

ICES Public Advisory Council (PAC) Annual Summary

2025/2026 Activities and Updates

PAC MEMBERS



In September 2025, we said goodbye to 4 PAC members whose 3-year term was ending and who did not wish to extend for a second term. We sincerely thank our outgoing members for all their contributions! For this year's new PAC member recruitment, we employed targeted strategies to better reach people living in Northern Ontario and outside the Greater Toronto Area.

Recruitment for new members to join the ICES PAC began in May 2025, with 7 new members joining the group in September 2025. The PAC also appointed a new Chair, Lisandra Hernandez Hernandez, an existing member providing peer leadership and partnering with ICES to help guide our work. We also welcomed a former PAC member to the ICES Board of Directors: Vu Ngo.

This year, the PAC helped shape several important ICES initiatives and scientist-led projects. First, PAC feedback and insight shaped a draft community governance approach for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada data at ICES and refined related plans to promote opportunities for community organizations to request data analytics. Second, the PAC also contributed ethical and practical considerations for how ICES studies may contact patients. Third, the PAC provided input on a medical AI education workshop for patient partners in research training programs and other patient engagement workshops. Finally, PAC members also had an opportunity to attend this year's ICES Annual Forum, which returned in-person for the first time since 2018. This allowed members the opportunity to meet more ICES Staff and Scientists, while also expanding their understanding of ICES' research and analytics.

MEETINGS



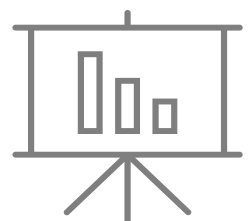
IMPROVEMENT



This year, with assistance and guidance from the continuing education PAC working group, quality improvements were made to the new member orientation and onboarding process. The working group provided feedback on the interview package for new members, the orientation process including a package and video, and introduced a new concept for a 'buddy system' where existing members can mentor and support new members. Members also suggested we share an optional existing 'data 101' module for members that would like a more in-depth orientation to data and research. All changes were implemented and delivered in September 2025 to our 7 new members. The baseline evaluation survey demonstrated improvement in our orientation process compared to previous years, with 100% agreement on 5/8 metrics.

The March 2026 annual evaluation was completed by 12 PAC members, representing the highest participation rate in four years. We have seen year over year improvement in key areas we have been working on, such ensuring members understand the role of the PAC and have what they need to fulfill their role, and that members feel they can express their opinions freely. A continued area for improvement is on ensuring we are communicating impact to our members and that they can see tangible results and improvement from their feedback. We have already begun providing project updates each meeting on initiatives that have come forward. The feedback from the annual evaluation will be used to improve activities for the coming year.

EVALUATION



ICES Public Advisory Council (PAC) Overview

The ICES Public Advisory Council was established in 2019 and comprises members from the public across Ontario. The council represents the public's voice and guides ICES on what matters most to Ontarians in terms of health data research. Their thoughts, perspectives, and values inform ICES research activities and influence how ICES researchers utilize data to enhance Ontario's healthcare. We are currently in our fifth iteration of the Council and Year 6 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, 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 in terms of health data research. The thoughts, perspectives, and values of the PAC influence ICES' research and the way ICES researchers use data to improve and evaluate healthcare.

For more information on the ICES Public Advisory Council,
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