard during strategy development:

Several themes emerged during the consultations that informed the goals and priorities included in the strategy.



Information sharing between clinicians and with other health system partners could be improved to ensure the right information is available when needed.



Improving access to digital health information and educational resources can help residents be more informed about the care they receive and empower them to better manage their health.



Additional support is needed when introducing new digital health technologies to ensure residents and health care providers understand the benefits and know where and how to access them.



Digital health investments have introduced significant benefits to the health system, but more work is required to realize their full potential.



There is an opportunity to make better use of the information captured by our digital health technologies, but the appropriate supports (e.g., specialized resources, governance, policies, education, cybersecurity practices, etc.) must be in place for this to happen.



Involving residents, health care providers, and other partners in the planning and implementation of digital health technologies can drive innovation and improve the use of digital health technologies on the island.

Digital Health Strategy

Guiding Principles

Development of the strategy was guided by nine core principles. These principles helped ensure the goals, priorities, and actions included in the strategy address the needs of the province, and respect digital health best practices.



Enablers

Our consultations highlighted a number of opportunities or enablers required to support the achievement of our goals and priorities outlined in this strategy. Enablers are not necessarily the change itself but by leveraging them, they make change possible. We recognize the importance of enhancing our resources, capabilities, and processes in these areas and are committed to investing in them.

- **Governance:** Improve collaboration and coordination of our digital health investment across the health system.
- **Digital/Digital Health Literacy:** Increase public and provider engagement and education to support enhancing knowledge and abilities related to existing and new digital health investments.
- **Change Management and Communications:** Strengthen change management practices to ensure residents and clinicians are supported during and after the introduction of new digital health investments.
- **Clinical Informatics:** Evolve the role of clinical informatics to support improving the use and adoption of our digital health investments.
- **Continuous Quality Improvement:** Identify opportunities to optimize the use and/or adoption of existing and new digital health investments.



Digital Health Strategy

Strategic Goals

Goal 1:

Help People to Manage and Improve Their Health

Digital tools can offer residents additional avenues for care and empower them to better manage their health. By providing digital access to personal health information (e.g. vaccine history or lab reports) and health services (e.g. virtual care) we can improve patient outcomes. We will work to ensure we have the appropriate digital tools available so residents can access these resources or services, if and when they need them.



What we will do:

- Provide residents access to their personal health information in a digital and secure manner.
- Enable access to trusted health information that will support residents with health education and self-management.

Goal 2:

Enable Connected Care Across the Health System

Connected care means health care providers can securely share and exchange information. This will ensure that information relevant to an individual's care (e.g. your current medications, recent blood work) is accessible to those providing care.



What we will do:

- Continue to transition from paper-based records by implementing necessary information systems.
- Enhance secure health information sharing and exchange between health care providers.
- Transition from fax-based referral pathways to digital referral pathways to support timely access to programs and services.

Goal 3:

Enhance the Use of Digital Health Tools

To realize the benefits of our digital health investments, health care providers need access to modern technology and infrastructure. We will evaluate our existing tools, set priorities for improvements, and continue to support providers as we embed digital health tools (e.g. electronic medical records) into clinical practice.



What we will do:

- Modernize technology infrastructure to align with new models of care and evolving privacy and cybersecurity requirements.
- Assess opportunities to use machine learning and/or artificial intelligence to introduce administrative efficiencies and enhance quality of care.
- Increase collaboration with residents and public/private/interprovincial partners on digital health initiatives.

Goal 4:

Build the Foundation for a Data-driven Learning Health System

A Learning Health System has a culture of continuous improvement. We plan to lay the groundwork to ensure available health information can be used to guide care and improve decision-making, resulting in a more effective and sustainable health system.



What we will do:

- Improve and standardize data processes and practices.
- Optimize the use of health data to support clinical decision making and overall health system performance.
- Ensure the existing tools and resources can support the use of health information (e.g., care delivery, population health, reporting and analytics, etc.).

Digital Health Strategy

Implementing the strategy

A strong partnership between the Department of Health and Wellness, Health PEI, and Information Technology Shared Services is needed to support successful delivery of the Digital Health Strategy.

As part of the strategy, we are implementing a new governance model that guides how these teams will work together to plan for priorities included in the strategy and provide the necessary resources to support implementing the priorities.

The digital health landscape is constantly evolving. To successfully implement the strategy, this model will provide flexibility so we can adjust our plans in response to changing priorities, technology, and resource requirements, as necessary.



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