

Introduction

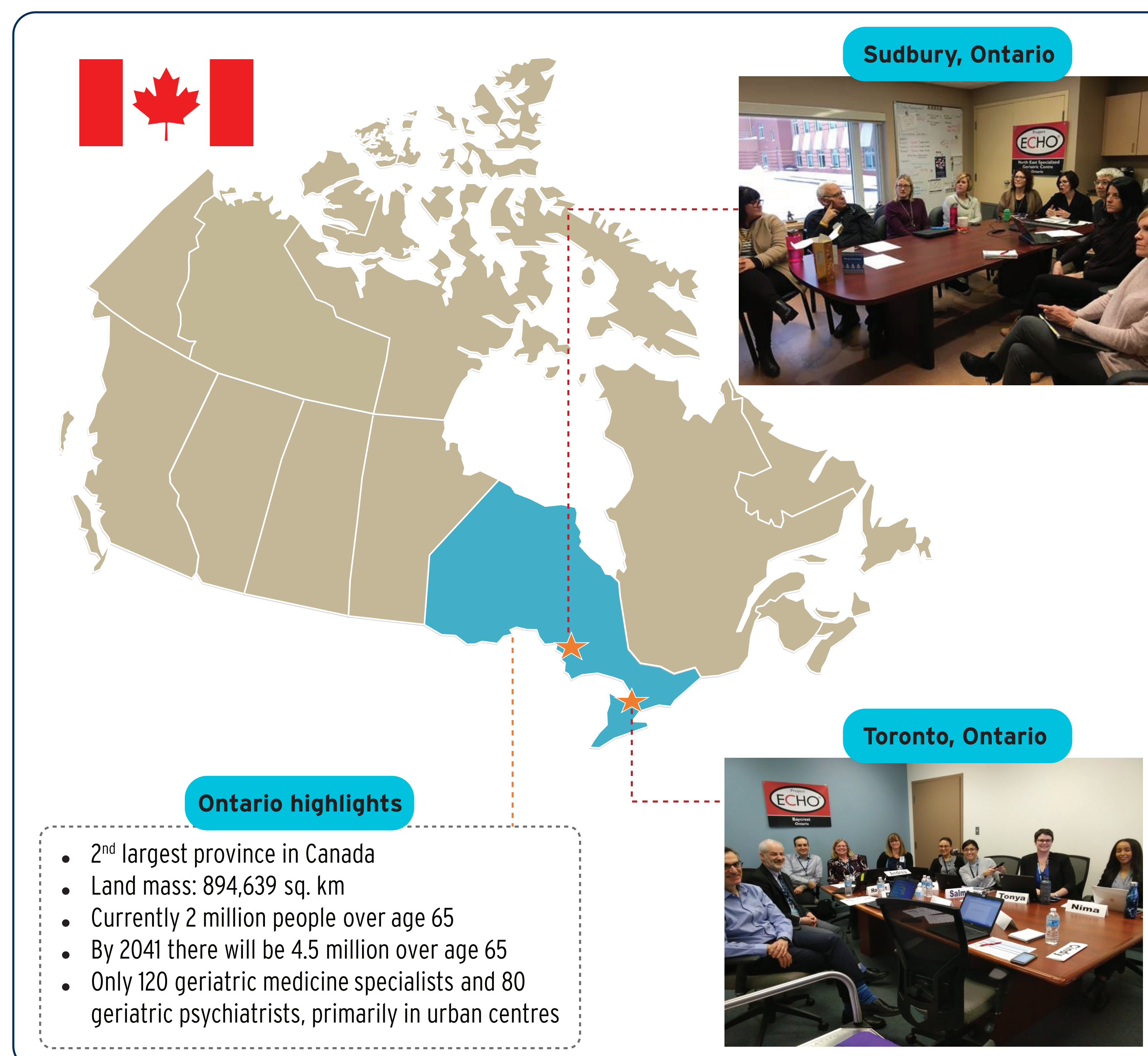
- In Ontario, Canada there is an increase in the number of people living longer with multiple co-morbidities
- Access to specialists is limited and for some, unattainable
- Primary care providers, especially those in rural and remote areas, are increasingly faced with caring for patients with frailty, Alzheimer's Disease, dementia, depression, and other geriatric syndromes

Program Description

- Baycrest, in partnership with North East Specialized Geriatric Centre (NESGC), leads "Project ECHO Care of the Elderly" (ECHO COE)
- ECHO COE is part of ECHO Ontario
- Since January 2018, over 100 primary care providers have participated
- ECHO COE runs in cycles of 10 or 15 weeks with a closed cohort for each cycle
- Didactic topics are geriatric focused and are based on needs assessments of the spokes
- Where possible, some sessions are left open as "flex topics" which are decided by the cohort mid-cycle

Dual Hub

- The dual hub model was adopted from the beginning with the goal of increasing exposure of ECHO COE across North Eastern Ontario and ensuring older adults across urban and rural settings were well represented
- The hubs share responsibility for facilitation of sessions, recruitment and overall project coordination, planning, implementation and sustainability
- Team members of both hubs are equally involved in Steering and Advisory Committees
- Each hub has a Project Coordinator



Discussion



- The benefits of a dual hub far outweigh the challenges
- Partnership between Baycrest and NESGC has allowed for greater reach across Ontario, especially in the northern, rural, less populated and underserved areas
- Shared workload increases ability to participate in ECHO Ontario projects and in research

Benefits and Challenges

Geographic Reach

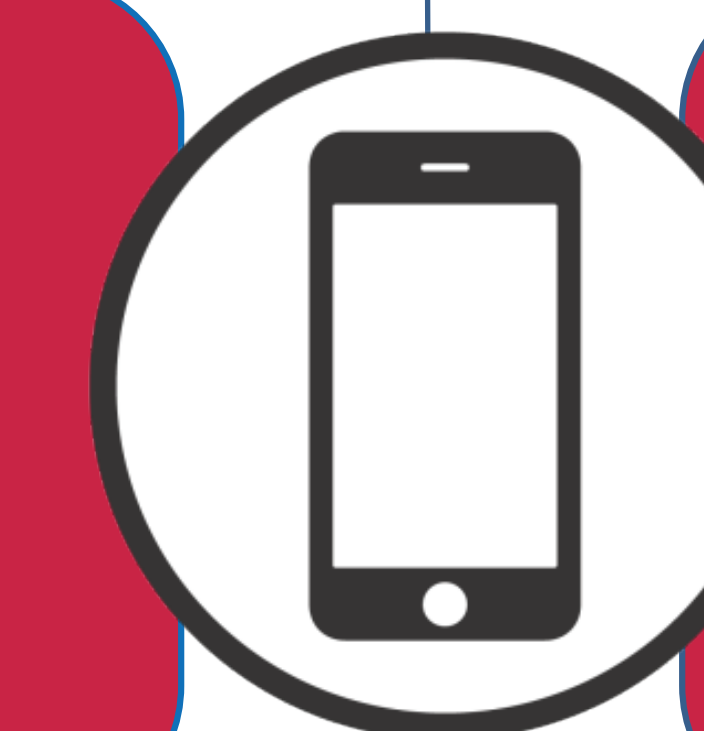
- Wider reach across the province through professional networks for recruitment & promotion
- Spokes get access to two hub teams with wider variety of professionals and expertise
- Ability to assess knowledge and learning and do research across a wider geographic range



- Risk of extra focus/recruitment in the North East

Technology

- Second hub site can step in if other site experiences technical difficulties or facilitator must step away to respond to a patient emergency



- Potential for system failure

Shared Facilitation

- More time to pursue additional endeavours such as ECHO Ontario research projects, collaborative work, conference planning, etc
- Builds teamwork skills
- Seamless coverage if there is an absence
- Potential to conduct a higher scope of research with two hubs (more human resources)



- Scheduling meetings between two organizations
- Access to project files across two different sites
- Research:
 - Different guidelines across two organizations
 - Submit application to two separate Research Ethics Boards

Shared Workload

- 3 Family Physicians with Care of the Elderly designation offer a wider breadth of clinical knowledge and experience working across multiple settings along the continuum of care.
- Workload of facilitation divided amongst 3 physicians



- Potential for conflicting clinical opinions



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