



association of family  
health teams of ontario

## 2025 "Bright Lights" Nomination Guide

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Application deadline is **Tuesday, July 22, 2025**

### Nomination Eligibility:

For a program, initiative or individual to be eligible for a Bright Lights award, they must fulfil the following criteria:

1. **Programs or initiatives must be undertaken by an AFHTO member.** If the nomination involves a team's partners, the work must either be led by an AFHTO member, or they otherwise play an integral role.
2. **Programs or initiatives that have previously won a Bright Lights award are no longer eligible, whether in their original or expanded model**
3. **Individuals must be staff or affiliated with an AFHTO member, and the nomination must be for work they've performed in their capacity as such.**

### How to submit a nomination:

1. Review the nomination [categories](#) in advance.
2. Review the nomination [evaluation criteria](#).
3. Complete the [online nomination form](#) and submit it along with all supporting evidence and materials, by 5:00 PM EDT on July 22, 2025.
4. Submit the following documents to [info@afhto.ca](mailto:info@afhto.ca) by July 25, 2025:
  - a. **1-4 high-quality photos of nominees** in png. or jpg. format to be featured at the Awards Ceremony on October 23<sup>rd</sup> ([see below](#) for more information).

- b. Take a video (30-90 seconds long) with your smartphone and share with [info@afhto.ca](mailto:info@afhto.ca). We'll be promoting nominations before the conference, so please consider providing an overview of your initiative as part of your nomination(optional).
- c. Signed [statement of attestation](#) to release photos for AFHTO use.
- d. Any additional supporting evidence and materials not included with the form submission.

### Submitting nominee photos

Bright Lights Award nominees are asked to submit **1-4 high-quality** -500 KB or more- photos of nominees to be included in the Bright Lights Hall of Fame and possibly a video highlighting each award theme and your outstanding work before announcing award winners on Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup>. **All photos must be submitted by July 25, 2025.** <sup>[OBJ]</sup>

- Please include photos in jpg. or png. format of:
  1. Nominee and/or team members
  2. The primary care team location
  3. The nominee interacting with patients (**if available – patients will need to also sign photo release**)
  4. Choice of any of above
- Signed [statement](#) to release photos for AFHTO use.
- Make sure the building, team logo or other defining element is prominently displayed.
- Make sure photos are well lit and taken without obstruction.

### Submitting nominee video

**Nominees also have the option to submit a video (30-90 seconds long) in addition to the photos.**

- All requirements as listed for the photos above also apply to the video.
- The video would be accepted in addition to the photos, not as a replacement.
- The video can be shared with [info@afhto.ca](mailto:info@afhto.ca).
- **All videos must be submitted by July 25, 2025.**

### Tips for writing your nomination

**Understand the everyday counts.** Has your team developed a workaround for a particular challenge? Utilised a range of tricks to address a sticky situation? Other teams may be wrestling with these same issues. It may seem like business as usual to you but spreading knowledge of these achievements could be a real help to teams in similar circumstances.

**You're not too small or too remote for your voice to be heard.** Evaluations from past award review committee members tell us they would like to hear from a variety of sources and especially from small, rural, and Northern teams.

**Include a variety of voices.** AFHTO's focus is on **interprofessional** primary care so bring a range of experiences and people together when presenting and developing the nomination. ***Include a patient/caregiver testimonial or experience where appropriate.***

**Review past award winners.** Their innovations run the gamut of topics and types of initiatives. You may see that your team has done something similar or has seen better results. You'll also see how your achievement will be recognized.

**When writing your nomination:**

- **Pick the right category.** Category descriptions are very detailed and specific. Make sure reviewers know why your nominations fits the theme.
- **Identify WHY your achievement stands out over the rest.** Show your evidence and results clearly. Some innovations might not have quantitative evidence, but you need to tell us what has improved as a result AND how other teams can learn from the results.
- **Look beyond the stats when demonstrating evidence.** Consider your results from the human perspective, not just statistics and measures. What did your initiative DO for your patients, team and/or community?
- **Use plain language.** Omit flowery speech and state your points clearly.

**Do Check In.** Not sure if your program or initiative will be a good fit for the conference? [Feel free to ask us.](#) We're happy to discuss it with you.

**Completing the online nomination form:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SRMK9M7>

- Review the [submission form template](#) before filling out the SurveyMonkey form.
- To avoid the risk of losing information, it is best to enter the nomination all in one session.
- The nomination form must be filled in online and IN FULL.
- Attach supporting materials to the form.

**Nomination Evaluation Criteria:**

The review committee will score each nomination on a scale of 1 (Very low) - 5 (Very high) for the extent to which the achievement:

1. Reflects significant achievement within the award category. The innovation may be large or small, but the impact is significant for the patients, community and/or primary care team
2. Exemplifies innovative thinking and leadership
3. Recognizes and addresses the needs of their local population (access or barriers to care, rurality, etc.)
4. Is sustainable with potential for continued improvement
5. Offers significant, useful, and relevant learning opportunities/resources to primary care teams
6. Is being spread and adopted more broadly
7. Is backed up by evidence of impact (e.g., outcome measures, evaluation results, research findings, patient, or community experience)

For nominations to be considered by the review committee, the online form must be completed in full and all supporting materials for evidence of impact submitted along with the form by July 22, 2025.

## Bright Lights Award Categories

1. [The Constellation of Primary Care](#)
2. [Governing with Integrity: Navigating Conflict, Power, and Accountability](#)
3. [Rebuilding the QI Muscle: Data, Action & Impact](#)
4. [Digital Tools, Human Care: Innovation with Purpose](#)
5. [Growing Great Teams: Building Culture, Retaining Talent, and Transforming Care Through Collaborative Learning](#)
6. [Meeting Needs, Advancing Equity: The Power of Comprehensive, Patient-Partnered Care](#)

### 1. The Constellation of Primary Care

Topics of interest include (but aren't limited to):

- Integration Across the Ecosystem
- Reimagining the “Primary Care Home”
- Team Design and Workforce Innovation
- Care Models and Structural Shifts

### 2. Governing with Integrity: Navigating Conflict, Power, and Accountability

Topics of interest include (but aren't limited to):

- Conflicts of interest and how they are managed
- Unclear accountabilities in team-based or multi-partner settings.
- Governance systems that are not designed for interprofessional teams.
- Governance across professions, partners, and organizations
- Participation of teams in Ontario Health Teams, Primary Care Networks, or complex business arrangements.

### 3. Rebuilding the QI Muscle: Data, Action & Impact

Topics of interest include (but aren't limited to):

- Practical examples of clinical or operational QI that lead to meaningful improvements.
- Strategies to scale and spread QI innovations across teams, regions, or systems
- How primary care teams are contributing to QI research and influencing broader system decisions
- Tools, infrastructure, and partnerships that support continuous learning and improvement.
- Approaches that build QI culture, capability, accountability- not just compliance

### 4. Digital Tools, Human Care: Innovation with Purpose

Topics of interest include (but aren't limited to):

- Virtual triage systems that streamline patient access.
- Patient portals that enhance communication and engagement.
- Team communication platforms that support collaboration and coordination.
- EMR (Electronic Medical Record) innovations that improve workflow, data use, and care quality.
- Examples where technology supports—not replaces—human-centred care.

### 5. Growing Great Teams: Building Culture, Retaining Talent, and Transforming Care Through Collaborative Learning

Topics of interest include (but aren't limited to):

- Strategies to reduce burnout and support team resilience
- Onboarding and mentorship that build confidence and connection
- Inclusive team cultures and psychological safety
- Retention and recruitment strategies in primary care
- Workflow design, governance, and the logistics of collaboration
- Interprofessional education (IPE) models for primary care
- Coaching and facilitation techniques for team development
- Practice-based learning units and academic partnerships
- Simulation, role-play, and experiential learning for collaboration
- Training programs that embed equity, humility, and shared leadership

## **6. Meeting Needs, Advancing Equity: The Power of Comprehensive, Patient-Partnered Care**

Topics of interest include (but aren't limited to):

- Caregivers as Partners, Not Passengers
- Mental Health & Addictions: Embedded, Integrated, Effective
- Beyond the Exam Room: Addressing Social Determinants of Health