

2024-2025 Fiscal Year Annual Report

April 2025

Infoway Centre For
Clinical Innovation
In Digital Health

 Canada Health Infoway





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Executive Summary

The Canada Health Infoway (Infoway) Centre for Clinical Innovation in Digital Health (the CIDH) was established in May 2024 to address Canada’s fragmented digital health landscape by advancing clinician-led, interoperable health solutions. In its first year, the CIDH has supported clinical leadership, interoperability adoption, and knowledge mobilization, ensuring that clinicians—regardless of setting—have the tools and resources needed to deliver high-quality, Connected Care.

Through targeted initiatives such as the Connected Care Innovation Grant, Clinical Student Scholarship Program, and Clinician Adoption Approach, the CIDH has engaged hundreds of healthcare professionals and catalyzed innovative digital health solutions across Canada.

Key Achievements

- **Connected Care Innovation Grant for Clinical Leaders:** Over 100 applications received, with 10 projects funded across five provinces, including First Nations-led initiatives.
- **Connected Care Clinical Student Scholarship:** Awarded 17 scholarships to support future digital health leaders, ensuring that emerging clinicians are equipped with the skills and knowledge to drive innovation.
- **Clinician Adoption Approach:** Expanded focus on nursing engagement, ensuring Canada’s largest regulated health workforce is fully supported in digital health adoption.
- **Contributing to Interoperability Policy:** The Digital Health Interoperability (DHI) Task Force has played a critical role in identifying systemic barriers to interoperability, developing policy recommendations, and advocating for clinician-friendly digital transformation strategies.

The Need for Continued Investment

While great progress has been made, Canada’s digital health transformation remains ongoing. Some clinicians benefit from advanced interoperability tools, while others still operate in fragmented or inefficient systems. The *Shared Pan-Canadian Interoperability Roadmap* (“Roadmap”) sets the vision for a seamless, connected healthcare system, but achieving this requires continued investment, policy alignment, and clinician-driven innovation.

Future Directions

The CIDH is committed to:

- Scale up the Clinician Adoption Approach, with a focus on nurses and family physicians.
- Fund clinician-led projects that support interoperability and provide scholarships to build clinician capacity within the next generation of clinicians.
- Continue to advance action on DHI Task Force recommendations, and mechanisms that remove barriers to adoption of interoperable digital tools, ensuring clinicians have the support, training, and infrastructure needed for success.



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- Explore how we can support digital health equity, particularly for rural, remote, and Indigenous communities, so that interoperability benefits all patients and providers, not just those in well-resourced settings.

A Call to Action

Digital health transformation is not just about technology—it is about people. The future of digital health is already here, but it is not yet available to everyone. The CIDH calls on clinicians, policymakers, technology vendors, and healthcare organizations to join in co-developing sustainable, clinician-driven digital health solutions.

With continued collaboration, investment, and commitment to equity, the CIDH will promote and advance Canada’s healthcare system to be fully connected, interoperable, and built for the realities of frontline care.



Introduction

The Canada Health Infoway (Infoway) Centre for Clinical Innovation in Digital Health (CIDH) was established to drive meaningful engagement with clinical leaders and accelerate the adoption of digital health interoperability across Canada. This inaugural annual report highlights the Centre's progress in advancing innovation, empowering clinical leaders, and supporting healthcare transformation in alignment with the goals of the Roadmap.

By strategically investing in initiatives such as the Connected Care Innovation Grant and the Clinical Student Scholarship Program, the CIDH has empowered a network of clinical leaders to pioneer digital health solutions that reduce administrative burden, improve access to care, and enhance provider-patient interactions.

Over the past year, the CIDH has focused on three key areas: clinician engagement, interoperability enablement, and knowledge mobilization. Through initiatives such as the Digital Health Interoperability Task Force and the Clinician Adoption Approach, CIDH has championed the development of digital health standards while ensuring that more frontline healthcare providers have the tools and resources to integrate technology into practice. By aligning its strategic priorities with national health data interoperability efforts, the CIDH is shaping the future of patient-centered, data-driven healthcare across Canada. This report serves as both a reflection on our achievements and a guide for the ongoing transformation of healthcare delivery, ensuring that the benefits of digital health innovation are accessible and equitable for all clinicians, patients, and communities.

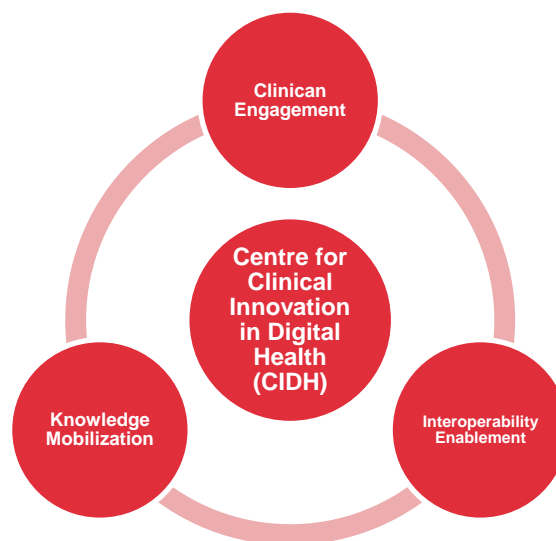


Figure 1 Chart displaying CIDH's three focus areas: clinician engagement, interoperability enablement, and knowledge mobilization.



Launch of the Centre for Clinical Innovation in Digital Health

Launched in May 2024 under Infoway, the CIDH is a response to the urgent need for a connected and interoperable healthcare system in Canada, where clinicians continue to face fragmented data, increasing administrative burdens, and inefficiencies that hinder patient care. The CIDH advances clinician-led innovation and digital health integration in the pursuit of seamless information flow across care settings to reduce duplication, improve decision-making, and enhance patient outcomes.

Key milestones include the formal establishment of the CIDH, the recruitment of Clinical Champions to guide strategic direction and stakeholder engagement, and the development of clear program objectives aligned with the Shared Pan-Canadian Interoperability Roadmap. With a focus on empowering clinical leaders, the CIDH sets the stage for a collaborative, standards-based approach to digital health transformation in Canada.

"A well-supported and skilled healthcare workforce contributes to the overall sustainability and resilience of the healthcare system. By investing in our clinical leaders, we strengthen the backbone of our healthcare infrastructure, ensuring that it can effectively adapt to evolving healthcare needs."

- Abhi Kalra, EVP of Connected Care at Canada Health Infoway.



Connected Care Innovation Grant for Clinical Leaders

The Connected Care Innovation Grant for clinical leaders was launched by the CIDH to support clinician-led initiatives that drive digital health transformation and interoperability. This program provides funding to clinical leaders across Canada to develop and implement innovative digital health solutions that enhance patient care, streamline clinical workflows, and reduce administrative burden. By fostering grassroots clinical innovation, the program aims to empower healthcare providers to lead the adoption of digital health standards and Connected Care solutions in alignment with the Shared Pan-Canadian Interoperability Roadmap.



Program Development

Funding Criteria and Application Process

The grant was designed to support projects that demonstrate measurable impact on interoperability, clinician experience, and patient access to care. Applications were evaluated based on their ability to:

- Leverage technology to improve efficiency and coordination.
- Reduce administrative burden for healthcare providers.
- Enhance interoperability by aligning with pan-Canadian standards.
- Show immediate impact, ensuring timely adoption of innovative solutions.

Eligible applicants included physicians, nurses, pharmacists, allied health professionals, and healthcare organizations leading clinical innovation efforts. The application process involved a detailed proposal submission, outlining project objectives, expected outcomes, and sustainability plans.

Communication and Marketing Strategy

To maximize outreach and engagement, the CIDH employed a multi-channel communication strategy, including direct outreach to clinical networks through professional associations and industry events as well as social media and digital campaigns.

This targeted approach ensured that clinical leaders from diverse backgrounds and regions were aware of the funding opportunity and could apply with well-developed proposals.

Launch and Outcomes

Number of Applications Received

The inaugural Connected Care Innovation Grant Program received over 100 applications, reflecting the strong interest and demand for clinician-led digital health innovation.

Percentage of Successful Applications

Following a rigorous evaluation process, 10 projects were awarded funding through the grant, representing a 10% success rate. The program received \$350,000 in total funding for fiscal year 2024-25, with individual grants ranging from \$25,000 to \$50,000 per project.

Successful Projects, Objectives, and Outcomes

The funded projects spanned five provinces—British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and Québec.

- Projects supporting First Nations communities were also funded: **First Nations Health Authority (BC):** Enabling First Nations-led primary care EMR integration to support greater autonomy over health data while ensuring interoperability with provincial systems.



- **Saddle Lake Health Centre (AB):** Integrating First Nation Health Centres' Digital Health Records with Alberta's provincial health information systems to improve continuity of care for Saddle Lake Cree Nation members.

Each project aligned with the goals of the Interoperability Roadmap, advancing digital health transformation through innovative approaches, such as:

- **North York General Hospital (ON):** Implementing an AI tool to generate comprehensive, standardized discharge summaries for patients and clinicians.
- **Hamilton Health Sciences (ON):** Utilizing large language models to standardize and structure free-text electronic health records, improving data accessibility and interoperability.
- **Dr. Pepe Clinic (ON):** Offering patients the ability to view standardized health data (aligned with PS-CA) and customize how they access their health data.
- **Centre Casa (QC):** Creating a paperless clinical file/application based on FHIR standards to allow for more accurate input of social/medical data and information related to a patient, reducing administrative burden, the risk of lost information and a better continuum of services.

These projects not only enhance system interoperability, reduce barriers to care, and improve health outcomes across Canada, but also create a model for scalable, clinician-led digital health innovation. By addressing critical gaps in data integration and patient access, these initiatives demonstrate what is possible when healthcare providers are empowered to lead transformation. Their impact extends beyond immediate implementation, informing best practices, influencing policy, and shaping the future of a more connected, efficient, and patient-centered healthcare system.

“With the support of the Connected Care Innovation Grant, our project has provided a pathway to ensure that patient information is both readable and actionable across different healthcare settings, including primary care, specialists, and home care services. This seamless data flow is crucial for a Connected Care environment, where information travels with patients without loss of fidelity or meaning.”

- Dr. Jeremy Petch, Director, CREATE





“Being selected for the Connected Care Innovation Grant has allowed us to work on a problem we are passionate about but never thought we would have the support to explore and solve. The funding and lean reporting requirements allowed us to focus on the work, think deeply and solve in ways others have not yet considered.”

- Dr. Daniel Pepe, Family Physician



Connected Care Clinical Student Scholarship

The Connected Care Clinical Student Scholarship was established by the CIDH to support the next generation of digital health leaders. This initiative provides financial assistance to clinical students pursuing education in digital health, interoperability, and Connected Care. By investing in learners at early stages of their careers, the program nurtures a skilled workforce equipped to advance digital health transformation, ensuring that future healthcare providers have the knowledge and expertise to integrate technology-driven solutions into patient care.

Program Development

Funding Criteria and Application Process

The scholarship supports clinical learners enrolled in accredited Canadian post-secondary institutions, including students in medicine, nursing, pharmacy, physiotherapy, and other allied health professions. The application process required students to:

- Demonstrate a strong interest in digital health, interoperability, and/or Connected Care.
- Be enrolled in or recently graduated from a clinical training program.
- Outline how the scholarship would support their education and career aspirations in digital health.

Communication and Marketing Strategy

The CIDH promoted the scholarship program through direct outreach to academic institutions and clinical education programs as well as social media campaigns.

This approach ensured broad awareness and accessibility, attracting applicants from diverse clinical backgrounds across Canada.



Launch and Outcomes

Number of Applications Received

In its inaugural year, the Scholarship Program for Clinical Learners received close to 50 applications, reflecting strong interest from students eager to enhance their expertise in digital health.

Supporting the Next Generation of Digital Health Leaders

The program awarded 17 scholarships, providing up to \$5,000 per student to support tuition and educational expenses related to digital health innovation, health informatics, interoperability, and Connected Care. Scholarship recipients represented a diverse range of disciplines and institutions, including:

- University of Toronto
- University of Calgary
- Memorial University of Newfoundland
- Toronto Metropolitan University
- University of New Brunswick

Success Stories & Testimonials

Scholarship recipients expressed their gratitude and enthusiasm for the opportunity to advance their education in digital health:

- *“Thank you so much for all of Infoway’s support in furthering education in Digital Health.”*
- *“I really appreciate the generous support from Canada Health Infoway. This funding allows me to focus on building my expertise in Connected Care.”*
- *“Receiving this scholarship has helped me pay for tuition and continue my studies in health informatics, bringing me one step closer to improving digital health systems in Canada.”*

These testimonials reflect the impact of the CIDH’s investment in future clinical leaders, ensuring that digital health expertise is embedded within the next generation of healthcare professionals. As the program continues, the CIDH remains committed to expanding opportunities for clinical learners and building a more connected and innovative health system.

Clinician Adoption Approach

As part of the CIDH commitment to encouraging the adoption of digital health solutions across clinical settings, the Clinician Adoption Approach was developed to empower healthcare professionals in the implementation of Connected Care initiatives, aligned with the Interoperability Roadmap. Informed by an assessment of Infoway’s current clinician engagement mechanisms, this approach also recognizes the critical role of nurses in delivering patient-centered care and aims to support them in integrating digital health technologies into practice. This approach focuses on three strategic pillars:



1. **Enhancing Engagement:** Encourage nurses, physicians, and other clinicians to adopt digital health tools through targeted education, training, and strategic partnerships.
2. **Enabling Change:** Support nursing, physician and other clinical organizations and professional associations in implementing digital health solutions.
3. **Facilitating Adoption:** Apply change management strategies, peer-learning networks, and targeted programs to foster sustainable digital transformation.

Advancing Clinician Engagement and Adoption

The Clinician Adoption Approach supports the implementation of key digital health solutions—including Patient Summaries, eReferral, and eConsult—by reducing barriers to health information exchange and equipping clinicians with tools to enhance data integration and care delivery.

Infoway’s multipronged change and adoption strategy supports healthcare providers through targeted engagement efforts, including peer learning networks, clinician working groups, and incentive programs that recognize early adopters of digital health innovations. Additionally, dedicated education and outreach initiatives have been implemented to facilitate clinician-driven change efforts and ensure sustained adoption.

Strengthening Digital Health Capacity in Nursing

While nurses represent the largest regulated healthcare workforce in Canada, they have been underrepresented in digital health initiatives. In response, CIDH has emphasized nursing engagement through partnerships with national and provincial organizations. This initiative includes:

- Hosting nursing-focused sessions to explore strategies and best practices for digital health implementation.
- Developing a Nursing Engagement Strategy, grounded in insights gathered through collaborative consultations and research. This included hiring 2 Nursing Champions to ensure nursing and nurse practitioners’ perspectives are reflected in our work.
- The CIDH has begun exploration of additional mechanisms to bring together nursing associations, frontline nurses, and health system leaders to drive digital health adoption.

Through this initiative, nurses will be empowered to act as change agents, advocating for digital tools that enhance care coordination, reduce administrative burden, and improve health outcomes.



"Our work at CIDH is centered around empowering clinicians—especially nurses—with the tools and support they need to lead Canada's digital health transformation. Through collaboration, education, and a shared commitment to interoperability, we're helping create a healthcare system that works better for both providers and patients."

— Michelle Culverwell MSc RN, Senior Manager, Change Management Adoption, CIDH

Key Activities and Achievements

- To date, CIDH's Clinician Adoption Approach has successfully engaged healthcare professionals across disciplines, supporting the meaningful integration of digital health solutions. Key milestones include strengthened clinician engagement via partnerships, tailored education and hiring 2 Nursing Champions embedding nursing and nurse practitioners' perspective within our work.
- Deployed change enablement strategies to foster a culture of digital adoption within clinician organizations.
- Collected and evaluated feedback from pilot projects to guide future adoption efforts.

These initiatives position CIDH as a national leader in driving interoperable, clinician-centered digital health solutions that enhance workflows and improve patient care outcomes. Moving forward, the Nursing Strategy and Clinician Adoption Approach will continue to evolve, ensuring that nurses and clinicians remain at the forefront of Canada's digital health transformation.

Digital Health Interoperability Task Force

Establishment and Purpose

The Digital Health Interoperability (DHI) Task Force was established through a collaboration between Infoway, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC), and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. This initiative was launched to provide a physician perspective on the current interoperability challenges across Canada's healthcare system. By bringing together key national medical organizations, the DHI Task Force aims to tackle long-standing interoperability challenges, particularly those affecting physicians' ability to access and share patient data efficiently. It is focused on improving the quality of patient care and enhancing patient safety through better use of interoperable digital health solutions; reducing administrative burden; improving clinical workflows; and enhancing care coordination by ensuring that digital health tools align with real-world clinical needs.



Objectives and Approach

At its core, the DHI Task Force identified systemic barriers preventing the effective use of digital health interoperability solutions in clinical practice.

Co-chaired by Dr. Samuel Ogunbiyi (Royal College) and Dr. Rashaad Bhyat (Infoway), the Task Force brought together 17 senior physician leaders from across the country, with nursing representation, all with significant experience with the digital health landscape, to develop evidence-based recommendations to inform national and provincial policy, ensuring digital solutions are designed with both physician and patient needs in mind.

The Task Force also prioritized clinician-led innovation, recognizing that sustainable adoption of interoperable digital health solutions requires meaningful engagement with frontline healthcare providers. Additionally, it emphasized change management strategies to minimize resistance and facilitate the widespread adoption of interoperable digital health tools that improve physicians' abilities to easily engage with a digitally connected system.

Key Deliverables

A major deliverable of the DHI Task Force was the publication of a comprehensive policy paper, which outlines the current landscape, opportunities for improvement, and strategic solutions for advancing implementation and use of interoperable digital health solutions in Canada. The *Digital Health Interoperability Task Force Report*, released in November 2024, provides five key policy recommendations for overcoming interoperability gaps and improving the adoption of interoperable digital health solutions amongst physicians and other clinicians.

These recommendations include maintaining momentum on legislative measures to enforce interoperability standards; incentive programs to encourage physician adoption of interoperable digital health solutions; and investment in AI-driven automation to reduce the documentation workload.

The Task Force has also emphasized modern patient-centered health data stewardship models, ensuring individuals have secure access to their own health records. These policy recommendations aim to create a regulatory and operational environment where interoperability becomes a functional reality in Canadian healthcare.

Next Steps

Looking ahead, the DHI Task Force will continue to work with partners to act on its recommendations. It will present its findings to policymakers, healthcare organizations, and clinician networks, to build awareness of, and support for its proposed strategies.

Collaboration with clinical organizations and technology vendors will also be a priority, ensuring that digital health solutions involve physician co-design, and align with national interoperability standards, and truly meet the needs of clinicians and patients.



By continuing to address interoperability challenges at both the policy and practice levels, the DHI Task Force is laying the foundation for a more connected, efficient, and patient-centered healthcare system across Canada.

“The DHITF has shown us what’s possible when we unite around a shared vision for healthcare innovation, but our work is far from over. Implementing these recommendations will require continued collaboration between governments, clinical organizations, and industry partners. As we build on the successes of 2024, I’m confident we’re on the path to a more connected and sustainable future for Canadian healthcare.”

- Dr. Rashaad Bhyat, Senior Clinical Leader, co-chair DHI Task Force



Achievements

The CIDH has made significant strides in advancing digital health adoption across Canada. Through its various initiatives, the CIDH has engaged clinicians, empowered healthcare leaders, and accelerated the implementation of interoperable digital health solutions that improve patient care and system efficiency. This section highlights the key outcomes achieved over the past year, demonstrating the tangible impact of the CIDH’s work on healthcare delivery, clinician adoption, and partner and interest holder engagement.

Key Outcomes Across Initiatives

Over the past year, CIDH-supported programs have driven substantial progress in the adoption of digital health technologies. The Connected Care Innovation Grant provided funding to 10 clinician-led projects, supporting initiatives that enhance digital interoperability, reduce administrative burden, and improve patient care coordination. The Connected Care Clinical Student Scholarship awarded 17 scholarships to future healthcare professionals, fostering a new generation of digital health leaders. The Clinician Adoption Approach has actively engaged clinicians, particularly in the nursing workforce, ensuring that digital health solutions are integrated seamlessly into clinical practice. Additionally, the DHI Task Force has made policy recommendations to reduce the clinical administrative burden and support physician participation in a digitally connected healthcare system.



Future Directions and Recommendations

Over the next year, the CIDH will continue to work with and for clinicians, particularly those who have been underserved in digital health transformation efforts. Nurses, nurse practitioners and primary care physicians have long been expected to adapt to technology that does not adapt to them. The CIDH's focus will remain on working with our partners to support digital health solutions that align with the evolving Interoperability Roadmap, enhance clinical workflows, reduce administrative burden, and supporting engagement with clinicians and ultimately patients.

Strategic Priorities for the Next Year

The CIDH is committed to strengthening partnerships, and prioritizing equity in digital health adoption. Over the next year, the CIDH will:

- Continue the Clinician Adoption Approach, with a focus on nurses and family physicians.
- Fund clinician-led projects that support interoperability and provide scholarships to build clinician capacity within the next generation of clinicians.
- Continue to advance action on DHI Task Force recommendations, including mechanisms that remove barriers to adoption of interoperable digital tools.
- Explore how we can support digital health equity, particularly for rural, remote, and Indigenous communities, so that interoperability benefits all patients and providers, not just those in well-resourced settings.

Next Steps: A Call to Action for Collaboration

Digital health is not just about technology—it is about people. The next phase of the CIDH's work will continue to be built on partnerships with clinicians, professional organizations, community health leaders, and policymakers who are committed to ensuring digital health works for those on the front lines.

Acknowledgements & Contact Information

The CIDH would not be possible without the dedication, expertise, and collaboration of countless individuals and organizations working toward a more connected, interoperable, and equitable healthcare system. We extend our deepest appreciation to the clinicians, healthcare leaders, researchers, and policy experts who have contributed their time and insights to shaping digital health transformation in Canada.

Recognizing Our Contributors and Partners

At Infoway, we are incredibly proud to support and collaborate with organizations that share our commitment to advancing digital health interoperability. We are grateful for the contributions of our partner organizations, including the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC), and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, whose collaboration has been essential in advancing clinician engagement and policy



recommendations through the Digital Health Interoperability (DHI) Task Force.

We also recognize the many clinical leaders, educators, and health system innovators who have played a role in shaping the CIDH's Connected Care Innovation Grant, and Clinical Student Scholarship Program, and Clinician Adoption Approach. The impact of this work would not be possible without the physicians, nurses, and allied health professionals who have contributed their lived experience and expertise to ensure digital health tools align with real-world practice.

Staying Engaged with the Centre

The work of the CIDH is driven by collaboration and continuous engagement with the healthcare community. Whether you are a clinician, researcher, policymaker, or technology partner, we invite you to join us in shaping the future of digital health.

To stay connected with CIDH:

Visit [our webpage](#) for the latest updates on initiatives, funding opportunities, and policy developments. Engage with us on social media to connect with peers and participate in discussions on the future of digital health. Participate in upcoming events, workshops, and knowledge-sharing forums, where clinicians and healthcare leaders collaborate on advancing interoperability.

For inquiries, partnerships, or more information, please [contact us](#).

The CIDH remains committed to empowering clinicians, supporting digital health innovation, and ensuring that no provider or community is left behind in Canada's digital transformation journey. We look forward to continuing this work together.