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At the tipping point: Health leaders share ideas to speed primary health care reform

Earlier this year, the Health Council of Canada sponsored a day-long discussion on primary health care reform through the McMaster Health Forum. Twenty health care leaders from across the country came together to talk about ways to strengthen primary health care in Canada.

“These were seasoned, highly respected people who understand what the issues are and what actions are needed, and they returned repeatedly to a handful of core activities that they believe would make a significant difference in primary health care reform in Canada,” said John G. Abbott, CEO of the Health Council of Canada and a participant in the session. He added that participants said Canada is not where it should be—and needs to be—in its ability to provide good quality primary health care, and they want Canada to do better.

Recommendations from the session included re-affirming primary health care as the foundation of Canada’s health system; ensuring appropriate management structures are in place between health ministries and primary health care providers; linking funding agreements with physicians and others to public policy goals for primary health care; and, finally, paying attention to change management so that physicians and primary health care teams are supported in their efforts to strengthen primary health care across Canada.

“Given the calibre of the participants and the degree of consensus, we believe that provincial and territorial governments will find these recommendations a useful guide to help focus their efforts in primary health care reform,” said Mr. Abbott.

To read the Health Council of Canada’s commentary, *At the tipping point: Health leaders share ideas to speed primary health care reform*, [click here](#). For a copy of the dialogue summary prepared by the McMaster Health Forum, [click here](#).