

The TRUE Cuts to Family Doctors' Offices *Family Practice OHIP Cuts Since 2012*

This is NOT just about a mere 1.3% cut ...

Since 2012, the Ontario Government has made a series of repeated cuts to OHIP funding, particularly against Family Physician practices. The following is a list of many of the significant cuts, along with examples of the impact to a typical family doctors' practice.

Venipuncture (Bloodwork):

Date: approx May 2012

Description: The G700 code was part of the payment to fund drawing bloodwork in a doctor's office. This is an essential service in rural, family doctor's clinics. The G700 code for \$5.10 was placed *inside* the FHO 'basket of services', essentially reducing it by 85% to a mere \$0.77. Using my practice as an example, I hire staff to provide this service approx 2000 times per year.

Total Annual Impact = \$8660

Reduction in Diabetic Q040 Code:

Date: 2012

Description: One of the annual codes billable for managing patients with diabetes was reduced from \$75 to \$60.

Total Annual Impact = \$3000

Preventive Care Management Service Enhancement Codes:

Date: 2012

Description: The following services were eliminated entirely: PAP smears (Q001), Mammogram (Q002), Influenza Vaccines (Q003), Child Immunizations (Q004), and Colorectal Screening (Q005). Each of these codes allowed \$6.86 per applicable patient.

Total Annual Impact = up to \$11,900

TeleHealth Advisory Service (THAS):

Date: Jan 1, 2013

Description: Family Physicians in groups like FHOs were paid \$400 per month to be on call for THAS. This funding has ceased.

Total Annual Impact = \$4800

CME Time Billing:

Date: 2015

Description: Family doctors were allowed to bill Q555, Q556, or Q557 codes that paid \$25 per fifteen minutes of CME time, up to a maximum of 96 codes.

Total Annual Impact = \$2400

CME Reimbursement Program:

Date: Feb 12, 2015 (but effectively eliminates any claims from 2014)

Description: Reimbursed physicians a certain amount for course and travel related to Continuing Medical Education and additional training. The limit varied depending on how rural the physician's practice was: the more rural and remote, the more the allowance.

Total Annual Impact = \$1750 (*varies based on Rurality Gradient*)

New Patient Codes:

Date: 2015

Description: Recognizing that taking on a new patient and getting to know a new patient requires a great deal of additional time and effort, family doctors could bill a series of New Patient Codes (i.e. Q013, Q023, Q033, Q043 codes). These codes ranged from \$100-\$180 depending on patient age and complexity. New graduates had a higher allowance for billing here in the first year while they grew their new practices. For most family physicians, there was a maximum allowed of 60 per year.

Total Annual Impact = up to \$10,800

OntarioMD EMR Funding:

Date: 2014 to 2015

Description: Through government funding, OntarioMD subsidized the additional cost of maintaining an EMR system, which is increasingly crucial for medical practice and population health. Physicians were initially subsidized \$600/month. That amount was eventually decreased to \$400/month. As of 2015, this entire funding has ceased.

Total Annual Impact = up to \$7200

**** TOTAL ANNUAL IMPACT = \$50,510 ****

*** This is in addition to the baseline percentage cuts noted below ***

The above list is not even all inclusive. There are *additional* cuts, too many to list individually, within each of these series of cuts.

PLUS, all of the baseline serial cuts thus far:

April 1 st , 2012	=	3% to 5%
Feb 1 st , 2015	=	2.65%
Oct 1 st , 2015	=	1.3%
TOTAL	=	approx 8%

In summary, a typical family doctor's practice has been cut \$50,000 in addition to the baseline cumulative 8% cuts.

According to Health Minister Hoskins himself, the average Ontario physician bills \$360,000 annually. Naturally family doctors bill less than that, but even using that figure:

$\$360,000 \rightarrow$
minus 8% = \$28,800
minus additional \$50,000 as above

= \$78,800 in cuts
= 22% in total cuts in just 3 years !!

- *And to remind the public, this is GROSS billings before overhead and taxes are taken off.*
- *Overhead has actually gone UP during this same time, including inflation, which amplifies the impact.*