

Ontario AI Scribe Program

Frequently Asked Questions with Responses

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Preamble

The Ontario AI Scribe Program was established by the Ministry of Health and Ontario Health to connect clinicians with pre-qualified AI scribes and build a convenient, comprehensive, and connected health care system.

Supply Ontario, with support from OntarioMD (OMD), conducted a procurement process and evaluated AI scribe vendors and their products against a number of requirements, including:

- [clinical & business](#)
- [technical](#) (security)
- [privacy & legal](#)
- fair pricing for clinicians

The resulting Vendor of Record (VOR) list of AI scribe vendors removes the guesswork for clinicians and relieves the burden of sourcing this technology, saving clinicians both time and money. The solutions on the VOR meet a set of clinical, privacy and security requirements while offering a fair price point for clinicians.

Additionally, clinicians will receive complimentary change management support from OntarioMD.

How to get started?

1. **Submit your interest in participating in the Ontario AI Scribe Program to OMD**
[Complete the expression of interest \(EOI\) form.](#)
2. **Obtain a link to the Supply Ontario intake form via email**
Once the EOI form is submitted, you'll receive a confirmation email from OMD with a link to the Supply Ontario intake form.
3. **Fill out the Supply Ontario intake form**
Once you complete the Supply Ontario intake form, you can expect a response within three (3) business days. For delays over seven (7) days, contact support@ontariomd.com.

After you are part of the Ontario AI Scribe Program, OntarioMD can provide you with free guidance on implementation, workflow changes, and ongoing optimization if you need it.

Below are some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) which OMD/SO have compiled for the OHTs and PCNs and their member organizations.

Benefits of OMD AI Scribe Program

Q1. What are the benefits of coming through the program as a group? Are the contracts/pricing different?

A1. The Ontario AI Scribe Program is able to support individual clinicians, practices, and large groups of practices. The benefit of coming through the program as a group includes leveraging Supply Ontario's expertise and support to procure an AI scribe and enter into a contract with the vendor. The Ontario AI Scribe Program also offers fair pricing that takes the guesswork out of negotiating the best price for your group.

Please note that the cost of using an AI scribe tool will vary depending on the tool's functionality and from one vendor to the next. Supply Ontario has established a minimum discount with each vendor on the Ontario AI Scribe Program's VOR list. As the industry evolves rapidly, pricing may change frequently. To ensure you benefit from the best available fair pricing, Supply Ontario included pre-negotiated, discounted and clear pricing language in the contracts with vendors.

Q2. What are the ramifications of staying with an AI scribe that is not on the VOR?

A2. Clinicians may face increased risk when using an AI scribe that is not on the Ontario AI Scribe Program's VOR list, particularly regarding compliance with privacy and security standards. In addition, if you are not part of the program, you will not benefit from group pricing or legal/privacy vetting provided by the program's VOR process.

Q3. Can you explain a bit more about how OntarioMD will help to reduce privacy and liability risks?

A3. AI scribe products on the VOR list were rigorously evaluated to ensure they met privacy laws, data destruction protocols, and comprehensive record-keeping requirements. This includes adhering to regulations around personal health information such as *Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)*, *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA)*, and *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)*. Vendors on the list are required to undergo regular threat risk assessments conducted by independent third parties and are prohibited from storing or using patient data for any purpose beyond providing AI scribe services.

Q4: Will there be any management fee which the Ontario AI Scribe Program members pay to OMD? What kind of support/service will OMD provide for OHT/PCNs? (other than contract negotiation)

A4. OMD support is offered at no cost or management fee for OHT and PCN members. OMD has certified change management professionals across the province who understand clinician workflows and are providing comprehensive change management support to clinician practices, from awareness and education to adoption to usage. This support includes:

- OMD Advisors located in the clinician communities that they serve, ready to support clients throughout the process,
- An ever-evolving learning platform containing content to assist clinicians with workflow, consent, privacy/security considerations and training.

Transition to Ontario AI Scribe Program

Q5. We have full adoption of one of the tools on this list at the moment. We went live on March 31. If a group is already using and loving a particular tool, but wish to transition into the program with the support and oversight, can they submit an EOI even though they are already using a tool?

A5. Yes, groups already using a tool can submit an expression of interest (EOI) form. OMD is ready to help clinicians adopt the AI scribe tool of their choice. To transition to [the Ontario AI Scribe Program](#), please submit an EOI form to begin your participation.

Once you submit your EOI form and complete the Supply Ontario intake form, Supply Ontario will help you transition to the use of your AI scribe of choice through the program. The program provides many benefits such as the vetting of vendors and contracts and support from OMD to answer your questions about AI scribes, help you manage the changes to your practice and workflows during adoption, and provide you with ongoing advice to optimize use.

Q6. What is the recommendation for those that have existing contracts with one of the vendors?

A6. If you have an existing contract with a vendor that is on the Ontario AI Scribe Program VOR list, you are not automatically part of the program and do not have the same contract/program assurances. You have to join the Ontario AI Scribe Program by submitting the expression of interest form on the [OMD Practice Hub](#). Once you submit the EOI form and complete the Supply Ontario intake form, Supply Ontario will help you transition to the program.

Q7. How will transitioning to this program impact sites who have already purchased AI scribe tools if the VOR rate is less than what was already paid? Will they be adjusted to the new rate next year? Will refunds be issued?

A7: If you have an existing signed contract with a vendor, it is generally your responsibility to manage that agreement, including any decisions related to termination or expiry. Supply

Ontario is gathering feedback from clients and will explore potential opportunities for contract harmonization where appropriate. In the meantime, support is available through Supply Ontario to help you acquire a new AI scribe solution under the Ontario AI Scribe Program.

Application Process

Q8. Do we have a sense of timing for this rollout?

A8. The Ontario AI Scribe Program is available now. Visit the [OMD Practice Hub](#) to learn more and to participate in the program.

Q9. Once the application is submitted, how long does the applicant have to pick a vendor?

A9. Once you submit your expression of interest form and the Supply Ontario intake form, you can take as much time as needed to choose a vendor.

Due to privacy and data sharing restrictions, two forms are required in the application process:

1. [Complete OntarioMD's Expression of Interest \(EOI\) Form](#).
2. Check your emails for OntarioMD's confirmation email with a link to the Supply Ontario intake form. The Intake Form is where you tell Supply Ontario what you want and need in an AI scribe.
3. Fill out the Supply Ontario intake form.

Once you complete the Supply Ontario Intake form, you can expect a response from Supply Ontario within three (3) business days. If you haven't heard back within seven (7) business days, please reach out to OntarioMD at support@ontariomd.com.

Q10. I completed the OntarioMD expression of interest for the VOR and then was asked to complete the Supply Ontario EOI. Is there a reason why we have to complete both? If I'm giving step-by-step instructions to clinicians in my region, can I direct them straight to the Supply Ontario EOI form?

A10. Due to privacy and data sharing restrictions, two forms are required in the application process. See question 9 for the steps.

VOR Arrangement/ Contract

Q11. Is the VOR limited to Canadian vendors only?

A11. The AI Scribe Vendor of Record (VOR) arrangement was established through an open and competitive procurement process, allowing both domestic and international suppliers to submit bids and to become qualified vendors. This qualified list of approved vendors comprises only those who have successfully met the standards and adhered to the technical, clinical, privacy, and security requirements established in the procurement process. No vendor was excluded from the process as a result of their location. Following this open, transparent and fair process ensures that the most qualified vendors are included on the VOR list. By choosing from this qualified vendor list, you can feel assured that you are partnering with vendors dedicated to excellence and compliance.

Q12. Do the contracts through this program have set terms? (1 year, 2 years, open to cancel whenever, etc.)

A12. Typically, terms are yearly or monthly, but different vendors may offer varying terms. The exact term will be determined when working through the procurement process, so clinicians are encouraged to discuss term options with Supply Ontario during the procurement process. If the clinician is committed for a certain term (i.e., yearly, or monthly), then they can discontinue once their term has expired. If you are concerned about committing to a longer term, please consider a free trial subscription from your chosen vendor before committing to a term.

Q13. Will new vendors be added as the program moves forward?

A13. Supply Ontario will give new vendors the opportunity to be included on the VOR list during the optional Vendor Refresh process. Supply Ontario will determine the timing and frequency based on needs. Visit the [OMD Practice Hub](#) regularly for updates about the Ontario AI Scribe Program and the VOR list.

Q14. Can OMD publish the requirements and criteria used to evaluate the vendors since the RFB was public?

A14. The Ontario AI Scribe Program's VOR list is owned by Supply Ontario and the requirements information is available on their website (including the list of vendors on the VOR) at <https://www.supplyontario.ca/vor/software/tender-20123-artificial-intelligent-solutions-ai-scribe/>.

In addition, Supply Ontario can also provide the detailed requirements if requested.

A link to this page is also available through the [OMD Practice Hub](#).

Q15. Can you provide any further clarification as to why “Heidi” isn't on the VOR list?

A15. The Ontario AI Scribe Program’s Vendor of Record (VOR) arrangement was established through an open and competitive procurement process, allowing both domestic and international suppliers to submit bids and to become qualified vendors. This qualified list of approved vendors comprises only those who have successfully met the standards and adhered to the technical, clinical, privacy, and security requirements established in the procurement process. No vendor was excluded from the process as a result of their location. Following this open, transparent and fair process ensures that the most qualified vendors are included on the VOR list. By choosing from this qualified vendor list, you can feel assured that you are partnering with vendors dedicated to excellence and compliance.

Q16. How does this VOR relate to Supply Ontario's initiative to use VOR vendors and avoid non-VOR agreements where a compliant procurement pathway already exists?

A16. This VOR arrangement is optional to use for the clients. This VOR arrangement offers numerous benefits. Please refer to the [Why Use the Ontario AI Scribe Program one pager](#) from OMD.

Q17. Can you provide a copy of the agreements with vendors as well?

A17. No, we cannot provide copies of the agreements with the vendors.

Legal and Privacy

Q18. Will the legal and privacy concepts/practices be in the Form of Agreement / contract?

A18. AI scribe products on the VOR list were rigorously evaluated to ensure they met privacy laws, data destruction protocols, and comprehensive record-keeping requirements. This includes adhering to regulations around personal health information such as *Personal Health Information Protection Act* (PHIPA), *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA), and *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA). Vendors on the list are required to undergo regular threat risk assessments conducted by independent third parties and are prohibited from storing or using patient data for any purpose beyond providing AI scribe services.

Q19. Does the contract permit AI scribe vendors to use our data for training their models?

A19. The contract does not permit the use of data obtained from clinicians through the services for secondary purposes.

Pricing

Q20. Can you speak to the actual cost in dollars monthly and over the next few years?

A20. The cost of using an AI scribe tool will vary depending on the tool's functionality and from one vendor to the next. Supply Ontario has established a minimum discount with each vendor for the Ontario AI Scribe Program. As the industry evolves rapidly, pricing may change frequently. To ensure you benefit from the best available fair pricing, Supply Ontario included pre-negotiated, discounted and clear pricing language in the contracts with vendors.

Q21. Is there any possibility to provide a curated list of vendors/costs to OHTs/PCNs if they sign a non-disclosure agreement to have access to this info in one chart?

A21. At this time, we are unable to provide a curated list of vendors and associated costs to OHTS/PCNs. If the OHT/PCN is purchasing as a group, Supply Ontario can develop a list of vendors / costs based on the requirements submitted through the Supply Ontario intake form.

Q22. Is OMD/SO going to share the negotiated prices for the services, the core services and the optional add-ons?

A22. For details on the vendor contracts, please contact Supply Ontario. Once you have submitted an expression of interest form to the [Ontario AI Scribe Program](#) and submitted the Supply Ontario intake form, Supply Ontario can provide relevant details regarding the vendor contracts.

Technical Setup/ Solution Functioning / Integration

Q24. Are the applications compatible with systems that are not OMD products? In other words, do we need integration with an existing EMR to use an AI scribe?

A24. EMR integration is not required with AI scribe solutions on the Ontario AI Scribe Program's VOR. Many AI scribe solutions are designed to work with EMR systems, but integration varies by vendor. Some AI scribes function externally, requiring users to 'copy and paste' notes into the chart, while others offer direct EMR integration for added functionality. OntarioMD can help identify the best solution for you.

Q25. If the integration is not needed, then where is the data coming from for AI to mine? Does that mean you have to manually enter data?

A25. EMR integration is not required with AI scribe solutions on the Ontario AI Scribe Program's VOR.

Many AI scribe solutions are designed to work with EMR systems, but integration varies by vendor. Some AI scribes function externally, requiring users to 'copy and paste' notes into the chart, while others offer direct EMR integration for added functionality. There can also be differences depending on the EMR being used.

[OntarioMD's Practice Hub](#) includes resources that can assist with your decision making and our OMD Advisors/Peer Leaders can assist with post go-live workflow to minimize any manual, administrative work. Please contact your OMD Advisor or support@ontariomd.com so we can support you.

Q26. As a reference tool – can you provide the comparison chart of vendor/ EMR integration?

A26. The EMR integration capability requires further investigation, as it depends on the specific integration requirements of each client. Supply Ontario is able to assess these requirements once the Supply Ontario intake form is submitted with the relevant details.

Q27. What is the difference between dictation software like Nuance or Dragon and an AI scribe?

A27. Dictation software like Nuance or Dragon converts speech to text in real time, but requires manual editing. An AI scribe goes further by using AI to understand context, identify speakers, and generate structured summaries or notes automatically.

Q28. Is there a matrix that highlights the pros and cons of each solution, including pricing and integration with EMRs?

A28. Once the Supply Ontario intake form is submitted, Supply Ontario can propose solution options based on the requirements you provided on the intake form. The EMR integration capability requires further investigation, as it depends on the specific integration requirements of each client. Supply Ontario is able to assess these requirements once the intake form is submitted with the relevant details.

Q29. There are AI scribes on the list that are already partnering with EMRs. Will they be part of this program, and as result, get the best deal or will that integrated offering be separate?

A29. Several vendors offer existing integration capability with EMRs. The EMR integration capability requires further investigation, as it depends on the specific integration requirements of each client. Supply Ontario is able to assess these requirements once the intake form is submitted with the relevant details.

OMD Change Management Support

Q30. Would you be able to share more about what change management support will look like? Is that hands-on in-practice support? Does it include ongoing support (will there be any supports which QIDSS's (Quality Improvement Decision Support Specialists) will need to provide to fill any gaps)?

A30. OntarioMD will provide support in person or virtually according to your preference. OntarioMD (OMD) has certified change management professionals across the province who understand clinician workflows and can help you with your AI scribe at no cost to you.

OMD is providing comprehensive change management support to clinician practices, from awareness and education to adoption to usage:

- [OMD's Practice Hub](#) includes resources that assist clinicians in understanding their practice's AI scribe requirements, preparing their practice to start using AI scribes, privacy/security considerations and training and to understand potential challenges in using AI scribes.
- OMD Advisors are located in the clinician communities that they serve, are available to point clinicians to helpful resources tailored to their specific needs and workflow and are available to clients at any point throughout the process. This can include referral to specialized OMD resources such as our OMD Peer Leader program for clinicians/practices that need more support.

Q31. Does OntarioMD have enough resource staff? What do OHTs/PCNs do if they don't have access to QIDSS (Quality Improvement Decision Support Specialist)?

A31. Yes, OntarioMD has a large team of experienced advisors who are change management specialists and work and live in the communities they serve, across all regions of the province serving every OHT and PCN. These advisors will work with all members of the practice, including physicians, NPs, allied health professionals, front office/billing staff, and where applicable, Executive Directors, QIDSS, and other FHT funded staff. We are happy to discuss your needs and will work with any local resources such as QIDSS to maximize effectiveness and support.

Q32. As providers implementing an AI tool begin using the tool across settings that they provide care at, will OMD also provide support/risk mitigation information and reassurance to organizations and their privacy teams across organizations/settings across the continuum?

A32. OntarioMD is providing comprehensive change management support to clinician practices from awareness and education to adoption to usage at no cost to clinicians. Support is delivered by our OMD Advisors located in the clinician communities that they serve and with existing longstanding relationships with clinicians across the entire province. OntarioMD also delivers support through a comprehensive CRM system to manage clients throughout the process, regular communications, a Unified Support model, an ever-evolving learning platform to support webinars and specific AI scribe web-based change management content to assist clinicians with workflow, consent, privacy/security considerations and training.

Q33. Will OntarioMD provide in person support or all virtual?

A33. OntarioMD will provide support in person or virtually according to your preference.

AI Scribe Users

Q34. Is this available to NPs providing primary care through hospital clinics?

A34. The Ontario AI Scribe Program is available to all clinicians and the broader Ontario Public Service. NPs working in the community and who are interested in the Ontario AI Scribe Program to participate in the benefits of this program, including contract/program assurances, should visit the [OMD Practice Hub](#) to submit an expression of interest form to begin their participation.

Hospitals interested in participating in the Ontario AI Scribe Program should reach out directly to Supply Ontario at aiscribe@supplyontario.ca.

Q35. For primary care operating inside of hospitals, are they eligible for this program with the current EMRs?

A35. Yes, primary care clinicians operating in hospitals are eligible for this program.

Q36. Should OHT and PCNs select one tool for the group, or would they be allowed to select different AI scribes depending on individual provider needs? In other words, if 1 PCN signs up, do all HCPs within the PCN use the same AI scribe?

A36. Organizations and individual clinicians can select the tool that best suits their workflow and preferences.

Once you have submitted an expression of interest form to the [Ontario AI Scribe Program](#) and submitted the Supply Ontario intake form, Supply Ontario will help you select the right AI scribe based on your requirements.

OntarioMD can answer your questions about AI scribes, help you manage the changes to your practice and workflows during adoption, and provide you with ongoing advice to optimize your use.

Q37. Is there any plan to open the (standardized contracts) to acute care/hospital settings as many physicians are interested in AI scribes?

A37. Hospitals interested in participating in the Ontario AI Scribe Program should reach out directly to Supply Ontario at aiscribe@supplyontario.ca.

Q38. Is the scope only primary care now?

A38. All clinicians and the broader Ontario Public Service are in scope and eligible to participate in the Ontario AI Scribe Program.

Q39. Are social workers and dietitians eligible to enroll?

A39. Yes, all clinicians and the broader Ontario Public Service are eligible to participate in the Ontario AI Scribe Program.

Alternate AI Scribe Programs

Q40. Some AI vendors are offering one-year free licences for practitioners. Is this something that is still available through the Ontario AI Scribe Program? Or would you say the value proposition of the supported programs exceeds the value of free licenses trials?

A40. Ultimately, it is up to individual clinicians to decide whether or not to take advantage of a free licence from an AI scribe vendor. However, OHTs and PCNs are expected to communicate to providers both the potential benefits and risks of entering into a contract, or using an AI scribe product, that may not have been vetted.

The Ontario AI Scribe Program established by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ontario Health (OH) will save clinicians both time and frustration in the long run. Clinicians can realize the program's many benefits by using the Vendor of Record (VOR) list of vetted vendors and their products, as well as the complimentary support services from OntarioMD.

Vendors on the VOR list successfully met several requirements informed by clinicians:

- **Clinical Functions:** The vendors and products on the VOR list were evaluated against a set of clinical functions developed by physicians for physicians.
- **Compliance with Provincial Requirements:** The vendors and products on the VOR list had to satisfy provincial requirements for clinical functions, privacy of personal health information, security and other legal considerations. A variety of stakeholders provided input to develop the requirements that align with medico-legal obligations of physicians.
- **Fair Pricing:** The program takes the guesswork out and relieves the burden of sourcing this technology, saving clinicians both money and time.
- **Peace of Mind:** Vendors on the VOR list and their contracts were evaluated by legal and privacy experts, so you don't have to. This evaluation removes the risk that early adopters took before the program was available.
- **Streamlined Support:** Participation in the program provides you with the support you may need at every step of the process to adopt and use an AI scribe in your practice. Supply Ontario will help you select the right AI scribe based on your requirements. OntarioMD will answer your questions about AI scribes, help you manage the changes to your practice and workflows during adoption, and provide you with ongoing advice to optimize your use.

Q41. Is there a process in these contracts to allow providers who already have an active licence to be covered by these contracts? Same for those accessing 1-year licences through Infoway, how do we maintain those licences so providers don't have to start paying?

A41. Canada Health Infoway's program and the Ontario AI Scribe Program are two separate programs. If you have an existing signed contract with a vendor either directly or through Canada Infoway Program, it is your responsibility to manage the existing contract (e.g., termination or expiry of the term). You can obtain support from Supply Ontario to acquire a new AI scribe solution under the Ontario AI Scribe Program.

Practices who want to transition to the Ontario AI Scribe Program to receive the contract/program assurances should visit the [OMD Practice Hub](#) to submit an expression of interest form to begin your participation. After you submit the Supply Ontario intake form, Supply Ontario will work with you to assess your options and help you transition to the program should you choose to do so.

Q42. What are the differences between this program and Canada Health Infoway initiative and how do they 'intersect' if they do?

A42. We do not have any information related to Canada Health Infoway initiative.

Q43. If the same vendor is on both SO and Canada Health Infoway lists, are the contracts different?

A43. Yes, if the same vendor appears on both the Supply Ontario (SO) and Canada Health Infoway lists, they are operating under separate, different contracts. Each agreement is distinct and governed by its own terms, conditions, and procurement processes.

Contact Information

Q44. Are there regional contacts we should reach out to?

A44. Please email support@ontariomd.com to coordinate your participation in the Ontario AI Scribe Program. OntarioMD has area managers in each Ontario Health (OH) Region you can contact as well:

OH Toronto Region – David.Fearn@ontariomd.com

OH Central Region – David.Fearn@ontariomd.com

OH West Region – Jay.Kettle@ontariomd.com

OH East Region – Julie.Latreille@ontariomd.com

OH North East and North West Regions – Julie.Latreille@ontariomd.com