

Terms of Reference
Education Working Group

Approved By	Date
Revision Date(s):	

Background

Screening is the systematic population-based application of a test or inquiry to individuals who do not have symptoms of a specific disease or condition in order to identify those who warrant further investigation and/or intervention to achieve better outcomes. The pillars of systematic screening include education, (offer of) enrolment, test administration, retrieval, treatment or intervention, evaluation and quality assurance/improvement.

Prenatal Screening Ontario (PSO) is housed within BORN Ontario, and is funded by the Ministry of Health (MOH). Its mandate is to coordinate and oversee the operations of prenatal screening services in Ontario, in order to maintain an integrated program that operates as a “system of care”.

PSO depends on input from experts and advisors from relevant fields to ensure that all the elements of a robust screening program are best carried out. The program will depend on advice from committees of experts, including the PSO Advisory Committee, our condition-specific Expert Group(s), and the various groups working to support quality assurance in prenatal screening.

PSO is responsible for the development of prenatal screening-related Educational Strategies for the province’s health care providers, as well as pregnant persons and their families. These strategies will inform the development of educational materials, including online and mobile tools, development and population of the PSO website, as well as paper-based and other accessible options.

Mandate and Scope

The role of the PSO Education Working Group is to advise PSO in the development of PSO Education Strategies. The PSO Education Working Group will:

- Review and inform the development of:
 - Guidelines for the PSO website
 - Decision aids
 - Consumer engagement activities
 - Content for the website and other online opportunities
 - Paper-based education tools

- Review educational materials to ensure that they are:
 - Evidence-based – with references where possible
 - Piloted with the target audience prior to posting to ensure clarity, utility, correct reading level (public materials) etc.
 - Applicable to the Canadian audience – health care providers and public
 - Accessible
 - Unique or augment previously posted material
 - In general, not linked to advertising or commercial companies
 - Up to date
- Review requests for educational materials or for specific topics to be developed or written for the website.

The PSO Education Working Group will invite expert guests as needed to provide relevant perspectives on knowledge mobilization and education strategies.

Accountability and Reporting

The Education Working Group will report formally to Prenatal Screening Ontario. PSO will report on this work through BORN Ontario to the Ministry of Health (MOH). The committee will interact with other internal and external bodies as required to accomplish its tasks.

Membership

The membership will be interdisciplinary, representing the areas of content expertise in prenatal screening and knowledge mobilization, including

- Genetic Counsellor
- Maternal Fetal Medicine specialist
- Geneticist
- Clinician or Educator with specific expertise in NIPT
- Family Medicine representative
- Midwifery representative
- Representation from GEC-KO
- Knowledge translation expert
- Patient representative
- Indigenous representative

Task force members will have been selected as individuals to represent a specific expertise, or will be specific delegates nominated by their organization or region. Alternate delegates will not normally be invited to meetings.

Membership includes voting and non-voting members. The non-voting members may include ex-officio representatives from the MOH, PSO staff and any representatives who may be invited as subject experts.

All other members, including the Co-Chairs, are voting members. Membership should be reviewed on a yearly basis and periodic rotation of members should occur.

Administrative and resource support persons will be provided by PSO.

Nominations and Expression of Interest

PSO will issue a general call for Expressions of Interest for membership on the Education Working Group. A nominations committee established by PSO will review all submissions and will nominate individuals based on the aforementioned membership criteria, excluding any individuals with conflicts of interest (as detailed below).

Term

The inaugural Chair and Vice-chair will have a term of three years. At the end of the initial three years, the Chair structure of the Education Working Group will evolve to match that of all BORN Ontario committees, and the Terms of Reference will be amended at that time. The inaugural Chair may remain as a committee member after the term is completed, and may return as Chair for another term after a cycle of a different Chair.

Members of the committee will generally have terms of three years, renewable once. Renewed appointments will normally be for another 3 years, however, after the inaugural three years of the committee, some renewals will be for 1 or 2 years, to ensure continuity among the membership. Additional renewal may be possible to allow a member to assume the chair or vice-chair role, if requested. Members are expected to attend a minimum of 50% of meetings per year to maintain membership. Members are requested to withdraw membership if unable to attend meetings on a regular basis.

Meetings and Procedures

Meetings will be held at the call of the chair no fewer than four times a year, with no interval between meetings of more than 4 months. Meetings will be conducted by web- or tele-conference, with other business conducted by email. In-person meetings may be held infrequently, as determined necessary and as permitted by CHEO.

The advice and recommendations developed by the Education Working Group should reflect the consensus of the whole group. Decisions will be based on evidence whenever possible, and will always be made with the best interests of the pregnant individuals and families served by the PSO screening system in mind. The Chair will facilitate a consensus decision-making process that is inclusive and provides enough time for evaluation, discussion, proposed options, identification of concerns, and acceptable resolution of the items and/or issues under consideration.

The Members will agree to support a consensus decision or course of action and be willing to carry it out. Where Members are unable to reach consensus, then a majority-based decision will be made. Decisions are binding and all members will support the decisions and work of the PSO-AC after decisions have been made.

Quorum

Quorum shall be 50 percent of voting members.

Conflict of Interest

Members will not include any person whose personal or professional activities constitute a conflict of interest. Any potential COI must be disclosed to the Co-Chairs. Such activities include, but are not limited to, direct ties to private industry and personal interests in developing related technologies, including patents and patents pending. Incumbent and existing members will disclose to the chair, without delay, any actual or potential situations that arise which might be reasonably interpreted as either a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest.

The Co-Chairs have the right to excuse any member with a COI that is perceived to interfere with the deliverable.

Confidentiality

Every member will respect the confidentiality of matters brought before the committee or any of its working groups. Meeting materials, including slides, are all to be considered confidential and may not be used outside committee work and may not be disclosed or shared with non-committee members. If such material is no longer confidential and may be circulated externally, the committee will be notified by the Co-Chairs.

Compensation

Serving as a committee member is voluntary. Meetings will typically be held by teleconference, but should travel expenses be incurred to attend meetings, members will be reimbursed for those expenses as per the BORN Travel Reimbursement Policy and Procedure.

Administrative Support

PSO administrative staff will provide administrative support for the committee.

Formal Review

The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually.