

ICES Public Advisory Council (PAC) Annual Summary

2023/2024 Activities and Updates

RECRUITMENT



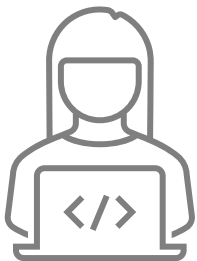
On March 31, 2024, we said goodbye to 11 PAC members whose 3-year term was ending. We sincerely thank our outgoing members for all their contributions, including pushing the PAC research question project forward! For this year's new PAC member recruitment, we had a goal of ensuring we reached specific audiences that have been underrepresented in years past. To achieve this goal, targeted recruitment strategies were used to better reach Indigenous communities, as well as people living in Northern Ontario and outside the Greater Toronto Area. Recruitment for new members to join the ICES PAC began in February 2024. The PAC also appointed its first Chair, Simisola Johnson, an existing member providing peer leadership and partnering with ICES to help guide our work. Finally, we welcomed a new Board of Directors Liaison this year: former PAC member Pierre Leclerc.

The PAC contributed to a [public-facing report](#) developed by the ICES Privacy Department. The Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) was enacted in Ontario in 2004 and governs how personal health information can be collected, used, and disclosed. ICES met with the Ministry of Health to present recommendations for modernizing PHIPA and wanted to release the recommendations in a public-facing report. The report was informed by the PAC, who provided feedback on ways to make the report understandable to the public.

ADVISORY WORK



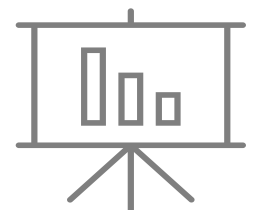
VISIBILITY



One of the PAC's goals has been to increase both internal and external visibility of the work that they do. The goal of more visibility internally at ICES was to encourage scientists to reach out with questions or projects that may benefit from public input. There were several ideas that came from the PAC's discussions in this area and that were put into action: 1) visible annual reports on our website that detail the PAC's work, 2) a revised [PAC webpage](#), and 3) periodic internal presentations on the PAC as a reminder for staff and scientists to bring forward projects.

In February 2022, PAC members collectively developed a research question to be answered by ICES. This process involved the PAC selecting a research topic area (Changes in Mental Health and Addictions Service Use) and creating a research question. The chosen research question was "What was the most frequent cause for outpatient mental health visits (over time)?" The analysis was completed in 2023 and a public-facing video and a full report are in development, with a release date of late Fall 2024. A smaller working group of members was also involved in the collaborative writing of a [non-peer-reviewed publication](#) released in January 2024.

RESEARCH QUESTION



ICES Public Advisory Council (PAC) Overview

The ICES Public Advisory Council was formed in 2019 and is made up of members of the public from across Ontario. The council represents the public's voice and guides ICES on what matters most to Ontarians for health data research. Their thoughts, perspectives, and values inform ICES research activities and influence how ICES researchers use data to improve Ontario's health care. We are currently in our fourth iteration of the Council and Year 5 of its work.

The Public Advisory Council (PAC) is the primary mechanism for ICES to engage with the public at an institutional level. The PAC guides topics that the ICES Management feels require or would benefit, from the perspective of the Ontario public. The PAC also provides feedback to ICES researchers and other areas of the organization that come to the group seeking guidance on matters about the public.

The PAC continues to guide ICES on what matters most to Ontarians for health data research. The thoughts, perspectives and values of the PAC influence ICES' research and the way data is used by ICES researchers to improve and evaluate health care.

For more information on the ICES Public Advisory Council,
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