



# Transforming the Ontario Public Service for the Future

Discussion Document  
February 2017

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# Message from the Secretary of the Cabinet

We within the Ontario Public Service are dedicated to serving the people of Ontario. Our rapidly changing world offers many opportunities to innovate and deliver better outcomes for the public. To do so, we will need to be open to new ideas and willing to constantly rethink how we deliver programs, policies and services.

The OPS is no stranger to change. Over the past few decades, we have demonstrated time and time again that we can transform how we operate to deliver significant results and increase efficiencies.

For example, we have:

- Modernized many of our back-office functions, including shared services and IT
- Transformed health care and education
- Digitized more services and shared more information with the public
- Worked with other levels of government to streamline our program delivery and
- Implemented a major tax reform in cooperation with the federal government to reduce the cost of administering our tax system.



But the transformation that we are currently undergoing is qualitatively different. The pace of change has accelerated in recent years, and we're facing many significant new challenges, including increasing public expectations, a greater desire from the public to participate in the government decision-making process, increased global competition for talent and specialized skills, modest economic growth, growing income inequality, shifting demographics and rapidly changing technology.

This is a challenging environment in which to operate, but it also offers exciting new opportunities to transform our organization and become more efficient and effective. To capitalize on these opportunities, we will need to work together and with key stakeholders to develop a long-term vision for the public service.

This discussion paper has been developed following a year of OPS employee engagement in all regions of the province. I heard directly from you that we need to collaborate on a long-term vision for the OPS. The questions included in Section 2 are intended to elicit advice and stimulate discussion about how we should redefine our core vision and transform our organization for the future.

I would like to extend a special thanks to Treasury Board Secretariat for their leadership in developing this report. I would also like to acknowledge the chair and members of the Public Service Commission and Executive Development Committee, as well as the Deputy Ministers' Council, for their early input into the development of this discussion paper.

Lastly, I would like to thank many of you who took the initiative to ask me questions at town halls, sent me emails and posted comments on how we can work together to transform the OPS for the better.

I look forward to working with you in the year ahead to shape the OPS of the future.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Steve Orsini', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Steve Orsini

## Executive Summary

The Ontario Public Service (OPS) is a professional, innovative and resourceful organization, devoted to meeting the needs of the people of Ontario. And we have demonstrated, time and again, our capacity to transform to meet the changing needs of the public.

While our collective vision of who we are and how we operate has provided us with a sturdy foundation for more than a decade, the world around us has changed. In the face of this dynamic new environment, we must ensure that we continue to have the skills and resilience we need to adapt — and to transform.

The last twenty years have seen the emergence of a smaller, more integrated and cohesive OPS. We have reoriented our focus to our core business by shifting away from primary service delivery in a vast array of public services, to a greater focus on policy and program development and financial management. We have found success in working across government and the broader public sector, and have aligned our business and administrative services to improve efficiency and outcomes.

Now we are taking the next step on our transformative journey and we are asking you, our dedicated public servants, to serve as our guides.

We are in the midst of many important transformational initiatives, including the 5-year OPS HR Plan, the Digital Government Action Plan, diversity and accessibility, and our Open Government strategy. But to remain a leading-edge public service, we must look beyond our current strategies and forge a resilient, cohesive vision for the OPS of the future.

And we need your help to create that vision. Fortunately, we are not alone: public services here in Canada and around the world face many of the same challenges. By tapping into best practices and finding our own innovative solutions, we can create a new approach to public service delivery based on these core principles:

1. **Providing integrated, people-centred service:** Focusing on the client and designing people-centred services by harnessing the power of crowdsourcing.
2. **Empowering Ontarians:** Developing partnerships with the people of Ontario to co-create and co-develop public policy with them, and not just for them.
3. **Delivering evidence-based, outcome-focused policy:** Using rigorous evidence to inform decisions and achieve better results in more cost-effective ways.
4. **Promoting open delivery systems:** Opening more services to stakeholders and the public so we are better positioned to meet the needs of Ontarians in new and innovative ways.
5. **Harnessing disruptive technologies:** Using open architecture to allow for the application of new technologies and the digitization of services.
6. **Cultivating an open and inclusive public service:** Empowering our leaders and employees in creating a more open, diverse and inclusive workplace.

This discussion paper lays out the current state of the OPS and our efforts to drive transformation in the short term, while also setting out key directions for what we will need in the long term to meet the changing needs and expectations of the province.

But more than that, this discussion paper is a call to action — it is a call to every member of the OPS to get involved and help shape our vision for the public service of the future.

## Section 1: Introduction

The future will bring with it many challenges and even more opportunities. For the OPS to be successful in the future, we need to tackle these challenges while effectively capitalizing on emerging opportunities.

The challenges are not insignificant: fierce global competition, fiscal constraint, slower productivity and labour force growth, and an aging population will create new challenges in meeting the needs of Ontarians; while disruptive technologies will create new skill shortages and displace more workers in the labour market.<sup>1, 2</sup>

At the same time, Ontario is poised for innovation and growth. We have a diverse economy, highly-skilled labour force, strong industries and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, regenerative medicine and driverless vehicles.

As governments strive to adapt to a swiftly changing context, the OPS is well-positioned to deal with these challenges and opportunities in the future.

And as the stewards of the long term in Ontario, we will continue to provide clear, independent advice that balances the needs of current and future generations.

### **The current vision for the OPS is two-fold:**

- to align our resources to deliver on government priorities, and
- as stewards, to manage public resources over the long term. To do so, we will need to be even more diverse, bold thinking, client-centred and nimble, always providing our best service to Ontarians.

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<sup>1</sup> Ontario, Ministry of Finance (2010). Ontario's Long-term Report on the Economy. [Available online.](#)

<sup>2</sup> Ontario, Ministry of Finance (2014). Ontario Population projections. [Available online.](#)



## Section 2: Purpose

The purpose of this discussion paper is to inspire a conversation about the future of the OPS, and how we can make sure that we have what we need to bring an innovative, integrated and inclusive lens to bear on the delivery of our mandate.

A shared vision, mission and values provide the foundation on which any organization is built. However, to remain relevant, that vision has to adapt to changing circumstances.

The 2012 Drummond Report highlighted the need for the public service to transform so that it is at its best in assisting the government to address key public policy issues.<sup>3</sup> Developing a new vision for the OPS will help ensure the public service is better positioned to deliver on government objectives.

So, to ensure our success, we will need a bold plan to transform the OPS. This plan will need to include:

- A sustained commitment from senior leaders, supported by an effective governance structure that will oversee and champion transformation
- Skilled and dedicated employees to effectively transform the OPS for the future
- Leading-edge research and best practices that inform our processes and deliverables
- Public, employee and stakeholder input to ensure a client-focused perspective
- Adoption of new technologies to drive efficiencies and better outcomes
- Aligned, coordinated and integrated policy and program development
- Effective, regular and innovative communications to enhance awareness
- Effective project management measured by key milestones and outcomes.

Over the past year, the Secretary of the Cabinet has shared key directional themes for a modern public service that is integrated, inclusive and innovative.



To facilitate a dialogue about what the public service of the future should look like, the following questions are being shared for discussion. Their answers will play an important role in developing our strategic plan for public service renewal.

<sup>3</sup> Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services (Drummond Report) (2012). [Available online.](#)

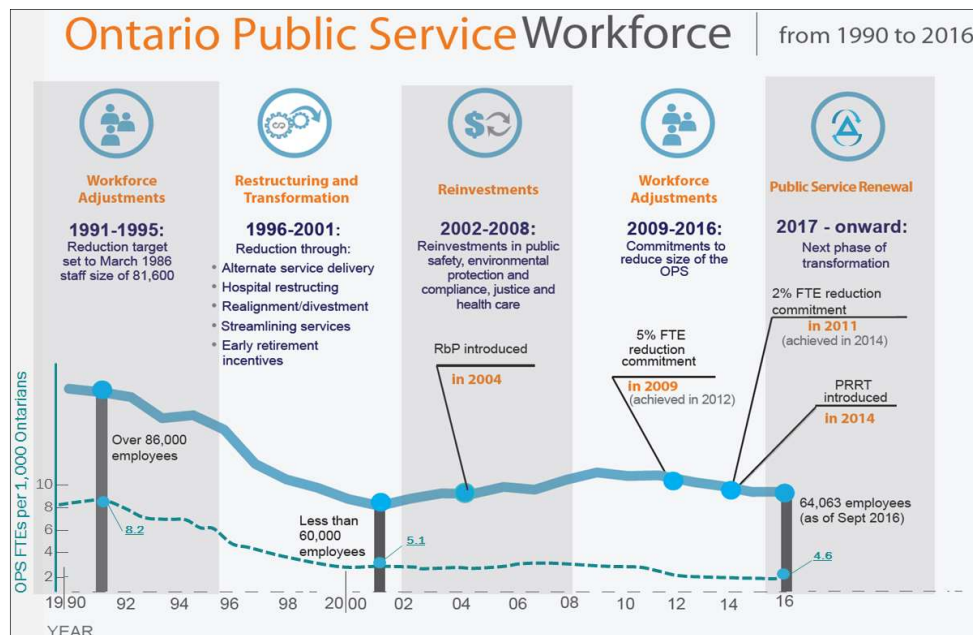
## **Discussion Questions**

1. What organizational culture do we want to create? How is it different from the current culture?
2. How can we ensure a more diverse, inclusive and innovative OPS?
3. What leadership skills/capabilities do we need to drive and transform our culture?
4. How can the OPS attract, retain and develop future leaders at all levels of the organization, in all parts of the province?
5. How will policy development need to be reshaped to be more people-focused?
6. What areas of the organization or processes are currently ripe for innovation?
7. How can we enable more risk-taking while maintaining public confidence?
8. How should we rethink service delivery to ensure it is integrated and people-centred?
9. What organizational changes would help transform the OPS?

## Section 3: Evolving Workforce

With more than 60,000 employees from Thunder Bay to Windsor, the OPS is a large and complex organization.

And our workforce has continued to evolve over time. The transformational journey that started in the 1990s provided the impetus to fashion a smaller, more nimble public service that could focus on its core businesses such as legislation and regulation, and the preservation of public safety, education and health care.



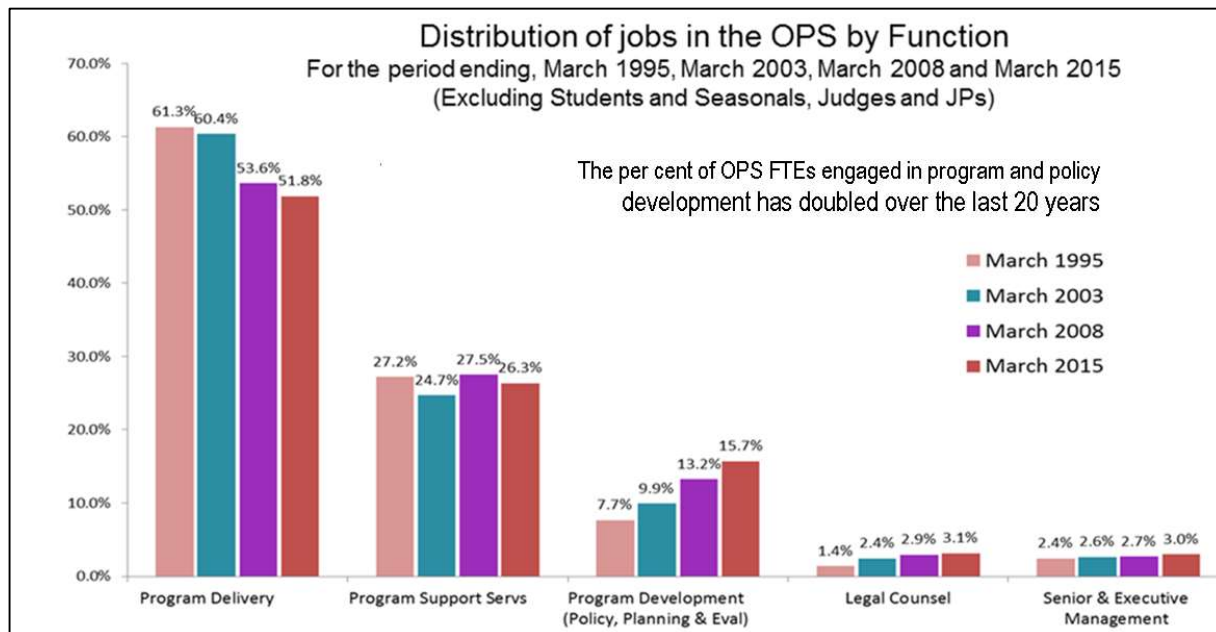
As of March 2016, the total number of full time equivalent (FTE) staff employed in the OPS was 25% less than at its peak in March 1991. On a per capita basis, there were approximately 8.2 Ontario public servants for every 1,000 Ontarians in 1990–91. By 2015–16, the ratio decreased to approximately 4.6 for every 1,000. Stated another way, in 1990–91 there were 122 citizens for every Ontario public servant, versus 217 in 2015–16.

Some key changes impacting the organization have included:

- **Health care delivery:** Management of psychiatric and ambulatory service delivery and provincial laboratories were devolved while integrated health networks were established, with better use of technology for the management of health information.
- **Social services:** Social assistance was devolved to consolidated municipalities while most developmental services were refocused, closed or transferred to non-profit facilities; I&IT systems were developed to transform the delivery of social services by municipalities and non-profit organizations, and improve government oversight of the direct social service delivery function.
- **Infrastructure:** The creation of Infrastructure Ontario transferred risk for design, construction, financing and maintenance to the private sector, resulting in more effective procurement.

- **Revenue collection:** Corporate tax administration and harmonized sales tax functions were transferred to the federal government, while property assessment and real estate services were devolved to agencies.

As the OPS transformed from primarily a service delivery organization to a policy development and program management organization, the role and composition of the OPS workforce shifted significantly.



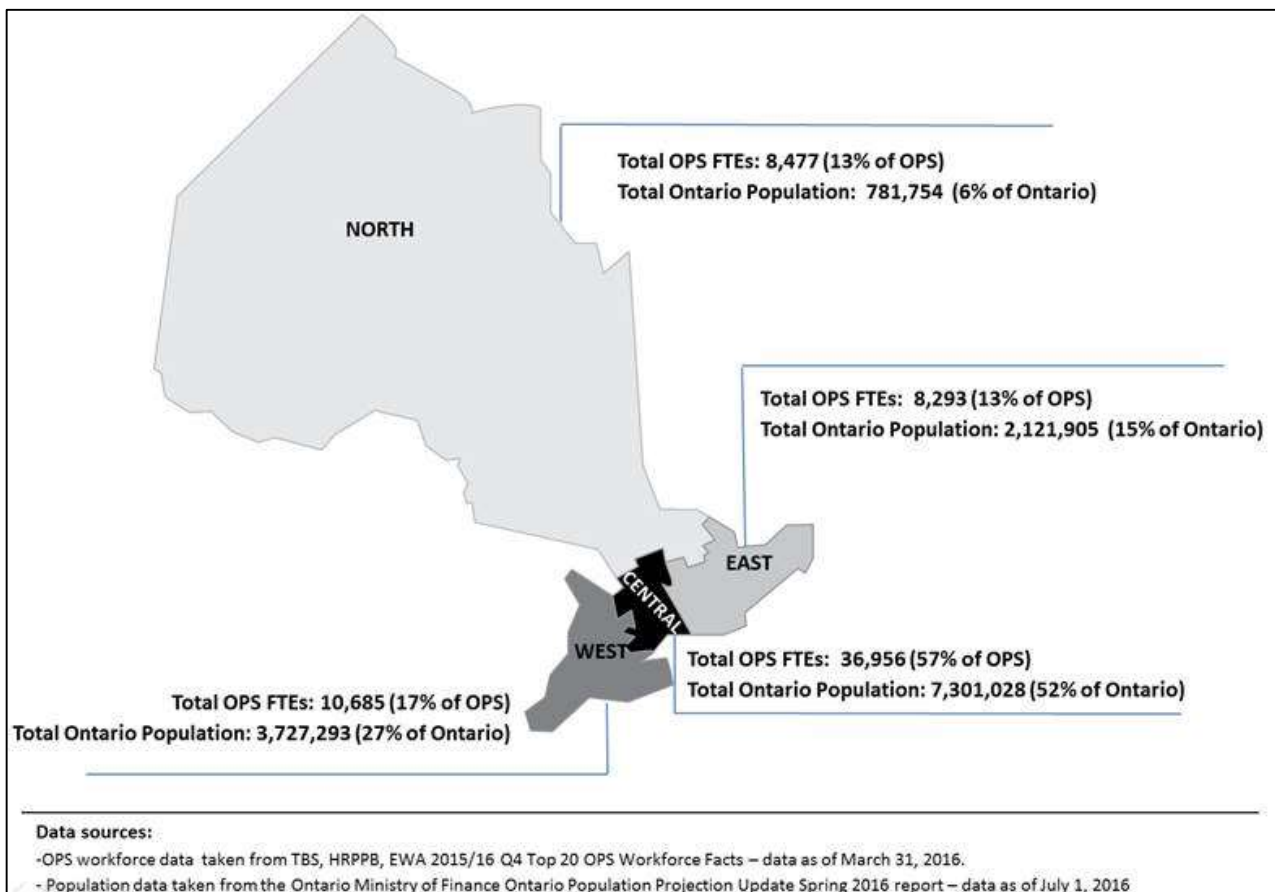
Following the mid-1990s restructuring, there was an increasing interest in leveraging capacity across ministries and ensuring that business and administrative services were aligned and efficient. This led to the consolidation of back-office corporate services.

### OPS Regional Footprint

One of the key characteristics of the public service is our geographic dispersion. We operate throughout the province, and our regional offices and service locations allow us to ensure that we are keenly aware of the needs of Ontarians, no matter which part of our province they call home.

Some examples of our regional footprint include:

- ServiceOntario counters
- Correctional facilities
- Probation and parole services
- Ontario Provincial Police operations
- Inspection and enforcement services through district offices, including the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
- Forest firefighters throughout the northern region.



## Section 4: OPS Transformation Underway

The OPS is committed to finding new and smarter ways to improve outcomes for the people of Ontario while meeting the government's fiscal commitments. Here are just a few examples of the many strategies we are using to deliver on that mandate.

### Leveraging Partnerships and Horizontal Integration

The OPS has been no stranger to change over the last number of decades. As an organization, we have demonstrated time and time again that we can tackle significant issues and transform how we operate to deliver significant results. Recent examples of how we are transforming the public service through partnerships across ministries and sectors include:

#### Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative

Through our Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative, we are working with municipalities to administer and deliver programs for the homeless on the local level, so they are better equipped to respond to the needs of the families and individuals affected. This initiative combines funding from five formerly separate housing and homelessness programs into a single, flexible and locally coordinated program administered by municipal service managers. With this approach, we are looking to build simpler, more efficient services that deliver results for the most vulnerable people in our province.

#### Youth Collective Impact Program

There are approximately 170,000 youth aged 15 to 24 who are not in education, training or employment in Ontario, representing about 9.4% of this cohort. This rate has not changed in recent years despite increased investments and improving graduation rates.

In recognition of the complex needs of youth and the challenges they face, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services has been working with partners from the private, public, non-profit and philanthropic sectors within select communities to align our efforts for disconnected youth. In other jurisdictions, this Collective Impact approach has been proven to significantly improve outcomes for this vulnerable population.

Central to the Collective Impact model is the desire to disrupt our traditional method of developing and funding programs and services for youth. By embedding the voices of many (i.e., youth, community stakeholders and front-line delivery personnel) and by forming partnerships with organizations within the community, the Youth Collective Impact Program can help us chart a new path to success.

#### Community Safety Situation Tables

One of our highest priorities as public servants is to assist individuals and families who live under an acutely elevated risk of harm. That is why we have gathered social service providers from different sectors together to provide immediate, coordinated and integrated responses to help those at risk.

Our Community Safety Situation Tables convene to discuss high-risk situations that have been brought forward by a partner agency. Within 24 to 48 hours, the relevant service

providers stage an intervention to help connect the person at risk and their family with the supports that they need.

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services has recognized the value of taking a proactive, collaborative approach that enhances community safety and well-being. To support this work, the ministry has launched the Risk-Driven Tracking Database Project, which provides participating communities with ability to track and analyze risk-based information in a consistent way. The data collected will point out trends and priority risks, help us improve community safety and support our efforts to help those who need it the most.

### **Community Hubs**

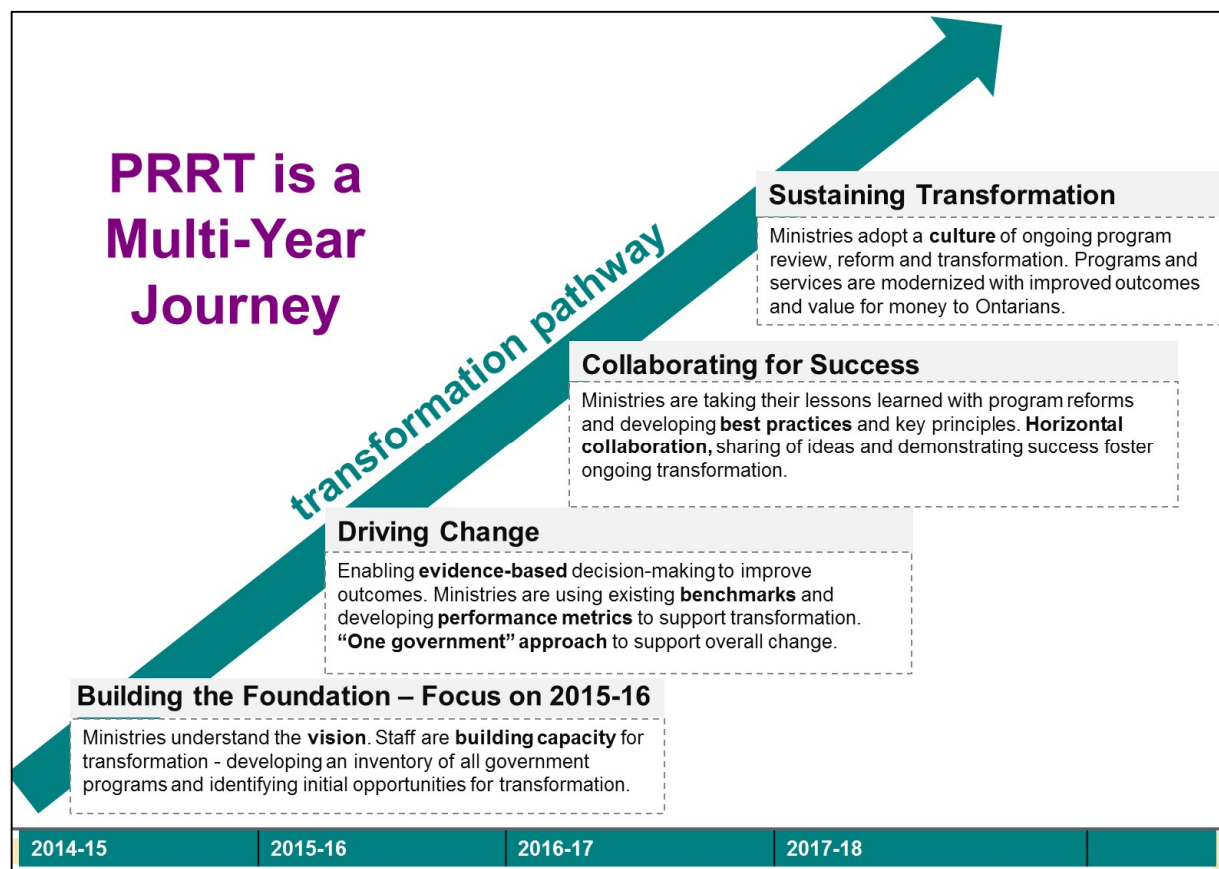
Community hubs provide a central access point for a range of necessary health and social services, along with cultural, recreational and green spaces to nourish community life. A community hub can be a school, a neighbourhood centre, an early learning centre, a library, an elderly person's centre, a community health centre or another public space. Benefits of community hubs include school-community partnerships, more efficient and sustainable services that respond to local needs, social return on investment, improved access to services and better outcomes for people.

The government accepted all the recommendations of a Strategic Framework and Action Plan released in 2015 to support community hubs in Ontario. The Action Plan's recommendations include coordinated service planning, client-focused service delivery and the use of public property to meet community needs. The Framework and Action Plan identified that provincial policies and processes are often complicated, fragmented and driven by ministry-specific requirements rather than being viewed through a lens of community needs and outcomes. Consistent with the Framework and Action Plan, the Ministry of Infrastructure's Community Hubs Division is working with partners to foster a horizontal, "one government" approach to decision-making and implementation.

### **Program Review, Renewal and Transformation**

We are also taking a fundamentally innovative approach to multi-year planning through Program Review, Renewal and Transformation, which in turn will help us drive improvements in service delivery.





Using a “one government” approach, ministries will work together over the coming years, in partnership with central agencies and external partners, to determine the best approach for transforming programs and services in order to deliver the very best value for the people of Ontario in the most cost-effective way.

## Modernizing for Better Outcomes

Improving outcomes for the people we serve is at the core of our approach to public service renewal, and there are currently many initiatives underway to modernize processes and improve service delivery:

### Ontario Student Assistance Program Reform

Investments in post-secondary education and training play a critical role in preparing people for the workforce. Seven out of 10 new jobs in Canada will be in high-skilled or management occupations, which require higher education or specialized skills. Overall, Ontarians with higher levels of education and skills have better employment prospects, earn higher wages, and have improved health and longevity.

Student financial assistance has been transformed to make post-secondary education more accessible and affordable. To help more students qualify for grants and access the student loan system, 100% of the funding from the Ontario Tuition Grant, Ontario Student Opportunity Grant, Ontario Access Grants and other grants offered by the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) has been redirected into a single major upfront grant — the new OSAP, starting in the 2017–18 school year. These changes will ensure that financial support is transparent, timely and targeted to those students with the greatest financial need.



The new OSAP will make average college or university tuition free for students from families with incomes of \$50,000 or less, and will make tuition more affordable for all eligible students.

### **Patient-Centred Care**

Our population is aging, and as we grow older as a province, our demographics will change. By 2041, 25% of our population will be 65 and older, compared to just 16% in 2015.<sup>4</sup> These demographic shifts, along with advances in pharmaceuticals and technology, are driving demand for more health care services at higher costs.

Moving towards a patient-centred care model is a cornerstone of health care transformation.

The province has improved access to primary care, provided more care for people at home, reduced hospital wait times, invested in health promotion programs and taken steps to make the system more transparent, integrated and accountable. During this period, the government has been able to manage costs while access to care has continued to improve. A good example of health care integration is the creation of Family Health Teams and Health Links networks, which work with patients to help them navigate the health care system and receive wraparound services. Moving to digital health services will further improve the patient experience and efficiency of the health care system.

### **ServiceOntario Modernization**

The goal of our ServiceOntario modernization is to improve customer service delivery for Ontarians. We have accomplished this by working in partnership across ministries to bundle routine transactions and expand the use of a single business number to provide one-stop access to government services. Our modernization efforts have also focused on advancing digital service design and delivery to ensure that our clients are offered the best possible service experience. ServiceOntario will continue to streamline service delivery with the adoption of a single individual identifier to improve access to government services.

### **Benefits Transformation**

The provincial government provides a wide range of direct and in-kind benefits, including health, dental, housing and child care. To streamline access, we are exploring multiple initiatives — from aligning multiple benefit programs through the use of a single easy-to-use online application, to automating back-office functions. To support these initiatives and build on our efforts to improve the way benefit programs are delivered, work is currently underway to create new legislation that will allow organizations to broaden information sharing while protecting the privacy of our clients by integrating program administration.

### **Transfer Payment Modernization**

There are thousands of organizations that receive transfer payments to provide a range of vital public services on behalf of the government. These include health services, social

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<sup>4</sup> Ontario Population Projections Update, 2015–2041. [Available online.](#)

services, employment and cultural programs, to name a few. It is the role of many public servants across the OPS to manage and administer this funding.

We are in the midst of modernizing the processes and rules for administering transfer payments so that our delivery partners can spend more time focusing on the outcomes that they have committed to deliver. An added benefit to this approach is freeing up OPS staff so they can better focus on holding recipients accountable for delivering on their commitments.

For example, the government is introducing a new one-window online registration system. Organizations will be able to create an online profile through which they can submit documents and easily update information, as required.

This modernized approach will create administrative efficiencies and savings for recipients and for government. By requiring transfer payment recipients to provide their Canada Revenue Agency business number, this new system will also create a better view of the financial relationship between the government and recipient organizations.

### **Building Internal Capacity**

The OPS has the responsibility to set an example in our province, so our plans to modernize the OPS must include a commitment to embed inclusion into everything we do. Our workplaces must be accessible, supportive, diverse and welcoming, with the talent and skills that we need to achieve our goals.

There are a series of strategies underway to make the OPS a more effective, inclusive and diverse workplace where we can take full advantage of the wide array of experience, skills and capabilities our public servants bring to the table.

### **OPS Human Resources Plan 2015–2020**

The OPS Human Resources Plan 2015–2020 will help us strengthen the public service — now and for the future. Built on the recommendations and the progress we have made on our previous HR plans, this plan focuses on the following three key priorities:

1. Positive and inclusive workplace culture
2. Engaged and innovative leaders
3. Effective and fair HR practices

# OPS HR Plan 2015-2020

*Building on our Strengths - Leading Change for the Future*

**HR Vision:** To foster a high-performing public service that attracts and retains the best employees



## Positive & Inclusive Workplace Culture

- Safe and healthy workplace initiatives
- Inclusive workplace initiatives
- Employee engagement initiatives

Positive & Inclusive Workplace Culture Index



## Engaged & Innovative Leaders

- Competency development & succession planning
- Engagement of OPS leaders
- OPS Leadership Strategy

Engaged & Innovative Leadership Index



## Effective & Fair HR Practices

- Human Capital Plan for HR Professionals
- Simplified and integrated HR processes and systems
- HR policy effectiveness, measurement and collective bargaining

Effective & Fair HR Practices Index

## OPS VALUES

Trust | Fairness | Diversity | Excellence | Creativity | Collaboration | Efficiency | Responsiveness

### Digital Government

In 2017, we will release our Digital Government Action Plan. This plan will provide a vision for transforming the way the Ontario government operates online, including the creation of a new digital service office, led by a Chief Digital Officer. The action plan will also outline key initiatives, such as identifying high-impact digital projects and services to be transformed while adopting a digital-by-default approach focused on making online government services easier to navigate.

### OPS I&IT Strategy 2016–2020

Our OPS I&IT Strategy 2016–2020 takes a long-term approach to investment in key technology assets. It leverages the power of new technologies — including mobile, analytics and cloud computing — to increase innovation and improve productivity. The strategy encourages the OPS to harness the power of data and information to provide solid evidence to back up decisions on program design and enhancements.

### OPS Campaign Against Discrimination and Harassment

Approximately 14% of respondents to the April 2014 OPS Employee Survey reported that they had experienced discrimination in the workplace over the last two years – and 16% of respondents reported that they had experienced harassment. According to the same survey,

our Black, South Asian and Indigenous peers reported higher rates of discrimination compared to non-visible minority employees.

As an organization, we are committed to providing a workplace free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. That is why we have taken action to strengthen and enhance our policies and practices, including developing a Sexual Harassment Prevention Action Plan specific to the OPS.

### **OPS Anti-Racism Action Plan**

The OPS Anti-Racism Action Plan will address systemic racism with the aim of ending racial disparities in the OPS and our province. To support this goal, a new Inclusion, Diversity and Anti-Racism Division has been established reporting to the Secretary of the Cabinet within Cabinet Office, which will create a focal point for enterprise-wide leadership on inclusion, diversity and anti-racism both within and outside the OPS.

### **Mental Health**

Mental illness has a devastating effect on the health, productivity, and well-being of Canadians. Statistics Canada reports over one in five Canadians and over one in four Ontarians will have mental health related diagnoses in their lifetime.<sup>6</sup>

The goals of the OPS mental health strategy are to shine a light on the importance of mental health in the workplace, the need to break down the stigma that surrounds mental health and mental illness, and to provide support to prevent mental health issues. The undeserved shame that stigma brings with it can and does prevent people struggling with mental health issues from seeking effective treatment options.

The Healthy Workplace, Healthy Mind initiative targets increased awareness of workplace mental health and providing new supports to address mental health issues. Actions have included speaker events, training and awareness, self-service resources and cross-ministry collaboration projects.<sup>7 8</sup>

#### **Visible minorities represent:**

- 25% of the Ontario workforce,
- 20% of the OPS workforce, and
- 14% of OPS senior management.

#### **Discrimination was reported by:**

- 14% of the OPS as a whole,
- 25% of the Indigenous workforce,
- 22% of Black OPS staff, and
- 18% of South Asian employees.<sup>5</sup>

Mental health problems and illnesses typically account for approximately 30% of short- and long-term disability claims and are rated one of the top three drivers of both short- and long-term disability claims by more than 80% of Canadian employers.

In 2011, economic costs related to a mental health—related diagnosis were well in excess of \$50 billion—2.8% of Canada's 2011 gross domestic product.

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<sup>5</sup> 2014 OPS Employee Survey

<sup>6</sup> Government of Canada (2006). The human face of mental health and mental illness in Canada.

<sup>7</sup> World Health Organization (2001). Mental health: a call for action. [Available online.](#)

<sup>8</sup> Canadian Mental Health Association. 2014 Pre-Budget Submission. [Available online.](#)

## **The OPS Multi-Year Accessibility Action Plan**

Accessibility is a core pillar of inclusion. It is all about improving access for persons with disabilities by removing barriers and preventing new barriers from forming. As a public service organization, we have a unique role and responsibility as an employer, a policy maker and a service provider. Our Multi-Year Accessibility Action Plan maps out our ongoing journey to become more accessible. As public servants, our responsibility goes beyond complying with the law — we can and should lead by example.

## **Flexible Work Options**

Organizations around the globe are achieving positive results by implementing flexible work options for employees. In addition to improving employee engagement and attracting top talent, flexible work arrangements and accommodations can yield improved employee health and well-being, increase employee satisfaction and lead to greater productivity. In the end, flexible work options lead to the delivery of better services to the public.<sup>9</sup>

In the 2014 employee survey, 27% of respondents indicated that they were in a flexible work arrangement.

In 2013, the OPS introduced the Flexible Work Strategy to support planning and implementing flexible work arrangements. To remain competitive while attracting and retaining talent, we must offer work options that support public service modernization and service excellence, improve efficiency and reduce the carbon footprint.

## **Non-Bargaining Compensation Policies and Practices**

To ensure we have the talented, inclusive, and diverse workforce needed to deliver on our modernization and transformation agenda, we need to attract and retain highly-skilled leaders at all levels. To that end, our compensation policies and practices support the flexibility we will need in this time of transformation.

Non-bargaining staff, managers and executives led by example through a prolonged period of compensation restraint and wage freezes, which created significant gaps and issues within the OPS for these employees. A new long-term compensation strategy, announced in November 2016, is being implemented for non-bargaining specialists, managers and executives in the OPS to address the issues that compensation restraint has created.

As part of our long-term compensation strategy for non-bargaining employees, we are:

1. Implementing a new modern job evaluation system to ensure consistency and equity in how non-bargaining specialists and managers are classified and compensated.
2. Establishing appropriate salary ranges for non-bargaining specialists and managers to realign compensation with bargaining counterparts and ensure that situations where staff make more than the managers they report to are minimized.

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<sup>9</sup> HR Policy and Planning Branch (2013). OPS Flexible Work Strategy. [Available online.](#)

3. Making executive salaries competitive with similar jurisdictions and comparator markets by transitioning executives to the market median over four years through a new salary rate structure.
4. Providing ongoing adjustments for non-bargaining employees equivalent to what bargaining counterparts receive.

### **Enhanced Focus on Relationships with Bargaining Agents**

Improving relations with our bargaining agents is critical to providing public services that are efficient, effective and sustainable, as we move to transform and better position public services for the future.

In order to achieve this goal, we must strengthen the existing culture of problem solving through the use of joint committees, disclosure and information sharing. We can use memorandums of agreement, outside of collective agreements, to work with our bargaining agents to support transformational and modernization priorities. We must also continue to work with our network of existing stakeholders to better address confidentiality concerns, allowing bargaining agents to be consulted earlier in the planning stage to help shape decision making.

- 84% of OPS are represented by a union/ bargaining group.
- OPSEU represents 49.5% of all FTEs.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> HR Policy and Planning Branch (2016). Top 20 Workforce Facts 2015/16-Q4.

## Section 5: OPS of the Future

So, as we can see, we are operating in a challenging environment with enormous opportunities. The OPS is well accustomed to transforming the way we do business. As we prepare for the future, we must ensure that we remain well positioned to meet — and exceed — the expectations of the public we serve in a world of fiscal constraint.

*Building Better Public Services: A Guide for Practitioners* by Tony Dean, a former Secretary of the Cabinet in Ontario and now a senator, outlines how public sector organizations across Canada and around the world are channelling new approaches to policy design and development, including service delivery integration with the private and non-profit sectors.<sup>11</sup>

Through rigorous data and evidence, a high-level strategic approach to human resource leadership and new technology, we can enable public servants to drive transformation and deliver top-level public services.

The task ahead of us is to harness the innate potential, both inside and outside the OPS, to deliver on our priorities and forge a new path ahead.

### Vision for the OPS

Our new vision for the OPS will be based on the following core principles:

1. **Providing integrated, people-centred service:** Focusing on the client and designing people-centred services by harnessing the power of crowdsourcing.
2. **Empowering Ontarians:** Developing partnerships with the people of Ontario to develop public policy with them, and not just for them.
3. **Delivering evidence-based, outcome-focused policy:** Using rigorous evidence to inform decisions and achieve better results in more cost-effective ways.
4. **Promoting open delivery systems:** Opening more services to stakeholders and the public so we are better positioned to meet the needs of Ontarians in new and innovative ways.
5. **Harnessing disruptive technologies:** Using open architecture to allow for the application of new technologies and the digitization of services.
6. **Cultivating an open and inclusive public service:** Empowering our leaders and employees in creating a more open, diverse and inclusive workplace.

So how will this new vision work in practice?

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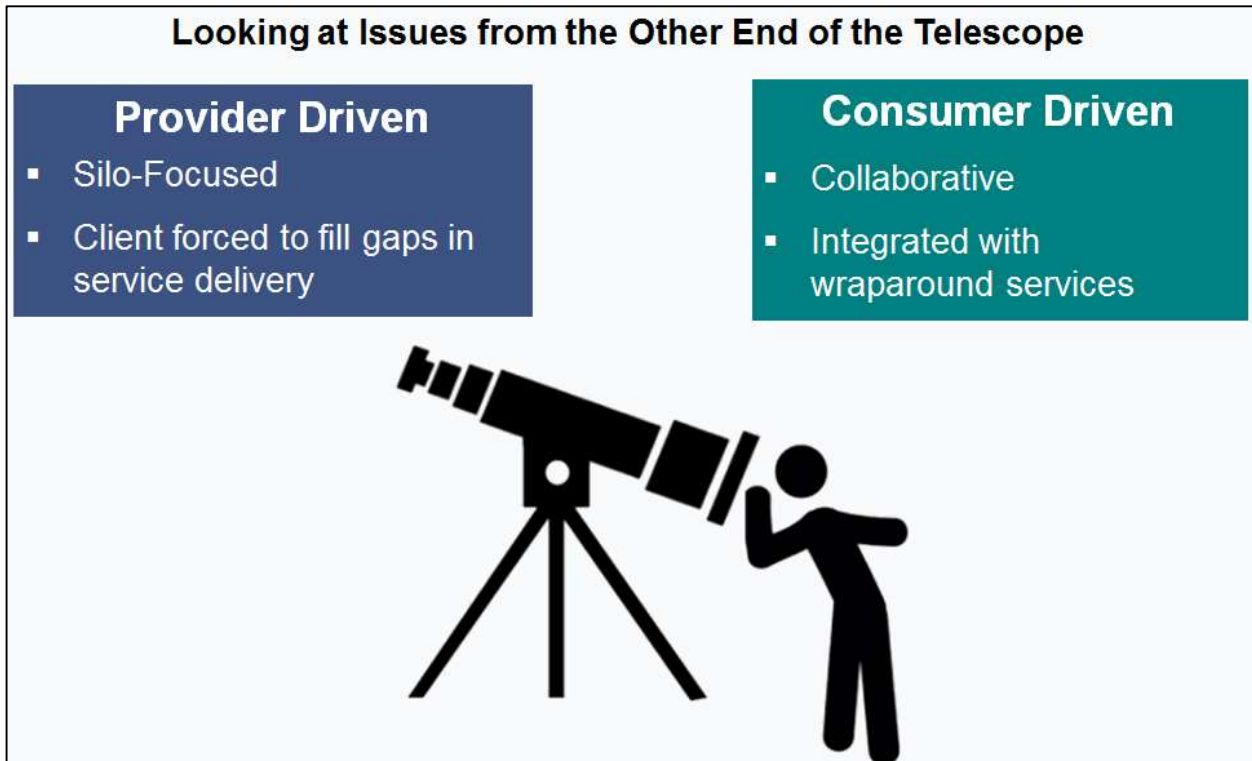
<sup>11</sup> Tony Dean (2015). *Building Better Public Services: A Guide for Practitioners*. Friesen Press.



## Providing Integrated, People-Centred Service

The future of policy and program design will be built around the client's perspective — bringing everyday voices into the conversation and basing our approach on public engagement, feedback and input.

Moving towards better integrated service delivery will require multiple ministries and agencies to build even more capacity for horizontal collaboration and engagement into the work that they do. We must refocus from a program-delivery perspective to a client-focused perspective. This will require work to happen across programs that consider how everyday citizens interact with the services we provide, and identify opportunities to improve delivery to support better outcomes.



There are a variety of new ways to connect with citizens in addressing public issues. For example, crowdsourcing is an approach to broad-based problem solving that has proven to be successful in the private and public sectors. It is an IT-mediated problem-solving, idea-generation, and production model that leverages the dispersed knowledge of groups and individuals.<sup>12</sup> Crowdsourcing connects citizens and outside partners with the OPS and with one another, and can assist with the design of integrated client focused services.

The new Policy Innovation and Collaboration Zone at Ryerson University is leveraging student-centred teams to deliver policy solutions to complex, real-world challenges using an open, team-driven, collaborative approach to design. The Policy Innovation and Collaboration Zone will focus on developing products or ideas and implementing them on a smaller scale to test their viability, rather than seeking to change policy or regulations on a large scale. This new model of policy design, using small scale experimentation to

<sup>12</sup> Prpic et al. (2015). The Fundamental of Crowdsourcing. Policy Studies Organization 1944-2866.



determine the best course of action, will play an important role in driving innovative transformation within the OPS.

Ontario will open a first-of-its-kind provincial government Digital Outpost at the Communitech Innovation Hub in Kitchener-Waterloo, among a community of nearly 1,000 leading tech companies and 80,000 square feet dedicated to fostering collaboration, innovation, start-ups, global brands, public sector agencies and academic institutions. Ontario's Digital Outpost will feature a lab-style environment for prototyping, testing and designing digital services and training teams in user-centred service design and agile development practices. The government's outpost will connect experts in the Kitchener-Waterloo corridor and surrounding digital innovation communities to the digital ecosystem in the Greater Toronto Area, accelerating digital transformation across provincial ministries, including nurturing and developing in-demand digital skills, recruiting top digital talent and spurring the next generation of innovation in public sector service delivery.

### **Empowering Ontarians**

In our new, mobile, digital economy, consumers have become empowered like never before. They have become accustomed to an environment that encourages two-way communication, crowdsourcing and community building. They expect fast, convenient and personalized programs that use digital technology to make accessing products and services as easy as using an app on their smartphone.

According to a 2013 Accenture Citizens Survey and a Chicago Pulse Survey, the public expects government to follow the private sector's lead — 71% want to be involved in the design of government services, and 55% prefer to access government information from their smartphone.<sup>13</sup>

Citizens today are more aware of their right to access information about public services and have higher expectations of the level of service and type of experience they will receive when they interact with public services.<sup>14</sup> The people of Ontario now expect easy access to government services, including their own personal information.

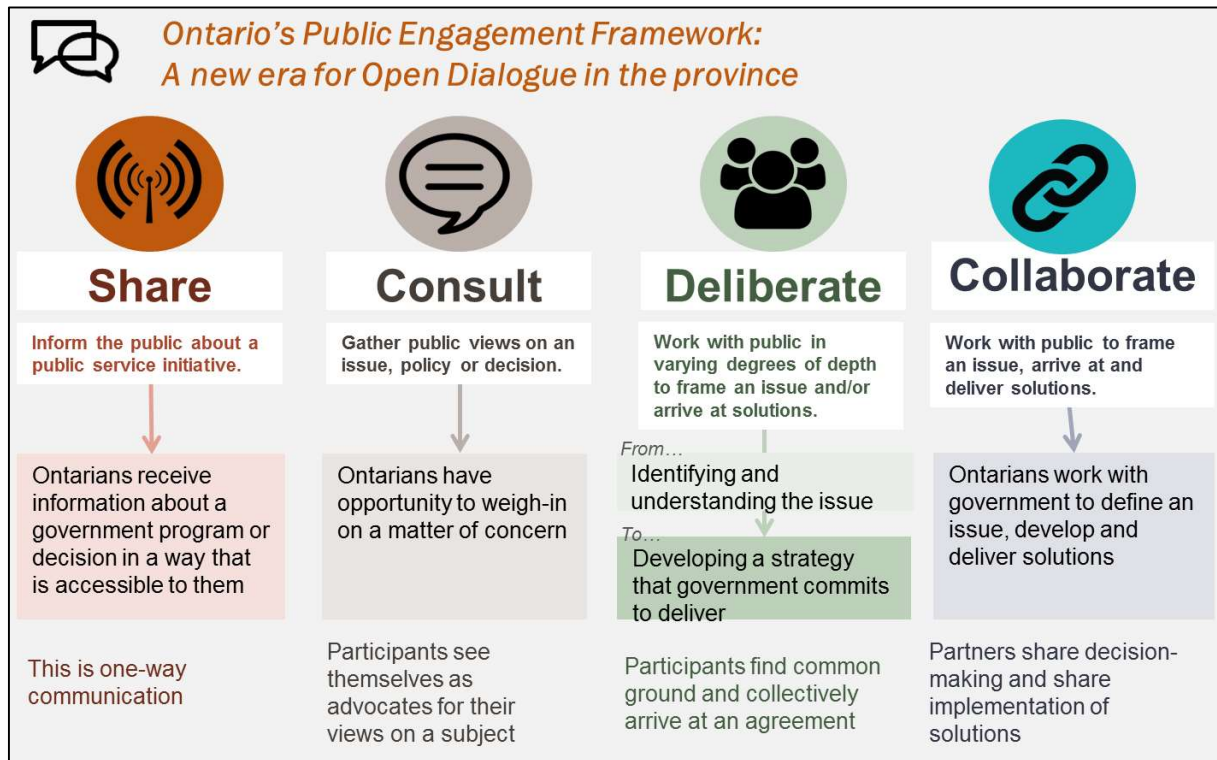
Moving towards people-centred services will require a government that is willing to empower citizens throughout the policy and program development process. Ontario's Open Government strategy and action plan aims to create a more transparent, accountable and accessible government, by providing more avenues for the public to access information and engage on things that matter to them.

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<sup>13</sup> 2013 Accenture Citizen Survey (4); Chicago Pulse Survey.

<sup>14</sup> PriceWaterhouseCoopers (2012). Transforming the citizen experience: One Stop Shop for public services.

Taking a more digital and collaborative approach to the provision of public services will require us to find new avenues for engaging with the public in more meaningful ways. The Public Engagement Framework lays out different approaches and will help increase the quality of public engagement, which will ultimately lead to better policies, programs and services.



### Delivering Evidence-Based, Outcome-Focused Policy

For policy makers, the key to achieving better results is using rigorous evidence to inform decisions. Enhanced use of evidence, supported by tools and resources, enables governments to select, fund and operate public programs more strategically.

In keeping with our commitment to evidence-based policy development, the OPS recently created the Centre of Excellence for Evidence-Based Decision Making. Evidence-based decision making is about using the best available analytics, research and information on program and policy results to guide decisions. This approach includes:

- identifying what works;
- highlighting gaps where evidence of program effectiveness is lacking;
- enabling policy makers to use evidence in budget and policy decisions; and
- relying on administrative and data systems to monitor implementation and measure key outcomes, using the information to continually improve program performance.

Modeled after the United Kingdom's successful Behavioural Insights Team, efforts are underway in specific program areas to design and evaluate tailored interventions that encourage small behavioral changes which will ultimately improve program outcomes and make their delivery more efficient.

Founded on the established principles of behavioral sciences, these solutions use low-cost evaluation methods — such as randomized controlled trials — to precisely measure their effectiveness. Randomized controlled trials allow for testing of multiple solutions simultaneously, which means that multiple solutions to a problem can be explored at once. In a truly evidence-based approach to policy and program development, solutions which look equally good on paper can be compared side-by-side in the field to see which option delivers the preferred outcome.

Our Policy Innovation Hub is also driving evidence-based policy within the OPS. Evolving out of the Policy Innovation and Leadership Secretariat in Cabinet Office, the Policy Innovation Hub's mandate is to support and accelerate policy innovation across the OPS and to coordinate with the federal Policy Innovation Hub in Privy Council Office.

One of the most important issues affecting the public service in our rapidly changing world is the rise of social media and its impact on providing policy advice and delivering programs and services.

Changes in the Policy Profession		
	Then	Now
<b>Influence</b>	Privileged advisor	System integrator
<b>Primary focus</b>	Policy development and research	Just-in-time policy and issues management
<b>Principal partners</b>	Organized interests	Organizational interest and citizen engagement
<b>Outside exposure</b>	Minimal and controlled	Increasingly transparent
<b>Accountable for</b>	Inputs	Impact ("outcomes")
<b>Provincial economy</b>	Higher growth	Slower growth
<b>Main means of communication</b>	Writing/telephone	Multimedia
<b>News cycle</b>	Daily	Real-time

Leveraging the influence of potential sources around us will help to move us to the forefront of policy development, and generate new and fresh ideas from communities that can ultimately be delivered locally. Moving toward broader and different forms of engagement has impacted the role and the function of the policy profession, and we can expect that transformation to continue as social technology plays a larger role in our society.

## **Promoting Open Delivery Systems**

Efforts to reform the public sector, both here in Canada and around the world, have largely reflected a change from a more inward-looking view of “government knows best” to a model that designs and delivers public services from the perspective of the end user.

While the approach is as varied as the jurisdictions themselves, some common elements have emerged, including:

- the changing relationship between citizens and the state
- working across silos through collaboration and integration in both policy making and service delivery
- a shift from a focus on inputs to a focus on measurable results and
- the importance of appropriate governance and accountability.

In the future, we will collaborate more closely within the public service, across jurisdictions and with the private and not-for-profit sectors. There is an expectation of greater transparency and a need to transform the way the public service interacts with citizens when developing policy and implementing programs. Engagement with diverse partners, including academics, businesses and not-for-profits, along with the use of crowdsourcing throughout the policy and program development cycle, will become the cornerstone of how the public service operates.

Collaborative communities enabled by digital technologies have already demonstrated their potential to leverage the knowledge and expertise to rapidly build capacity and solve complex challenges.

The problem-solving potential of the crowd is why we introduced the Open Data Directive on April 1, 2016. As Ontario confronts big global challenges such as climate change, poverty alleviation and the need for job creation, the public service will increasingly rely on broader problem-solving networks in which the public service itself is just one of many participants. By making government data publically accessible for third party reuse, we are allowing organizations with ingenuity and initiative to build applications for the public good.

## **Harnessing Disruptive Technologies**

In the last decade, digital technology has revolutionized entire sectors of our economy. Within a very short period of time applications like Uber and Airbnb have disrupted the transportation and hospitality industries, respectively. It is now a matter of years, and not decades, before driverless cars will be on our roads. Banking is exploring the use of blockchain, the technology behind the crypto-currency Bitcoin, for electronic transaction processing and recordkeeping, and artificial intelligence will advance more quickly than we can adjust.

In short, we are living in an age of economic game changers.

Mobile technology has become ubiquitous, and the public now expects to access services from anywhere at any time, including government services. To meet the increasing

expectations of the public, government digital services must mirror the simplicity and effectiveness Ontarians have experienced in the private sector. To accomplish this ambitious goal we need to rethink how government programs and services are delivered.

Digital government provides an opportunity to put people first, delivering customer-centred services that are efficient and easy to access. Leading jurisdictions, including the United States and the United Kingdom, have been working to transform government approaches and embed digital standards within public services. Both the U.S. Digital Services Playbook and the UK Digital by Default Service Standard establish frameworks to inform and enable the required process and culture changes for transformation.<sup>15</sup> Following these examples, we will be creating a new Digital Government Office.

### **Cultivating an Open and Inclusive Public Service**

The OPS is committed to creating a more inclusive, healthy and respectful workplace where everyone has the opportunity to contribute to their full potential. To achieve this goal, best practice research recommends taking a holistic and integrated approach that uses mutually reinforcing sets of policies, workplace practices and culture change initiatives.

The public service of the future must be efficient and flexible to welcome the next generation of civil servants. Transforming our workspaces and updating our technology presents us with an opportunity to modernize our work environment. While the Queen's Park Reconstruction Project, which will create collaborative workspaces that promote inclusion and accessibility, is a good start, this is a challenge that we must continue to address in the years ahead.

Risk aversion can stifle innovation in any organization. Against a backdrop of slow growth, fragile public finances, high unemployment and low public trust, we need to build a workplace where innovation is encouraged.

Innovation is a critical factor in keeping our organization effective, efficient, inclusive, sustainable and ready to respond to emerging, complex issues. Organizations must consciously take a proactive and systemic approach in building innovative capacity across the enterprise with particular focus on the:

- people involved
- information they are using
- ways in which they are working together and
- rules and processes which govern their work.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Office of the Corporate Chief Information Officer (2015). Implementing Ontario's Digital Imperative.

<sup>16</sup> OECD (2014). Innovating in the Public Sector: from ideas to impact. [Available online](#).

The OPS has a comprehensive human resource strategy and policy framework, as well as program development and delivery structures, to support public service renewal, enable compliance with legislation and facilitate implementation of best practices.

HR planning is particularly important to address demographic shifts and capitalize on our multi-generational and increasingly diverse workforce.

The quality of leadership and bench strength within the OPS is an ongoing area of focus. Efforts to further enhance the leadership culture in the OPS should include new ways of supplementing traditional recruitment practices as well as accelerating the development of employees with leadership potential through the use of experiential learning opportunities.

We have been measuring employee engagement since 2006. Over the last couple of surveys, engagement scores have been on the decline. To re-engage staff, we need to go from just measuring employee engagement to improving the employee experience.

We need to:

- examine the factors that influence the entire employee experience
- target managerial, organizational, and employee-related factors that influence the employee experience, engagement and productivity and
- renew our leadership and culture to be more engaging and inclusive.

#### Within the next ten years:

- Over three-quarters of our ADMs will be eligible to retire.
- The natural internal feeder groups to these roles also have significant retirement eligibility rates (Directors: 63%; Senior Managers: 47%).<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> OPS Workforce Information Network Data - July 2016

## Conclusion

By attracting and nurturing diverse talent, harnessing the power of digital technology and tapping into the collective wisdom and insights of the public, we can renew our approach to public services while improving outcomes.

But we cannot do it without you. We need the collective insights and wisdom of each generation in our workforce to help inform our strategy for public service renewal.

We need your input, your guidance and your experience.

And we need your support to drive transformation in every aspect of the important work that we do.

That is why, in 2017, we are launching a broad consultation across the OPS to help us develop a strategic framework for public service renewal and a new vision for the OPS. Through an open and inclusive dialogue, managers and employees will help shape the OPS of the future.

The new vision we develop together will help ensure we have the right skills, diversity and leadership to enable us to innovate and transform to meet the needs of the citizens we serve.

