

Prepared by the Board Chair and CEO



About OCINet

Connecting Clinicians, Enriching Care

Formed in 2022 with the consolidation of three diagnostic imaging repository programs (i.e., HDIRS, NEODIN, SWODIN), OCINet was created to execute Ontario's medical imaging digital health strategy.

Building on regional efforts of the past decade, OCINet enables the secure storage and retrieval of imaging records, supports hospitals and integrated community health services centres (ICHSCs), and connects radiologists, referring physicians, and specialists with their patients' images province-wide.

The seamless, authorized sharing of imaging records supports the movement and treatment of patients, reduces repeat scans and harmful radiation exposure, reduces healthcare costs, and decreases wait times.



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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND CEO

Lifting the Barriers to Provincial Clinical Image-Sharing

Making Access to Imaging Faster, Secure, Equitable, and More Convenient

We are pleased to present this year's update on OCINet's accomplishments and ongoing progress toward building a more connected, convenient healthcare system. As we close our third full year of operations since our establishment in April 2022, it is clear that OCINet has entered a pivotal phase of growth, modernization, and strategic advancement, with even stronger regional-to-provincial momentum.

Building a Unified Foundation

OCINet's first two years focused on the administrative consolidation of the three, regional, legacy diagnostic imaging repository (DIR) organizations. This past year marked a strategic shift toward technical consolidation, operational excellence, and growth. We commend the OCINet team for their outstanding work in delivering seamless imaging services across Ontario, including managing the three regional DIRs, the Emergency Neuro Imaging Transfer System (ENITS), and regional picture archiving and communications systems (PACS).

Excellence in Operations and Service Delivery

Our mandate and strategic priority to maintain and provide leadership in DIR operations continues to be fulfilled with excellence. With the objective to maximize access to medical imaging at the point of care where and when needed, over the past year, we saw the following results:



Roy Butler OCINet Board Chair, President & CEO, St. Joseph's Health Care London



Shafique Shamji OCINet Board Secretary, President & CEO, OCINet

- Over 16 million new medical images were added to the repositories, growing OCINet's total managed volume to over 200 million images.
- Clinicians accessed images from the DIR over 32 million times, directly supporting patient care across the province.
- 25,000 urgent CT scans were transmitted through ENITS, helping to prevent approximately 20,000 patient transfers to other hospitals and enabling local, timely treatment.
- We provided 24/7 support for three distinct PACS environments across 52 hospitals.

While challenges were encountered, particularly with the shared, cloud-hosted PACS service, OCINet consistently maintained service levels, preserved positive cash flow, and operated within budget.

Modernizing IT Infrastructure

Significant advancements were made in the past year to future-proof our infrastructure:

- The Central East DIR is now hosted in a new data centre and prepared for migration to a new GE platform.
- Planning and testing are complete for potentially the world's largest data migration: over 8 petabytes of imaging data across 62 organizations, with migration commencing in June 2025.
- With \$3 million in additional funding from Ontario



"OCINet consistently maintained service levels, preserved positive cash flow, and operated within budget."



Health, we secured storage capacity ahead of anticipated U.S. tariffs.

When this project is complete, all three DIRs will operate on a common, standardized, and modernized platform.

Achieving 100% FEM Coverage: A Historic Milestone

A major achievement this year was reaching 100% foreign exam management (FEM) coverage. Today, every hospital in Ontario can retrieve and locally ingest into their PACS, diagnostic images from at least one of the DIRs — a historic accomplishment that makes patient care more seamlessly convenient and directly enhances clinician workflows.

Prioritizing a New Provincial VNA

In alignment with our strategic direction to consolidate the DIRs into a single location available for all of Ontario, OCINet provided critical expertise in supporting Ontario Health's issuance of a 10-year, over \$200 million request for proposal (RFP) for a new provincial vendor neutral archive (VNA). This initiative aims to consolidate all DIR imaging into a cloud-based, integrated platform, supporting Ontario's broader digital health strategy. The RFP closed in March 2025, with vendor selection expected before the fiscal year-end.

Increasing the Image-Sharing Scope

With a strengthened infrastructure and new provincial VNA, we have the opportunity to expand modalities and contributors and to become a true province-wide clinical imaging network with, as our strategic plan states, a full provincial view of imaging.

Although OCINet receives diagnostic imaging from all Ontario hospitals, we collect only 20% of the images captured by Integrated Community Health Service Centres (ICHSCs). Through our regional shared PACS services, we optionally receive imaging records from cardiology, pathology, and more.

To eventually support broader provincial image sharing, we've begun informal discussions with groups like the Association for Pathology Informatics, Independent Surgical & Diagnostic Clinics of Ontario, Ontario Health, and the Ontario Ministry of Health.

With deep insight into imaging operations and needs, OCINet is well positioned to support further site connections as funding and timelines permit. "Our commitment remains steadfast: to enable better healthcare through robust, secure, and accessible services."

Strengthening People and Culture

OCINet's strategic priorities include becoming a centre of excellence for medical imaging management. This involves continuing to enhance capacity and grow subject matter expertise to keep pace with the advancements in the field.

In the past year, OCINet team members both attended and presented at healthcare informatics events, visited with participating radiologists and imaging technologists, and took advantage of learning opportunities related to archiving systems, evolving standards, cybersecurity, privacy, AI, and more.

OCINet grew staffing by over 10%, despite sector-wide labour shortages. This included our new Director of Human Resources, Lauren Marcotte, who will guide the development of OCINet's formal HR plan, ensuring our workforce continues to be positioned for ever-evolving roles and relationships, and new image-sharing technologies.

Looking Forward

OCINet is positioned for an exciting future:

- The new provincial VNA will drive cloud modernization and smoother access across healthcare organizations.
- Early pilots of AI-driven FEM optimization show promising results in improving clinical relevancy, reducing unnecessary downloads, and improving efficiency.
- Completion of the Central East DIR migration will establish the groundwork for cross-regional interoperability.

Our commitment remains steadfast: to enable better healthcare through robust, secure, and accessible clinical imaging services.

On behalf of the Board and executive leadership, we extend our deepest appreciation to the OCINet team, Ontario Health, and our partners. Together, we are shaping a future of innovation, excellence, and improved healthcare for all Ontarians. +

OCINet BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ensuring Sound Strategies, Grounding Decisions with Governance

A Strong Board of Hospital and Business Leaders Continue to Shape OCINet

O CINet is guided by a professional board of directors who meet upwards of six times per year on a volunteer basis. OCINet's Board includes physicians, nurses, and executives from academic, community, complex, and continuing care hospitals situated across Ontario as well as IT, operational, and financial leaders from some of Canada's most recognizable organizations.

Two board members departed the Board in 2024/25. Cathy Szabo, President & CEO of Providence Care, actively served as a director and sometime treasurer from 2017 to 2025. Elizabeth Buller, President and CEO of St. Joseph's Healthcare, Hamilton, retired from both OCINet and hospital life in April 2025. OCINet thanks these inspiring leaders for their sage guidance and generosity.

The OCINet Board typically includes 12 members. However, the group temporarily expanded to include 14 members to ensure adequate coverage and representation during regional consolidation. With the departure of two directors this year, the Board will return to the 12-person voting complement in 2025/26. +



OCINet Board of Directors



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DIRECTOR



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DIRECTOR



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DIRECTOR



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THE ONTARIO HEALTH PERSPECTIVE

Enabling a System View of Imaging



Angela Tibando Senior Vice-President, Digital Excellence in Health, Ontario Health

Ontario's Digital Health Lead Shares Her Perspectives

One of the most significant transformations underway in Ontario healthcare involves strengthening the digital connections between patients and their care. Leading this shift is Angela Tibando, Ontario Health's Senior Vice-President, Digital Excellence in Health. Her goal: to build a seamless, integrated digital system. In the realm of medical imaging, her partnership with OCINet is pivotal.

"Our job at Ontario Health is to knit organizations and technology together to get a system view in how we're supporting patients," says Tibando.

"We are always looking for feet-on-the-ground system partners who are able to help us achieve that mandate," states Tibando. "In OCINet, we have an organization that is already focused on medical image sharing and making that system run smoothly across the entire province."

Since launch, OCINet has become a cornerstone delivery partner to Ontario Health. "Our combined, shared mission has always been to create an integrated, coordinated, convenient care system. We are on an electronic health record transformation journey together," she observes.

Medical Imaging as a Foundation to Care

"Lab tests and diagnostic imaging are key components to help assess or diagnose a patient," Tibando explains. "Imaging is critical in all aspects of healthcare. Treatment, surgery, and prescriptions all start from there. That's why it's so important that imaging systems are integrated, and that's why we work so closely with OCINet."

She points to the recurring issue of repeated scans when patients move among facilities: "It's very common that a patient first receives care in their local organization but then needs specialty care elsewhere. They travel to a specialist, but the specialist doesn't have access to their medical images. So, it's like starting over for the patient."

A System View, A Patient Lens

Tibando returns time and again to one central principle: the patient journey.

"There are many individual organizations delivering pieces of healthcare," she says. "Decades ago, people went to their family doctor for primary care or a hospital for acute care. Today, we have home care, mental health and addiction care, long-term care, specialty care, and many more options. As a patient, you're traversing a network of organizations to get the care you need."

"In the past, every provider made technical decisions that made sense for their organization, but not necessarily for a patient moving across organizations. When I look at the system, I try to view it from a patient perspective," she says. "If we want a seamless patient journey, we have to operate as a system instead of as individual organizations."

Indeed, one of Tibando's most used phrases is "system view"—but to her, it's not abstract. "We haven't really changed our data flow or our digital solutions across



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"OCINet has the technical knowledge, the workflow knowledge, the clinical relationships, and a system view. OCINet must be at the table for provincial image-sharing decisions."

the healthcare system over time. We need to have a system view, a coordinated approach. Because at the end of the day, it's the patient who is most impacted."

Better coordination is a driver behind the initiative to establish a new, cloud-based, vendor-neutral archive (VNA) for medical imaging.

"OCINet, partnering with Ontario Health, will bring their expertise with the healthcare system to transition our existing environment to the new model. Collaborating with radiologists and specialists in the various imaging organizations—and understanding what their workflow is when we introduce any digital health changes—is critical. OCINet understands and can anticipate the impact," she explains.

"Having a delivery partner like OCINet who understands how things work is critical. They're much more than a sounding board. OCINet has the technical knowledge, the workflow knowledge, the clinical relationships, and a system view. OCINet must be at the table for provincial image-sharing decisions."

Shaping the Future Together: From Technology Managers to System Experts

Both Ontario Health and OCINet are evolving to keep pace with patient needs and technology.

"We're all—in every healthcare organization and modern business—moving away from managing our own technologies. Cloud technologies, AI, automation, etc. are facilitating that shift," she explains. "What that does is frees us from the day-to-day technology backbone maintenance work. This allows us to make sure we're spending time on understanding how the system is changing—and needs to change—and working with the providers to facilitate that change."

As Ontario Health and OCINet work together to transition digital and imaging platforms, we will also work together to reimagine, encourage, and emphasize provider relationships. +



OCINet STRATEGY (2024-2027)

Harnessing Digital Potential, Evolving Strategically

Board-Approved Strategic Priorities for 2024-2027

PRIORITY 1

Provide leadership and expertise in the development of a world-class diagnostic imaging repository for Ontario

PRIORITY 2

Ensure the provincial DIR encompasses a full provincial view of medical imaging

OBJECTIVE

Enable access to medical imaging at the point of care, where and when needed

OUTCOMES

- Consistent and equitable experience
- Seamless access to a complete imaging record across the province
- Reduce wait times through efficient image management and distribution
- Confidence that Ontario's images are safe, secure, and available as needed

OBJECTIVE

Ensure that all imaging clinics contribute images into the DIR

OUTCOMES

- Ensure 100% images available in the DIR
- Add 600+ more clinics to the DIR
- Improve system efficiencies and reduce CDs
- Reduce duplication, costs, and wait times
- Improve capacity to meet demand
- Improve access to imaging closer to home

PRIORITY 3

Become the centre of excellence for medical imaging management

OBJECTIVE

Enable our people and teams to reach their fullest potential

OUTCOMES

- Enhance and expand OCINet's capacity
- Foster a strong, enabling, and inspirational organizational culture
- Grow subject matter expertise/serve as the hub of expertise: DIR management, emergency neuroimaging management, foreign exam management, interfaces for DI, patient matching, and PACS

OCINet OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS



David Veeneman Vice-President of Operations, OCINet

Strengthening Systems, Supporting Hospitals and Clinics

Proactively Managing Risk to Maximize Impact

CocINet during the past year. Collectively, OCINet ingested over 16 million more exams, consumed 1.6PB more storage, re-distributed more than 32 million exams to support clinical care, supported 6 HIS changes (affecting 13 sites), and oversaw 4 PACS re-integrations.

The demands of supporting the three, disparate, regional programs (while concurrently integrating regional staff and processes) and ensuring uninterrupted service are daunting. Simultaneously this year, however, OCINet managed to close the gap provincially by provisioning all hospitals with the clinical capabilities of foreign exam management (FEM), building an entirely new DIR in the Central East region to support the migration and planned transition later this year of all hospitals and ICHSCs in that region to a new platform, and supporting Ontario Health in creating and launching an RFP for a new, provincial VNA that will eventually replace the three current DIRs.

Central East DIR Transition

The DIR supporting the Central East region has reached the end of its useful life, and the teams are working feverishly to transition this DIR to a new solution, on all new hardware, colocated in a brand new data centre.

The new DIR will align technologies across the province for the first time in the programs' 17-year history. Currently supporting over 50% of the provincial imaging collected to date, this migration will likely result in one of the largest imaging migration projects EVER performed globally. Of critical importance, this transition will see hospitals in the Central East region transferred to safe harbour by the end of this fiscal year. However, of almost equal importance, this transition will enable the eventual standardization of technologies across all the DIRs—which will in turn align patient identification management technologies and processes, form the foundation for inter-DIR connectivity, as well as better prepare OCINet services for the transition to the cloud.

"Currently supporting over 50% of the provincial imaging collected to date, this [Central East region] migration will likely result in one of the largest imaging migration projects EVER performed globally."

Southwest Cybersecurity Transition

Work is also underway to strengthen OCINet's partnership with the Southwest Local Delivery Group (previously the Southwest Regional Security Operations group; now the SW LDG). This enhanced partnership will enable OCINet to transition critical security services to the SW LDG. In doing so, OCINet will gain invaluable security support and expertise, while freeing up key resources to focus on clinical services and health system enablement.

A key example of the value of this partnership was the recent opportunity OCINet had to participate in a "purple team" cybersecurity exercise with the SW LDG. A purple team exercise is a collaborative effort where offensive (red team) and defensive (blue team) cybersecurity experts work together to simulate real-



"While less visible to customers, 'behind the scenes' initiatives are a vital part of enabling OCINet to operate successfully."

world attacks, identify vulnerabilities, and improve an organization's security posture. The insights gleaned though these exercises are truly immeasurable, and OCINet is very appreciative of the opportunity to learn and benefit from the findings.

New Enterprise Risk Management Program

Another key area of development for OCINet this year was the implementation of its new Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) program. ERM is a strategic and integrated approach to identifying and managing risk across the entire organization and its extended networks.

While less visible to customers, "behind the scenes" initiatives are a vital part of enabling OCINet to operate successfully. In healthcare, risk is an inherent part of operations, and delivering services at a provincial scale magnifies both the likelihood and the impact of risks when issues arise. The benefits of an effective ERM program for OCINet include the ability to allocate resources more appropriately, enhance decision-making, and transfer less risk to participants. OCINet remains fully committed to managing risk to the best of its ability to maximize the potential clinical value it can deliver.

Procurement of a Provincial VNA

From a futures perspective, the item of most significance this year was the initiation of a procurement of a new provincial vendor neutral archive (VNA). Ontario Health, in collaboration with OCINet, is pursuing a strategy to modernize clinical imaging in Ontario.

A key enabler to this strategy is the transition and consolidation of regional on-prem DIRs to cloudbased, managed services platforms. This is a multiyear strategy that contemplates the modernization of the current DIRs aligned with Ontario's 'Cloud-First' architecture within a managed services framework. The strategy includes a consolidated, cloud-based VNA for the purposes of centralizing the province's medical images, and a single provincial image viewer. The strategy is also intended to support expansion of contributors, including integrated community health services centres (ICHSCs), as well as expansion of data types beyond current, traditional radiology to support other imaging modalities (e.g., echocardiology, ophthalmology, pathology).

The procurement of the new VNA launched earlier this year represents a significant step forward in advancing this multi-year strategy. +

A PROVINCIAL IMAGE-SHARING MILESTONE (FEM)

Retrieving Relevant Records, Supporting Radiology Workflow With FEM

Ensuring Every Image for Every Patient in Every Region is Importable to a Physician's Local PACS

OCINet continues to advance its foreign exam management (FEM) program to improve clinical access to diagnostic imaging acquired outside of local PACS environments. FEM allows clinicians to retrieve and view foreign exams directly within their existing PACS workflow, supporting continuity of care and diagnostic efficiency. Currently, access is limited to exams stored in the diagnostic imaging repository (DIR) to which the site contributes.

FEM Strategy and Achievements

A key strategic objective for FY2024/25 was to ensure that all DIR-contributing hospitals had access to FEM functionality. With the Interlinx FEM solution now established as the OCINet standard, this objective has been met. Over the past year, 19 hospitals implemented Interlinx FEM—including 13 that were new to FEM altogether—effectively closing the access gap and ensuring a more equitable foundation for diagnostic imaging access across the province.

Core FEM Functionality

OCINet supports two FEM access methods:

 Ad hoc FEM - Enables users to search and manually import foreign exams on demand. Prefetch FEM – Automatically retrieves a limited set of prior exams based on scheduled appointments or patient arrival.

Prefetch functionality is designed to ensure timely access to prior imaging, particularly during peak hours, but is limited to a predefined number of studies. For a more comprehensive view of a patient's imaging history, users can initiate an ad hoc search and retrieve additional relevant exams directly from the DIR.

Essential Enhancement: AI Relevancy

To further improve access to clinically meaningful prior imaging, OCINet has introduced the Interlinx AI relevancy feature within the FEM solution. This enhancement uses artificial intelligence to map imaging orders and prior exams to standardized SNOMED body parts, ensuring that only the most relevant prior studies are retrieved. (See the following flow chart.) This AI-driven approach enhances diagnostic accuracy and supports more efficient clinical workflows by reducing the volume of non-relevant images presented during interpretation.

Several sites have already gone live with the Al relevancy enhancement and have reported positive

"FEM allows clinicians to retrieve and view foreign exams directly within their existing PACS workflow, supporting continuity of care and diagnostic efficiency."

Al Relevancy for FEM: How it Works

TRIGGER RECIEVED

A triggering (new) imaging order is received

BODY PART MAPPING A new order is mapped onto SNOMED body part

DIR SEARCH INITIATED

A search against the DIR to identify available prior imaging procedures

BODY PART MAPPING Prior imaging

procedures are mapped to SNOMED

body parts

DETERMINED Procedures are evaluated for

RELEVANCY

relevancy

PROCEDURE(S) MOVED Procedures are evaluated for

relevancy

feedback, including improved access to pertinent priors, reduced need for manual searches, and better alignment with clinical expectations. These early results support broader rollout as a high-value clinical enhancement.

FEM: Looking Ahead

In FY2025/26, OCINet will shift its focus from enabling access to modernizing legacy FEM solutions that are nearing end-of-life. Sites currently using non-standard solutions will be prioritized for transition to the Interlinx FEM model. Additionally, OCINet will begin to explore and define a strategy for cross-DIR FEM access, enabling clinicians to retrieve prior imaging across regional repositories, reducing diagnostic gaps when patients receive care at multiple facilities across the province.

In parallel, all DIR participants with Interlinx FEM will be contacted to coordinate their transition to the AI relevancy-enabled workflow. OCINet will provide communication and training materials to support awareness and adoption at each site. +



IMAGE-SHARING IN ACTION (PHYSICIAN PERSPECTIVE)

Accelerating Patient Care, Improving Resource Utilization With FEM



Dr. Ferco Berger Division Head of Trauma & Emergency Radiology, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre

Trauma Radiologist Attests That FEM Improves Response Time, Resource Utilization, and Hospital Course

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, one of Ontario's 11 trauma centres, uses foreign exam management (FEM) to prefetch external patient imaging files. This system makes patient records from the regional diagnostic imaging repository (DIR) available in the local picture archiving and communication system (PACS) before or as a patient arrives to Sunnybrook, allowing radiologists to access them quickly in a system they're familiar with, enabling faster and better decision-making.

Dr. Ferco Berger, Sunnybrook's division head of trauma and emergency radiology, recently described the benefits of FEM. "Radiologists and referring physicians understand the benefits of prior imaging comparisons for achieving the best accuracy of their interpretation of the

"In trauma care, the sooner the patient gets the right treatment, the better the outcome, so having external images available through FEM may impact a patient's course in hospital and their daily life after."

current imaging exam. By prefetching relevant, prior, outside imaging exams in advance, FEM saves crucial time and allows for this comparison in acute situations."

According to Dr. Berger, having access to external priors through FEM leads to better patient management — "If there is any relevant prior study, it will increase my confidence in reporting, while also increasing patient safety by, for example, minimizing treatment delays and reducing radiation exposure." Indeed, the importance of having immediate access to prior imaging is clear. "In our PACS, clicking a link shows all available imaging, even if it wasn't prefetched. Prefetching is often incomplete, since it is limited in number of studies and only applies to the matching body region. Clicking the link displaying all available imaging is the first thing I do, even before looking at the current exam. If I am reporting a CT of the chest, for example, I may be able to download and gain some relevant information from past CTs of the

> abdomen and pelvis that were not prefetched," explains Dr. Berger.

Speedier Assessments, Improved Patient Safety

Working swiftly is essential in acute care. "Every minute counts," says Dr. Berger. "With FEM, and the increase of institutions making their images available through DIRs, we can stay within our PACS and minimize the need to navigate

external systems to find images. FEM integrates most necessary data into our local PACS and my workflow. In trauma care, the sooner the patient gets the right treatment, the better the outcome, so having external images available through FEM may impact a patient's course in hospital and their daily life after."

"Timely availability of outside imaging is made possible by FEM's speed, which is especially important in care for trauma patients transferred to Sunnybrook from other facilities. Since many more institutions are "These systems—the DIRs enabled with FEM connections to PACS—save time, reduce scans, minimize administration, and likely impact patient outcomes. In the ER, we use these tools every day, for every patient."

now connected to the DIRs, we don't rely on other systems as much, and the use of DVDs has reduced considerably. The use of DVDs is quite cumbersome, since images are not embedded in our PACS, and loading them takes time and may even crash the computer. The less I need to use them, the better, so FEM is ideal. Having images available helps us reduce unnecessary CTs and can help us decide on different CT protocols if we do need to scan. Availability of prior images through FEM therefore enhances patient safety."

Take, for example, a patient transferred from another hospital to Sunnybrook after an ATV or snowmobile accident. "The sending hospital may not have the room or ability to take care of the patient, but often will have been able to do a CT prior to transfer, usually a wholebody CT. Without FEM, the team here may do another routine wholebody CT. However, with the outside imaging available, the Sunnybrook team can evaluate what is still needed to get scanned and reduce repeat CTs, as well as decide to deviate from our routine protocol to get more specific images that are better to decide on patient management."

Another example of the importance of FEM is tracking the progression of a condition, such as a brain bleed. "In such cases, repeat imaging helps evaluate whether the condition has worsened. Without access to prior imaging, we don't know the evolution, and it can be difficult to make management decisions," Dr. Berger explained.

Lighter Administrative Burden, More Patients Processed

A study conducted at Sunnybrook has shown that up to 45% of repeat CTs can be avoided with FEM access, and the proportion of patients not needing any repeat CTs can be tripled. Dr. Berger explains, "During an imaging time-out moment, the trauma team and radiologist discuss the patient's condition and available images before doing new CTs, avoiding unnecessary repeat CTs."

Besides adding radiation and contrast dose to the patient, unnecessary repeat CTs delay patient care, strain resources, and elevate costs. "Every time we rescan without reason, we tie up equipment that could be used for other patients. This unnecessarily increases wait-times, including for other patients needing imaging, urgent or less so," he explains.

In trauma radiology, time is the most valuable commodity. Dr. Berger notes, "Accessing existing studies, often before arrival of the patient, can expedite patient management decisions, which could conceivably benefit patient recovery and outcome. The work that OCINet is doing greatly helps us take the best care of trauma patients. The use of FEM is very important in optimizing patient care."

Dr. Berger concludes, "These systems—the DIRs enabled with FEM connections to PACS—save time, reduce scans, minimize administration, and likely impact patient outcomes. In the ER, we use these tools every day, for every patient." +





OCINet SERVICES SPOTLIGHT (ENITS)

Expediting Specialty Consults, Supporting Critical Patients

ENITS: Enabling Timely Consultations and Transfers for Urgent Patient Care Since 2008

The Emergency Neuro Imaging Transfer System (ENITS) continues to be a vital digital health solution, supporting the timely delivery of urgent and emergent imaging to specialist providers across Ontario. Nearly 18 years since its inception, ENITS remains a cornerstone in provincial efforts to enable rapid clinical decision-making for time-sensitive conditions, such as stroke, neurological trauma, vascular emergencies, and paediatric cardiac issues. Access to these imaging data sets for Ontario-based specialists enables the care team to determine the most appropriate course of treatment and, when required, patient transfer to an appropriate facility for care.

ENITS In Action

ENITS provides a secure, web-based, zero-footprint diagnostic viewer for access to in-scope imaging. Today, 121 organizations across Ontario contribute imaging to ENITS, with over 609 connected modalities and approximately 757 credentialed users. The system processes an average of 562,710 studies annually and plays a key role in consultative workflows, such as Telestroke and CritiCall Ontario.

CritiCall Ontario assists hospital physicians by facilitating consultations with medical specialists and/ or referral decisions for urgent and emergent patients to appropriate levels of care within Ontario and outside of the province, if necessary. ENITS is able to provide near-real time access to CT and MRI neuro images from all connected hospitals to help facilitate the consultation process. Hospitals send neuro images directly from their CT and/or MRI scanners to ENITS where they can be accessed and viewed.

"ENITS is an incredible resource for many of the specialists who are providing consultations through CritiCall Ontario. Imaging through ENITS provides them with very specific clinical information that can be so



important in helping to determine the best course of action for the patient," says Isabel Hayward, Executive Director of CritiCall Ontario.

ENITS Technology Refresh

In the last year, OCINet completed a major back-end infrastructure uplift for ENITS. Key improvements include:

- Migration to new servers and operating systems.
- Full redundancy and high availability.
- Updated application components to the latest versions, enhancing security, stability, and performance.
- Improved infrastructure that enables faster deployment of future releases, rapid scalability, and streamlined monthly operating system (OS) patching.
- A redesigned ENITS homepage, aligned with OCINet branding, offering a refreshed and cohesive user experience (launch date June 2025).

This modernization effort ensures that ENITS continues to meet the evolving needs of clinicians and health system partners, while also supporting longterm system sustainability and responsiveness.

ENITS Looking Ahead

OCINet's ongoing focus for ENITS will remain on maintaining system performance, ensuring resiliency, and adapting to the growing clinical demands placed on emergent imaging systems. + OCINet FACTS AND STATISTICS

Securely Increasing Data-Sharing, Quietly Lessening Patient Burden

Authorized DIR Users Had Access to Millions of New Imaging Exams for Patient Care in 2024/25







16.9 Million

Number of exams contributed to the DIRs that are shareable



32 Million

Number of exams accessed from the DIRs by authorized users

OCINet HUMAN RESOURCES

Retaining Healthcare Tech Talent, Preparing for Expansion



Lauren Marcotte Director of Human Resources, OCINet

The Demand for Specialized Imaging Expertise Persists

ike many jurisdictions, Ontario's healthcare sector faces significant challenges in recruiting and retaining specialized technology professionals. The demand for digital health solutions is growing, but a shortage of skilled professionals, compounded by attractive opportunities in the private sector, leaves many healthcare technology positions unfilled. Addressing these challenges through competitive compensation, targeted recruitment, work-at-home opportunities, and workforce development is essential to ensure the ongoing advancement of healthcare technologies like OCINet's.

Staffing Enhancements

OCINet is a modest-sized organization, with approximately 53 employees and contractors. Even with a heavy project load, the team made meaningful progress in staffing and external support initiatives over the past year. Four new team members were successfully onboarded, including one administrative assistant and three clinical support positions. These additions have contributed positively to OCINet, bringing additional expertise, support, and fresh perspectives to help advance our organizational goals.

This year also marked the retirement of two longstanding and valued employees. Their years of dedication and hard work have made a significant impact on OCINet, and managers wish them the best in their future endeavours. Fortunately, one of the retirees has returned in a contractor role, ensuring a smooth transition through ongoing knowledge transfer. To further support our growing operational needs, OCINet engaged additional technical consultants. These resources have bolstered the team and provided valuable expertise in key areas aligned with OCINet strategic initiatives. Looking ahead, recruitment efforts are already underway to further expand and realign expertise to better meet evolving organizational priorities. OCINet is pleased to welcome a full-time Director of Human Resources, Lauren Marcotte. This key addition will enhance our HR planning capabilities and further support the achievement of OCINet's strategic goals and objectives.

Organizational Development

OCINet continues to support professional development and educational opportunities for staff. Over the past year, several team members attended conferences, expanding their knowledge and networks. In fall 2024, OCINet hosted its second annual in-person staff retreat in Toronto. This well-attended event featured business updates, seminars, and presentations, all providing a valuable opportunity for learning, collaboration, and connection.

To further promote open communication, OCINet holds monthly organizational team meetings, bringing together all employees, contractors, and partners. These meetings offer a platform to share success stories, address challenges, provide updates, and engage in open dialogue.

In the past year, OCINet also prioritized health and safety. Two team members successfully completed their certifications as health and safety

"OCINet's dedicated staff—many of whom provide on-call support during evenings, weekends, and holidays—ensure all healthcare partners receive timely assistance and access they depend on. Their unwavering dedication is deeply appreciated and essential to image-sharing efforts." representatives for the Joint Health and Safety Committee. Additionally, an interactive seminar on ergonomics was delivered to equip staff with practical strategies and resources to support and maintain safe and healthy work habits while working remotely.

In partnership with our Scarborough Health Network (SHN) payroll partner, two major system upgrades were completed: Workday and UKG. Workday is a cloud-based system which has simplified and improved the management of employee data and benefits administration and can assist in workforce planning. It allows staff to view, request, and update their information. UKG is expected to optimize payroll processes and staff schedules. As with any major system upgrade, there have been hurdles with time

Joining OCINet was a smooth transition from my previous hospital role, allowing me to continue my career as a healthcare analyst. Even in less than a year, I already feel like part of the OCINet family. In my role, I collaborate with dedicated teams and contribute to innovative solutions that make healthcare more convenient for providers, resulting in improved patient care. It's exciting to be part of a growing organization that's truly making a difference. I'm looking forward to what the future holds!"

Matt Boucher

Data Quality Analyst, OCINet

spent on new processes, problem solving, data verification, and accuracy.

Management and board members alike extend their sincere gratitude to all OCINet employees, contractors, and partners for their valuable contributions over the past year. The team's commitment has played a vital role in the organization's continued success, as OCINet looks forward to another year of growth and achievement together. Indeed, OCINet's dedicated staff—many of whom provide on-call support during evenings, weekends, and holidays—ensure all healthcare partners receive the timely assistance and access they depend on. Their unwavering dedication is deeply appreciated and essential to image-sharing efforts. +

N y early experiences in healthcare allowed me to witness very sick patients receiving new hearts. When you've seen that level of excellence, you want that for everyone! I'm pleased to be a part of OCINet, because I feel that we honour that tradition of excellence in Ontario healthcare. Although we're not directly at the bedside, it's evident that the entire OCINet team keeps the patient and healthcare provider team top of mind when designing and delivering services to our customers. There is a focused determination on conveniently and securely accessing information, regardless of geography, to deliver world-class care."

Naresh Singh Project Director, OCINet

was excited to join OCINet as it brings together my clinical background as an X-ray and MRI Technologist with my experience as a PACS Administrator. I've seen firsthand how timely, connected access to medical imaging improves patient care. This role allows me to contribute to system-level improvements that enhance how providers access and share imaging. I support end users across the province in their use of PACS and other imaging applications, helping to resolve issues and consult on workflows. This work reduces delays in diagnosis, strengthens collaboration among healthcare providers, and ultimately supports more efficient, connected care in Ontario."

Norm Kwan, B.Sc., MRT(R)(MR)

Imaging Informatics Specialist, OCINet

OCINet RATIONALE (PATIENT STORY)

Ensuring Efficiency, Enhancing Patient and Physician Experiences

OCINet Technology Improves the Patient Experience While Advancing Research

Jermaine, a quiet, 70-year-old man from Toronto, has three children and six grandchildren. He shares a busy, fulfilling life with his clever wife, who still enjoys leading the thriving accounting firm that she cofounded. Now retired, Jermaine's successful career as a manager of 911-related mapping services for the municipal government included pioneering disaster recovery drone technology. Although he once dedicated his life to improving the health and safety of others, his own life took a dramatic turn after a major car accident in 2014, which led to several health complications, including symptoms consistent with early-stage Parkinson's disease.

In 2023, Jermaine's neurologist at Toronto Western Hospital (part of University Health Network) recommended that he participate in a 10-year, international, movement disorders study. While Jermaine is not yet diagnosed with Parkinson's, the study monitors his mobility, muscle control, cognitive function, and more. As part of the study, Jermaine undergoes various tests every six months, including spinal fluid extractions, but back injuries from the accident have made those extractions difficult. During one of his six-month appointments, Jermaine's study doctor needed clinical imaging to ensure proper and precise placement of the needle. As she started to order a new scan, Jermaine's wife asked whether a recent MRI taken at another hospital would suffice (Jermaine had recently had an MRI at North York General Hospital for unrelated reasons) and mentioned that those imaging records are likely readily accessible. Though unfamiliar with OCINet and the DIRs, the study doctor was surprised to access the MRI instantly via ConnectingOntario. The instant access to imaging allowed the spinal fluid extraction procedure to proceed without delay, that very day.

Without DIRs and ConnectingOntario, Jermaine would have waited weeks for a new MRI (research procedures are often considered non-urgent), and faced an extra, costly, two-hour round trip. Thanks to the seamless access to his existing clinical images, however, Jermaine and the study doctor were able to move forward with the spinal test immediately. This not only saved him travel discomfort and radiation exposure but also accelerated the study doctor's research.

This image-sharing story, like many, has a happy ending. While Jermaine's health wasn't in immediate danger, quick access to a past MRI significantly improved his patient experience. Additionally, the study doctor, now familiar with OCINet and the DIRs, can use these image-sharing tools to benefit other study participants. + "The instant access to imaging allowed the spinal fluid extraction procedure to proceed without delay, that very day."



OCINet PRIVACY PROGRAM

Prioritizing Privacy, Strengthening Accountability in Imaging Data Sharing



Darcelle Hall Privacy Manager, OCINet

OCINet's Privacy Office and Privacy Committee Meet on Key Initiatives

The key theme for the privacy program this year has been strengthening trust and accountability. The OCINet privacy office worked collaboratively with the Privacy Advisory Committee (PAC) to undertake the following key activities:

- Developing a participant privacy manual that includes shared policies outlining privacy roles and responsibilities of OCINet and the participants.
- Identifying support and communications materials to be developed for participants to build awareness, facilitate efficient processes, and encourage effective collaboration.
- Updating the PAC terms of reference to strengthen privacy governance by introducing the ability to strike privacy working groups for key initiatives and to confirm the most appropriate escalation paths to address privacy issues.
- Reviewing the outcomes of privacy consent management and privacy auditing reviews to identify gaps and process improvements where technically feasible.

The manual and terms of reference are in review with the PAC for finalization and approval in 2025.

The privacy program continues to support OCINet staff through ongoing privacy training and advisory support for new projects or service/solution changes.

Reducing Risk, Addressing Privacy Issues

Where the privacy office was engaged by participants to address privacy issues or breaches, the key issue this year involved preventing storage of data that does not belong in the DIRs:

- Technical and data management errors resulting in incorrect study contribution.
- Requests from participants to confirm whether research studies can be stored in the DIRs.

OCINet's systems are designed to support the sharing of medical imaging data to facilitate or assist with the delivery of healthcare to patients. Participants expect that the data available to them through our services can be collected for this purpose.

It's important for participants to ensure they have the appropriate authority to share study data to reduce the risk of unauthorized collection or disclosure. For example, studies conducted for pure research will not likely have patient consent to be shared. +

OCINet FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Practising Fiscal Prudence, Investing Intelligently for the Future



Soumya Ghosh OCINet Board Treasurer, Partner-IBM Financial Services



Eileen Gaspirc Chief Financial Officer, OCINet

OCINet Financial Highlights for FY2024/25

Fiscal year (FY) 2024/25 was a year of planned change, growth, and transition. OCINet gratefully acknowledges that it receives 100% of the funding for the diagnostic imaging repositories (DIRs) from Ontario Health. The PACS and speech recognition services are funded by participating hospitals.

Financial Stability in a Period of Transition

The major accomplishments in FY2024/25 were:

- The continuation of the Central East DIR migration, likely the largest and most complex project of its kind anywhere in the world, bringing all the former platforms into alignment and preparing for a provincial solution.
- The implementation of foreign exam management (FEM) at hospitals across the province, providing physicians with greater access to images regardless of their source and improving patient care by reducing wait times, reducing patient transfers, and avoiding duplication of images.

Some of the other highlights included:

- Funding of \$32.0 million was provided by the Ontario Health Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA), which was expended on operations of \$20.1 million, annual capital purchases of \$10.5 million, and expenditures of \$1.4 million on the DIR migration and FEM projects.
- Refinements to the TPA were achieved, including agreement on a definition of a baseline funding model, commitments for annual capital refresh funding, and a formula for stable cash flow.
- Economies of scale were achieved by consolidating the GE contracts for the three legacy

DIRs and aligning the terms to the best from each.

- Significant changes to the Central East DIR migration strategy were managed within the existing funding.
- An additional \$3 million under an amendment to the TPA for capital funding was received in the fourth quarter. OCINet acted quickly to prepurchase computer storage in February 2025, before tariffs and consequent price changes went into effect, mitigating the impact for FY2025/26 and beyond. Storage is a major and necessary component of OCINet's ongoing annual capital refresh activity.
- Collection of contributions to participant reserves from all former Southwest (SWODIN) participants was completed, and collection from former Northern and Eastern (NEODIN) participants in accordance with their payment schedules continued, providing future stability for operating cash flows.
- A major hardware and software refresh of the Southwest (SW) picture and archiving communications systems (PACS) started in the fourth quarter and is planned to be completed in FY2025/26. This work is expected to be funded by previous Canada Health Infoway (CHI) grants and savings from prior years' SW PACS participant contributions, minimizing the current year financial impact on participating hospitals.

Management continues to look ahead and seek ways to provide a connected and convenient healthcare system for patients and physicians and the best value for money for Ontarians. +



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