

MSH UHN AMO Innovation Fund Funding of Sabbaticals Policy & Procedures

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to set out the eligibility parameters and adjudication process that informs the awarding of Innovation Funds to support physician sabbaticals.

Background:

The MSH UHN AMO budgets up to \$200,000 per year (*maximum of \$25,000 per applicant*) of Innovation funds to help support AFP practice plan members undertaking sabbaticals. It is expected that this funding will improve health care delivery in Ontario by introducing new and innovative approaches from other jurisdictions.

Eligibility:

All physician practice plan members of the MSH UHN AMO are eligible to apply for funding to offset the cost of undertaking a sabbatical. Travel to another location for a sabbatical is NOT an eligibility requirement.

The sabbatical should support the scholarship of the applicant, lead to the acquisition of new skills, and be completed within two years of receipt of the award. The sabbatical must commence in the same fiscal year for which funding is awarded.

Funding:

The MSH UHN AMO will fund up to a maximum of \$25,000 for each successful applicant. To receive funding, the physician's practice plan must match the awarded support from practice plan resources.

Funding will be evaluated based on the proposed cost and duration of the sabbatical. For an application to be considered for the maximum funding (\$25,000), the sabbatical must be a minimum of two (2) months in duration. Proposed sabbaticals for a shorter duration may have funding pro-rated at the discretion of the MSH UHN AMO Innovation Fund sub-committee. All applicants will require matching funds from their practice plan.

Application Process:

Practice plan members are invited to complete the sabbatical application form. All applications must be received by the MSH UHN AMO by November 21, 2025.

Applications must be submitted prior to commencing the sabbatical. Retroactive applications will not be considered.

Adjudication Process:

The MSH UHN AMO Innovation Fund Sub-Committee will adjudicate and score all submissions using the following criteria:

- *Clearly identified gap – does the therapy/approach currently exist in Ontario?*
- *Innovative approach to health care – what is the clearly defined innovation, and is it better than the current approach?*
- *Potential impact – ability to implement in Ontario?*
- *Quality of proposal and qualifications and experience of applicants*

The innovation fund sub-committee will give a numerical ranking to all applications and will also determine if a proposal is fundable.

There will be up to \$200,000 available to fund sabbaticals and funding decisions will be merit based. Proposals deemed non-fundable will not be funded even in situations where not all Innovation Funding has been allocated to sabbaticals undertaken by physicians at UHN / SHS. Any unspent Innovation Funds will be used to fund traditional Innovation Fund projects. At the conclusion of the review process, a list of successful applicants will be distributed to the MSH UHN AMO Management Committee, however, no other feedback will be provided to individual applicants.

Accessing Funds:

75% of funds will be available to be spent as of April 1, 2026, with the remaining 25% made available at the completion of the sabbatical and following the submission of the final report summarizing the new technique or approach to healthcare delivery that was learned during the sabbatical (see below). Sabbaticals must commence in the same fiscal year as funding – April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027. Applicants will have 2 years to complete their sabbatical.

Application Form:

Eligible physicians are encouraged to submit an application, maximum of two pages, that at a minimum includes the following information

- Letter of support and verification of matching funds¹ from practice plan
- Location of Sabbatical
- Dates of Sabbatical
- Primary preceptor
- Detailed breakdown of costs expected to be incurred (this may include lost clinical revenue) and how MSH UHN funds will be spent
- Detailed discussion on why the new therapy/approach to treatment being acquired is innovative, what the current approach to treatment is in Ontario and how this new approach will improve health care delivery in Ontario.

At the conclusion of the sabbatical, the awardee must submit a report that includes a final budget detailing how funds were spent as well as a plan to implement learnings and new skills to improve health care delivery in Ontario.

1. Definition and verification of matching support

Practice plans must, at a minimum match the funding support provided by the MSH UHN AMO for the sabbatical. Matching practice plan funds must be made available to successful applicants by April 1, 2026. The practice plan must provide details on the source of the matching funds.

Timelines:

The submission, adjudication and funding of successful applications will align with annual Innovation Fund Competitions and adhere to the following timelines:

1. Call for applications – July 11, 2025
2. Submission deadline – November 21, 2025
3. Adjudication of applications by the Innovation Fund Sub-Committee – December 2025
4. Submission of successful applications to IFPOC for final approval – January 2026
5. Sabbatical start date – April 1, 2026 – March 31, 2027
6. Final reports due no later than March 31, 2028.