



POPLAR

PRIMARY CARE ONTARIO PRACTICE-BASED LEARNING
AND RESEARCH NETWORK

NAPCRG PBRN Conference
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Dave Barber**

Disclosures

- Faculty: Michelle Greiver
- Relationship with financial sponsors:
 - Funded grants, research or clinical trials:
 - Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), peer reviewed grants
 - Ministry of Health of Ontario for POPLAR
 - Astra-Zeneca: grant for an unrelated project (severe asthma registry)
 - Membership on advisory boards or speakers' bureaus: None
 - Patents for drugs or devices: None
 - Other: None

Why research in primary care?



- Some of the most substantial opportunities for transformative research lie within **primary care**, the sector providing most of the care for most Canadians most of the time.
- By conducting clinical research in primary care, studies are **more pragmatic** and the findings are **more generalizable** to the real world.
- Primary care **practice-based learning and research networks** can be critical building blocks in constructing a pan-Canadian network that integrates **knowledge production, dissemination and practice improvement**.



@ Integrating research and clinical care must include primary care

Michelle Greiver, Steve Slade, Sabrina Wong, Brian Hutchison, Donatus Mutasingwa, Andrew Pinto and Marshall Godwin
CMAJ May 10, 2021 193 (19) E697; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.78754>



POPLAR: Coming together



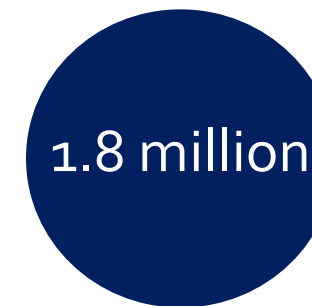
- POPLAR is the **Primary Care Ontario Practice-based Learning and Research Network**
- POPLAR is a **provincial** initiative that includes **research, QI and EMR data**; it aims to
 - Strengthen practice-based **clinical research and quality improvement** processes
 - Host a standardized **provincial EMR database**, the **POPLAR Data Platform**
- POPLAR was **initiated in 2021**, and is **funded by the Ministry** through INSPIRE-PHC



Ontario Practice-based
Learning Networks



family physicians
contributing EMR data



1.8 million patients

POPLAR's Vision

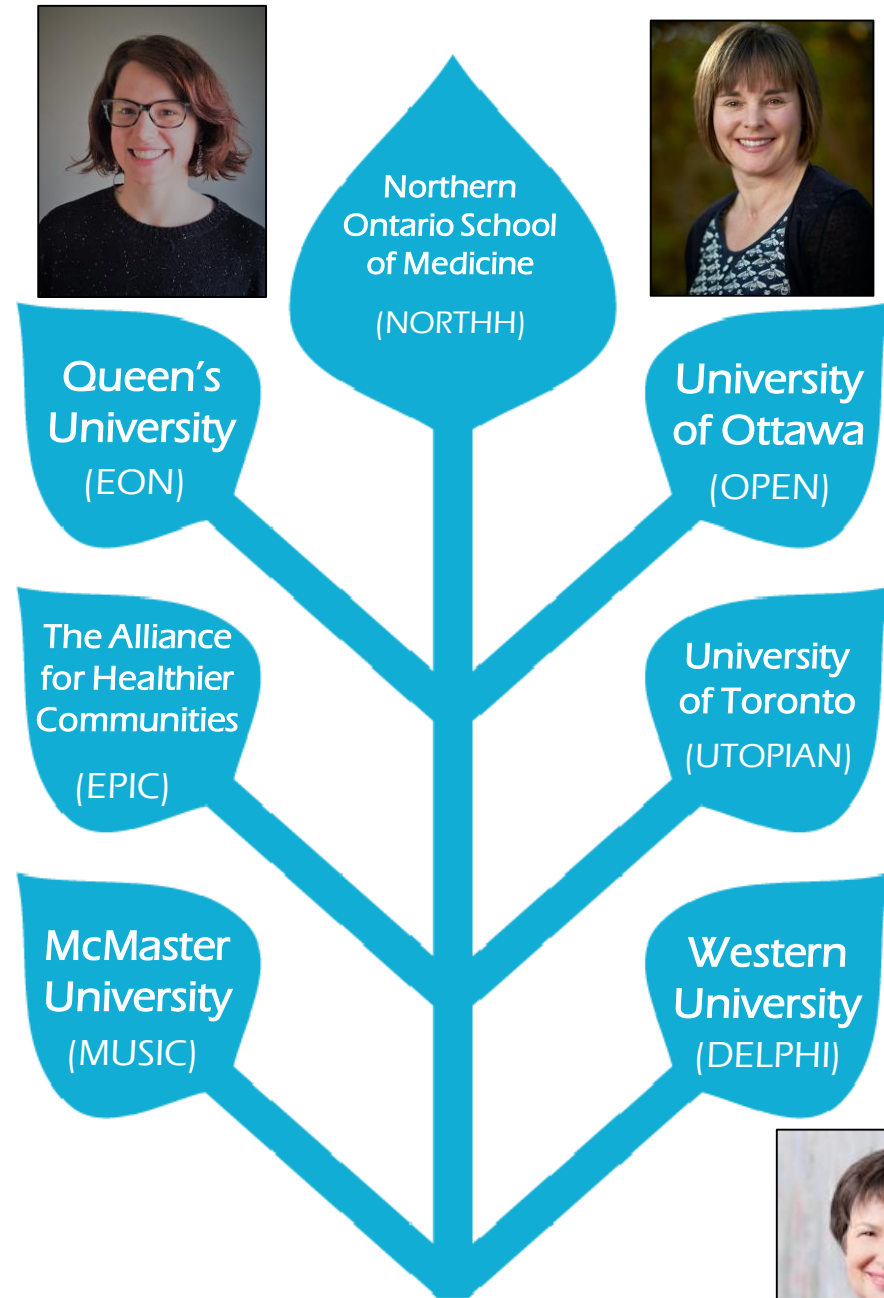
Our vision is to

- Be part of and contribute to Ontario's **learning health systems**
 - Partner with **OHTs**
- Focus on achieving the **Quadruple Aim** through a **Health Equity** lens
 - A centralized **provincial EMR data system** for analytics
 - Processes and procedures to support **Clinical Research and QI** in practices

Who is in POPLAR?

POPLAR is an initiative of Ontario's **six University Departments/Sections of Family Medicine** and the **Alliance for Healthier Communities**.

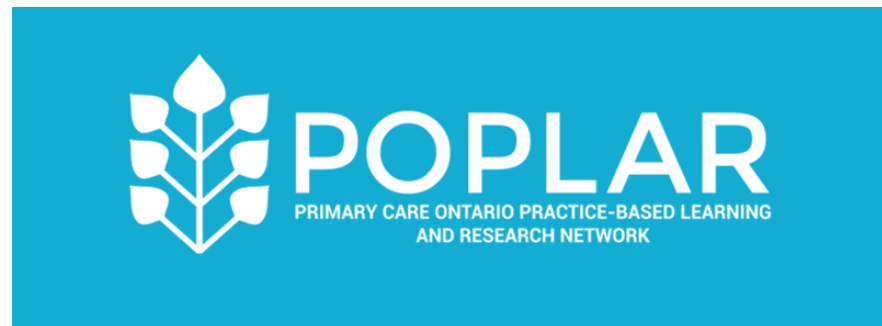
INSPIRE-PHC; Primary and Integrated Healthcare Innovation Networks





POPLAR is part of **INSPIRE-PHC**, which provides:

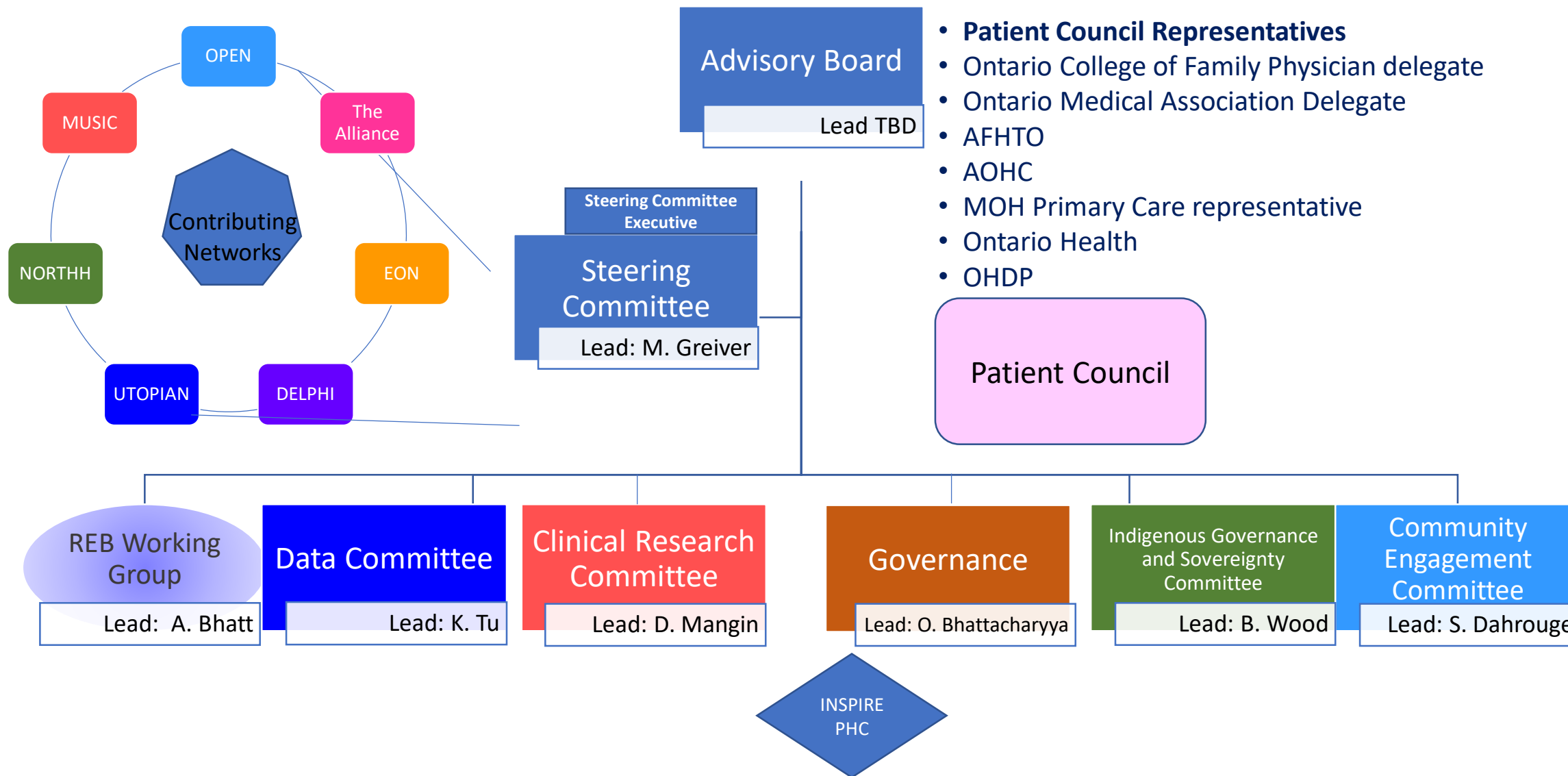
- Province wide **coordination and connection** of centres
- Research **methods expertise** in patient oriented research
- **Financial and contract** management
- **Stakeholder engagement** in primary care data needs
- **Patient engagement** coordination
- **Leverage ICES** and primary care and population health expertise and infrastructure.



Progress to date

- **Leads and staff engaged** at all seven networks
- **Committees** have been formed and are meeting regularly
 - Steering REB-Data Access Data & Information Management Indigenous Data Governance & Sovereignty Governance Working Group
 - Clinical Research Administrative Working Group Community Engagement-Recruitment
- **Protocol and Data Access Framework** drafted
- **REB Approval** for the centralized data system: the “**POPLAR Data Platform**”
 - obtained at UofT and in progress at other networks
- **Linkages:** Data being forwarded to ICES for Alliance and UTOPIAN.
 - Other POPLAR Networks have initiated the process
 - Data are linkable
- **NORTHH** start-up
 - Northern Ontario School of Medicine Research Towards Health Hub (NORTHH) is **active**
 - Actively recruiting
 - Data has been extracted and is at POPLAR
 - Has hired an Indigenous Data Sovereignty Consultant
 - <https://report.nosm.ca/northern-ontario-data-to-shape-uniquely-northern-primary-care-research/>

POPLAR Structure



- **Patient Council Representatives**
- Ontario College of Family Physician delegate
- Ontario Medical Association Delegate
- AFHTO
- AOHC
- MOH Primary Care representative
- Ontario Health
- OHDP

What POPLAR provides

- Centralized data and research processes
- Local and regional partnerships
- Learning Health System



Research

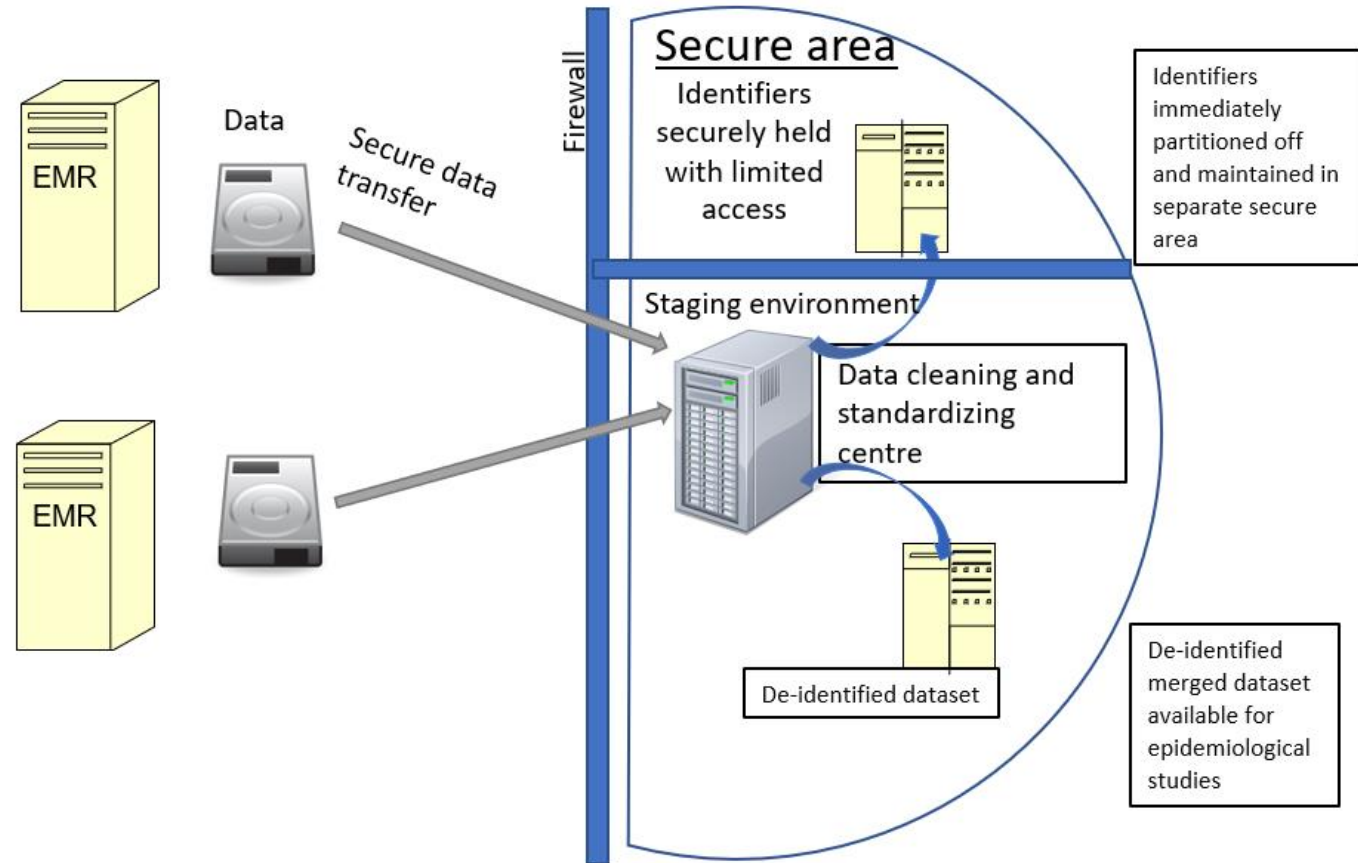
- Research and QI to improve data and care
- Research support
- Link to researchers and innovative studies



Data

- POPLAR database
- Practice reports to support the QI process
- Data analytics team
- Data to support practice-based clinical research and QI
- Canadian Primary Care Sentinel Surveillance Network (CPCSSN)

POPLAR Data: Generation of de- identified EMR dataset



Accessing Data

- Data are
- Once ap
(SAVE)
- Access
support

Gettin

For projects see
UTOPIAN Projec
A letter of supp
timeline details
sufficient time for review.

UTOPIAN Project Request Intake

This form is currently being piloted. Please do your best to complete it, if you run into issues or are having challenges completing it, please email Tom Rylett - dfcm.utopian@utoronto.ca

These are the criteria that all UTOPIAN projects must meet. When completing this form, please ensure that you have addressed how it fulfils these requirements:

Project Importance: The project should represent an important family medicine or primary health care question(s) that is currently being faced by clinicians and/or their patients. It should have the potential to improve patient health and/or health services. Clear justification is provided for the importance of the question (e.g. incidence, prevalence, costs etc.).



g-utopian-

must complete the

that you include your
opportunity to ensure

Implications for Health System

- POPLAR can **scale up initiatives** which have been tried and tested in one PBLN to other PBLNs across Ontario
- POPLAR EMR data is cleaned, de-identified and standardized to produce reliable **provincial and regional data** for health system planning
- Processed data **can be returned and re-identified at the sites of care** to identify patients eligible for targeted **quality improvement** efforts, as well as approved **research** projects.
- EMR data **can be linked to hospital clinical records** to study local care trajectories as well as to administrative data at ICES to study disease patterns and evaluate quality improvement efforts.
- POPLAR can **help coordinate clinical research in primary care practices across Ontario**, connecting interested participants to trials and being a platform for health services research

What can we do to strengthen our “Living Laboratories”?

- Encourage **participation**
- Encourage **growth** of Primary Care’s Clinical Research, QI and Data Infrastructure
- Strengthening Primary Care enhances **equity, inclusiveness and overall health** for our patients and populations



Thank you!

Any questions?

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www.poplarnetwork.ca