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HEALTH SCIENCES NORTH  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018

# Report from the Board Chair

## Nicole Everest



Health Sciences North  
Horizon Santé-Nord

# **Report of the Board Chair Nicole Everest Annual General Meeting of the Corporation June 21, 2018**

It is my pleasure to present you with the 2018 Report of the Chair.

This year has been one of change and transformation at HSN.

In July we welcomed our new Chief of Staff. Dr. John Fenton brought a genuine desire in his new role to reach new levels of quality of care at HSN. Dr. Fenton has been a vascular surgeon in Greater Sudbury since 1994, and has been a trusted voice on a number of hospital Committees, where the physician voice has guided many decisions. Dr. Fenton's focus this year included ensuring medical staff engagement in priority quality improvements and strengthening the relationships with the three other hub hospitals in Northeastern Ontario. Physician engagement is key to HSN's transformation, and you will hear more from Dr. Fenton about the many clinical innovations our medical staff have willingly participated in to improve care delivery, and provide high-caliber services right here in our region.

The arrival in October of our new President and Chief Executive Officer, Dominic Giroux, has been a breath of fresh air. He hit the ground running very quickly, engaging in a meaningful way with front-line staff, members of medical staff and external partners. Thanks to his leadership, our organizational focus has improved. We have seen increased accountability to the Board. Relationships with the North East Local Health Integration Network, postsecondary education and partner hospitals are improving. A number of important provincial capital funding approvals have been secured. Dominic, with the support of the Senior Leadership Team, helped us get back on track from a financial perspective and this, with greater transparency.

The Board of Directors was very concerned last September with the increasing number of Alternative Level of Care (ALC) patients especially in anticipation of the flu season. In September, my counterpart Ron Farrell, Chair of the North East LHIN Board, and I instituted a collaborative governance effort between our two organizations to contain our number of ALC patients. We set a target of containing the number of ALC patients below 75. We met on a monthly basis to monitor progress. I am pleased to report that from November 2017 to March 2018, our average number of ALC patients was 72, a significant reduction from the average of 101 during the same period the year before.

One of the successful solutions for achieving this result was the establishment of a transitional unit pilot project in our Daffodil Lodge in partnership with the March of Dimes. Today, 10 interim short-stay rooms are available to ALC patients awaiting their next step in care in the community. In November, the HSN Board set 13 specific budget parameters for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. We tasked our new CEO to contain our deficit to less than 1% of the budget in 2018-2019, subject to greater cost containment in non-clinical departments.

In January, as you just heard from Maureen McLelland, we approved a very engaging strategic planning process to help set our key goals or aspirations and measurable outcomes to be achieved by 2024. The completion of this important process will be a major focus of the boards of HSN and of the Health Sciences North Research Institute between now and January 2019.

In January, the provincial government announced a \$500,000 planning grant to support Stage 1 of a five-stage capital planning process for a physical expansion of our Ramsey Lake Health Centre to help repatriate programs and services for kids and youth that are currently not available in Northeastern Ontario. The vision is to cluster existing programs for kids and youth, expand that scope over time to address the unmet needs in the Northeast, and align new programming with priorities of the NE LHIN and of the province. Thanks to the hard work of the NEO Kids Foundation and to your very generous community support, over \$4.1 million have already been raised in support of a future capital expansion of HSN for NEO Kids.

In February, we awarded the contract for the construction of our PET-CT suite. Just before the May long weekend, we broke ground for the construction of the new PET-CT Scanner Suite. The late Sam Bruno fought for access to the best care possible for the North. Sadly, he is not with us to see his dream come to reality. But this region is fortunate that the Bruno family and the community stepped up and raised the \$3.5 million dollars needed to purchase the PET-CT. We would not be celebrating this success had the Northern Cancer Foundation and the Sam Bruno PET Scan Fund not benefitted from the generous support of so many individuals and businesses from across the Northeast. The new equipment will help improve patient care and save patients over 477,000 km annually in health travel. The PET-CT Suite external construction will be completed by February 2019. The first patient scans are expected early summer 2019.

In March, we awarded the contract for the construction of our new Learners' Centre. Construction crews arrived on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Learners' Centre will be a place for future health care professionals to hone their skills so they are ready for the real world once they have completed school. In the Simulation Lab, health care professionals of tomorrow, from all disciplines, will train with the health care providers of today. The \$26 million Centre allows HSN to build on its reputation as a world-class teaching and research facility. The 28,000 square foot structure will also help train and attract more physicians and clinicians to Northeastern Ontario. With the tireless help of community individuals and corporate donors, the HSN Foundation raised \$5.4 million toward this project. Construction is expected to be completed by the end of 2019.

The PET-CT, the Learners' Centre and our future expansion for NEO Kids are very exciting capital projects that will have lasting impacts for patients across northern Ontario. These projects further position HSN nationally as a health care centre of excellence. As our health priorities evolve in the future, we want to be in a position to deliver quality health care to northern and Indigenous communities. Our foundations make this goal more achievable. I want to thank foundation staff, their boards, the volunteers for their unwavering support and passion, and for our donors' belief in our vision.

Throughout the year, the Board monitored the achievement of targets approved by the Board in its 2017-2018 Quality Improvement Plan. Three targets were met by March 2018. These aimed to:

- Increase the proportion of patients completely satisfied with information sharing;
- Increase the proportion of admitted patients aged 65 or more with medication reconciliation upon admission;
- Reduce lost time frequency among staff.

The Board noted that more work was required to improve our financial performance and to reduce the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile length of stay in the Emergency Department for patients with complex conditions.

In March, the Board set seven clear goals for the organization for 2018-2019 and approved a new 2018-2019 Quality Improvement Plan. The CEO will comment more on those shortly. In April, we approved the 2018-2019 budget that will return HSN to a balanced position as early as 2019-2020. This came with very difficult decisions. It is currently being validated by a third party review team appointed by the LHIN. HSN Board members and senior leaders have actively participated in this validation exercise over the last several weeks, and we look forward to the outcome at the end of the month.

Ontario has a new provincial government. Premier-Designate Doug Ford will be sworn in on June 29<sup>th</sup>. He has promised to end hallway medicine, reduce wait-times, reduce the health sector's bureaucracy, enhance supports for mental health, encourage more doctors to move to Northern Ontario and help address over capacity in Ontario's hospitals by creating 15,000 long term care beds over the next five years. The NE LHIN also informed us in April that it was initiating a systemic review of health care pressures in the region. We commend the NE LHIN for initiating this systemic review since the 25 hospitals in Northeastern Ontario have the worst financial situation of the 14 LHINs in the province. We look forward to working with the new government, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the NE LHIN and our nine Members of Provincial Parliament from Northeastern Ontario to find solutions to the challenges facing our health care system, and work at providing the best care possible to our patients.

There is much to celebrate at Health Sciences North. We have many accomplishments this year to be proud of and have seen many improvements in how we help out patients and fulfill our growing teaching and research mandates. The staff at Health Sciences North has a passion for delivering the best patient care, and it's thanks to that passion that we will be well prepared to tackle the challenges health care is facing in the coming years.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank HSN's leadership, employees and medical staff, patient advisors and volunteers for their outstanding work.

In closing, I would like to thank members of the Board of Directors for their commitment to HSN: Vasu Balakrishnan, Michelle Caza Joly, Dr. Catherine Cervin, Dr. Killian de Blacam, Dr. John Fenton, Roger Gauthier, Daniel Giroux, Dominic Giroux, Dr. Jordan Herst, Rosella Kinoshameg, Floyd Laughren, Dr. Kevin McCormick, Stephen Petrovic, Chris Redmond, Karen Rowe, Shawn Scott and Lisa Smith. I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Chris Bourdon, Dr. David McNeil, Alicia Woods and Dr. Peter Zalan who served on the board earlier in 2017-2018.