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e-Approval # 172-2020-74

December 18, 2020

Mr. Bill Hatanaka  
Board Chair  
Ontario Health  
525 University Avenue 5th floor  
Toronto ON M5G2L3

Dear Mr. Hatanaka:

The Ministry is the executive sponsor of the Ontario Health Data Platform (OHDP), a collaborative initiative to accelerate research and analytics within Ontario to help the province better manage and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to deliver this platform and support its valuable work for the people of Ontario.

Subsection 18(11) of O. Reg. 329/04 (General) made under the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004* (“the PHIPA Regulation”) provides that Ontario Health, when requested to do so by the Minister, shall disclose personal health information (PHI) to the Minister where the Minister has determined that such disclosure is necessary for the purposes of:

- (a) researching, analyzing, investigating, preventing, responding to or alleviating COVID-19 or its effects; or
- (b) evaluating or monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on the management of, the allocation of resources to or planning for all or part of the health system.

Pursuant to subsection 18(11) of the PHIPA Regulation, I have made a determination that the PHI set out in Appendix A to this letter is necessary for the purposes set out above, and I hereby request that Ontario Health provide to the Ministry of Health, the PHI set out in Appendix A from Ontario Health’s records for those same purposes.

This request shall remain in place until further notice or July 30, 2022, the date s. 18(11) of the PHIPA Regulation is set to expire, whichever comes first. Timelines and further details regarding the disclosure of this information will be addressed in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry and Ontario Health, forthcoming from Greg Hein, Assistant Deputy Minister, Digital Health Division.

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Mr. Bill Hatanaka

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to ensuring the availability of data and information needed for evidence-based health system decisions, and especially for your support in Ontario's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yours sincerely,



Christine Elliott  
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health

c: Mr. Matthew Anderson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Ontario Health  
Mr. Peter Bethlenfalvy, President of the Treasury Board, Treasury Board Secretariat  
Ms. Helen Angus, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health  
Mr. Greg Hein, Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health

## Appendix A

### RELEVANT PHI REQUESTED

The Relevant Personal Health Information consists of the following datasets to be disclosed by Ontario Health. After launch, the Ministry may amend the dataset list from time to time in writing, for ongoing OHDP operations.

\* Note “Data Source” indicates transmission of data files not necessarily PHIPA custodianship.

Data Source	Data Set	Full Name	Description	Rationale
1. MOH via OH-CCO	RPDB (Phase 0)	Registered Persons Database	RPDB contains information on persons registered under the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) and those who are eligible for the Ontario Drug Program. This database is critical to a number of key programs that deliver health services to the public, for example, access to hospital services, physician services and drug benefits.	Contains core demographics data on Ontarians such as their sex, age, residence, etc., variables that can be used to identify potential predictors of COVID-19 and build machine learning (ML) models that can recognize different groups in the population with potentially different COVID-19 experiences/outcomes.
2. CIHI via OH-CCO	NACRS (Phase 0)	National Ambulatory Care Reporting System	NACRS at the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) is a national database which contains data for all hospital-based and community-based ambulatory care: day surgery, outpatient and community-based clinics, and emergency departments. Client visit data is collected at time of service in participating facilities. NACRS collects demographic, administrative, clinical, and service-specific data for ED, day surgery, and other ambulatory care visits.	Contains Ontario data pertaining to emergency departments, including ICD10 codes describing presenting condition and diagnosis, essential to COVID-19 projects aimed at developing models for individual risk prediction.  Full dataset can be used to help train more accurate ML models of features of the healthcare system.
3. MOH-via ICES via OH-CCO	OHIP Claims History Database (Phase 0)	Ontario Health Insurance Program Claims	This dataset contains information on all claims items processed. Includes patient, service and amount paid information. The assessment and processing of claims is a financial record of money paid to a provider for services billed on behalf of Ontario residents.	Completeness of the OHIP claims database can serve a critical role in training accurate ML models; specific data elements are important complements to other key administrative data sets (NACRS, DADS, RPDB) essential to COVID-19 risk prediction projects. Multiple instances across datasets of information such as date of encounter improve accuracy.

Data Source	Data Set	Full Name	Description	Rationale
4. CIHI via OH-CCO	DAD (Phase 0)	Discharge Abstract Database	DAD at the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) is a national database designed to capture administrative, clinical, and demographic information on hospital discharges (including deaths, sign-outs and transfers).	Data elements cover clinical, demographic, and administrative information at a provincial level essential to COVID-19 research project data analysis which are known to indicate strong dependencies on demographics and clinical risk factors. Multiple datasets improve accuracy by capturing events missing from other datasets or identifying variance in events captured in multiple datasets.
5. CIHI via MOH via ICES via OH-CCO	OMHRS (Phase 0)	Ontario Mental Health Reporting System	OMHRS analyzes and reports information submitted to CIHI about all individuals receiving adult mental health services in Ontario, as well as some individuals receiving services in youth inpatient beds and selected facilities in other provinces. OMHRS includes information about mental and physical health, social supports and service use, as well as care planning, outcome measurement, quality improvement and case-mix funding applications.	This dataset covers a patient population where some features, such as previous addictions, might be useful proxies for other risk factors for COVID-19. These data can also be used to track mental health effects of COVID-19 and social distancing and other policies. Such data also helps to increase size of datasets used to train ML models in features of the health care system, improving accuracy of COVID-19 related models.
6. MOH via ICES via OH-CCO	ODB (Phase 0)	Ontario Drug Benefits Plan	ODB contains Ontario Drug Benefit Program information, including recipients, payment, claims, and pharmacy and practitioner information. The ODB Program provides drug benefits for Ontarians aged 65 and older, residents of long-term care homes, homes for special care, recipients of professional home services and social assistance and recipients of the Trillium Drug Program.	Drug type and utilization data is an important clinical factor necessary to understanding existing conditions or risk factors related to COVID-19, essential to developing risk prediction models.
7. CIHI via MOH via ICES via OH-CCO	CCRS (Phase 0)	Continuing Care Reporting System	CCRS at CIHI is a national database that contains demographic, clinical, functional, and resource utilization information on individuals who receive continuing care services in hospitals or long-term care homes in Canada.	This data is specific to LTC populations who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19, where proposed projects on risk prediction could benefit from more targeted data.

Data Source	Data Set	Full Name	Description	Rationale
8. OH-CCO	eCTAS (Phase 0)	Electronic Canadian Triage & Acuity Scale	<p>The electronic Canadian Triage &amp; Acuity Scale (eCTAS) solution is a triage decision-support system. It is designed by clinical and technical experts and based on proven research from the University of Alberta. It seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve patient safety and quality of care by establishing an electronic triage decision support tool that will standardize the application of CTAS across Ontario</li> <li>• Enhance accountability through the timely collection and analysis of clinical triage data</li> </ul>	Province-wide, standardized, and real time triage data is needed to develop prediction models for COVID-19-related Emergency Room volumes/ admissions.
9. MOH via ICES via OH-CCO	OLIS - C19 (Phase 0)	Ontario Laboratories Information System – COVID-19 subset	<p>This dataset includes data on laboratory tests covered by OHIP. OLIS data is used to analyze Ontarians’ use of health services and satisfaction with the delivery of laboratory services paid for by Ontario taxpayers.</p> <p>OLIS is a database that is under the ministry’s custodianship. OLIS-C19 is a subset of the OLIS information repository that contains lab test orders and results from hospitals, community labs and public health labs specific to COVID-19. The data feed does not include records with a consent block in place.</p>	Lab data providing province-wide testing results is critical to all projects aimed at developing models related to COVID-19 prediction.