14 leading Toronto hospitals sign landmark agreement to strengthen Canada's research ecosystem

New collaboration framework designed to reduce barriers to multi-site research, strengthen Canada's competitiveness and help bring discoveries to patients faster

MISSISSAUGA, November 3, 2026 — The 14 hospitals within the Toronto Academic Health Science Network (TAHSN) have signed the Master Collaboration Agreement (MCA), an important milestone in strengthening Canada's largest unified health research network and one of the largest collaborative academic health research ecosystems in the world. The agreement establishes a common legal and operational framework to accelerate research collaboration across the hospitals, all of which are affiliated with the University of Toronto. Ultimately, it aims to help discoveries move more quickly into improved patient care.

"In an increasingly competitive global environment, this agreement strengthens Canada's ability to attract research investment, industry partnerships, and leading scientific talent while helping discoveries move more efficiently into patient care," said Sarah Downey, Chair of TAHSN and President and CEO of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). "It demonstrates the power of Toronto's academic hospitals and the University of Toronto working together to tackle complex health challenges that no single institution can solve alone."

"At Trillium Health Partners, we are shaping a healthier community by embedding research into everyday care, translating discovery into real-world impact to create better health for all. This agreement will make it easier for our teams to work with partners, share knowledge, and better understand, anticipate, and respond to the evolving health needs of communities and drive health system excellence," said Dr. Laura Rosella, Chief Scientist, Institute for Better Health, Trillium Health Partners. "By reducing barriers to collaboration, we can focus more of our efforts on developing and testing solutions that improve care, elevate health, and help communities thrive."

Canada has long punched above its weight in clinical trials, leading the G7 in activity per capita, but its advantage is eroding: trial activity fell 11 per cent in 2024, and its global ranking for industry-run Phase 3 trials dropped from fifth to eighth. Canada's academic hospitals are central to this work, helping attract research investment, supporting skilled jobs and retaining scientific talent while giving patients access to promising new treatments.

The 14 hospitals within the TAHSN network are already connected through affiliation with the University of Toronto and a shared commitment to research, education, and patient care. Participating hospitals include: Baycrest, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, Humber River Health, Michael Garron Hospital, North York General Hospital, Scarborough Health Network, Sinai Health, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, The Hospital for Sick Children, Trillium Health Partners, Unity Health Toronto, University Health Network (UHN), and Women's College Hospital.

As research becomes increasingly collaborative, launching a project across institutions can require teams to negotiate similar terms and navigate different processes each time. The MCA establishes a common framework for eligible research activities—one project, one shared framework—to reduce duplication and streamline administrative processes, while maintaining each organization's requirements for ethics, privacy, security, and oversight.

Serving a rapidly growing and diverse community, Trillium Health Partners is focused on generating and applying evidence, grounded in lived experience, to respond to changing health needs in real time and improve care now. The MCA supports this work by making it easier for us to collaborate across hospitals on eligible research, helping everyone move from evidence to action to impact, advancing faster, smarter, more equity-centred health care.

Early implementation has already demonstrated measurable benefits. The MCA was first piloted as a bilateral agreement between CAMH and UHN in December 2024. Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and Unity Health Toronto joined in December 2025 to form a four-hospital pilot, test the multilateral framework and prepare for broader implementation. During this time, average research study activation timelines were **reduced by more than 75 per cent**—from 448 days to 109 days—enabling researchers to spend less time navigating administrative processes and more time advancing discovery.

Through the pilot, the MCA is already working to support 43 collaborative research studies in various stages of implementation, addressing some of today's most complex health challenges, including cardiac health, cancer care and Alzheimer's disease. These collaborations include multi-site clinical trials and research involving data sharing.

TAHSN brings together the University of Toronto and 14 affiliated academic hospitals, forming one of North America's largest and most innovative academic health science networks. Combined research funding across the network exceeded $1.7 billion in fiscal 2025. Ten TAHSN member hospitals—representing one-quarter of the institutions on Canada's Top 40 Research Hospitals list for 2025—accounted for more than 40 per cent of the list's total research spending. This research strength is part of a broader Canadian life sciences sector that contributes more than $89 billion annually to the national economy.

Signing the MCA is an important first step, with implementation now underway across the network. Adoption will occur in phases as participating hospitals put the framework into practice and realize its benefits over time. An overview of the MCA and related resources is available on the TAHSN Master Collaboration Agreement webpage.

About the Toronto Academic Health Science Network (TAHSN)

TAHSN is comprised of the University of Toronto and 14 of its affiliated academic hospitals. Together, its organizations serve one of the most dynamic regions in the world. The Toronto region's rich diversity is matched by a network of academic health science organizations that possess a wide array of strengths, assets, and services. Collectively, TAHSN organizations, communities, and the universal health-care system through which we provide and receive care, form an ecosystem that has excellence in collaboration, innovation, and impact. Our academic health-care achievements contribute to a healthier and more prosperous community, province, and country. https://tahsn.ca/

About Trillium Health Partners and the Institute for Better Health

Trillium Health Partners is the largest community-based hospital network in Canada. Comprised of Credit Valley Hospital, Mississauga Hospital and Queensway Health Centre, Trillium Health Partners serves the growing and diverse populations of Mississauga, West Toronto and surrounding communities. Trillium Health Partners is a teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Toronto and home of the Institute for Better Health. The Institute for Better Health brings together leading scientists in population health, patient experience, and implementation and evaluation science to understand community needs and apply data, evidence, and knowledge to shape a healthier, more equitable community. For more information, please visit thp.ca and instituteforbetterhealth.com.

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