

Health Sciences North 2020 Annual General Meeting

Report from the Board Chair
Floyd Laughren



Health Sciences North
Horizon Santé-Nord

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Annual General Meeting – June 24, 2020

It is my pleasure to present you with the 2020 Report of the Board Chair of Health Sciences North.

This was my first full year as your Board Chair.

I want to acknowledge the commitment of our Board members, and thank them for their leadership in the past year:

- Dr. Dominique Ansell;
- Vasu Balakrishnan;
- Dr. Killian de Blacam;
- Dr. Catherine Cervin;
- Lynne Dupuis;
- Don Duval;
- Dr. John Fenton;
- Roger Gauthier;
- Daniel Giroux;
- Dominic Giroux;
- Francesca Grosso;
- Rosella Kinoshameg;
- Tom Laughren;
- Dr. Kevin McCormick;
- Lyse-Anne Papineau;
- Stéphan Plante;
- Chris Redmond; and
- Lisa Smith.

Our work continues to be guided by our 2019-2024 Strategic Plan.

Our Purpose is to “provide high quality health services, support learning and generate research that improves health outcomes for the people of Northeastern Ontario.”

We have made three Commitments in our Strategic Plan:

- We will carry out our patient care, teaching and research responsibilities with integrity, ensuring patients and families remain the focus of all we do.

- We will partner with humility, valuing each person's and each community's strengths and ideas to bring the best care, education and research solutions forward.
- We will provide a physically, psychologically and culturally safe environment that promotes a positive care, working and learning experience.

We believe in, and strive to model five Values:

- Respect;
- Quality;
- Transparency;
- Accountability; and
- Compassion.

We remain focused on five key goals:

- To be patient and family-focused;
- To be digitally-enabled;
- To be socially accountable;
- To support and develop our people; and
- To strengthen our academic and research impact.

More specifically, our Strategic Plan identifies 19 Outcomes to be achieved by 2024 under each of these five key goals.

From a governance standpoint, HSN's Board held five regular meetings and one special meeting over the the last fiscal year.

The Board of Directors is tasked with governing HSN and providing oversight on the affairs of the corporation.

Standing Committees of the Board play an essential role in enabling the Board to carry out its responsibilities.

We have seven standing committees of the Board that meet regularly to delve into issues ranging from Finance to Quality to Long Range Planning, to name a few.

Quite frankly these committees make our system of governance work since they report to the full board with recommendations for Board decisions.

In addition, the Health Sciences North Research Institute is governed by its own Board of Directors and a Board Research Committee.

So I say thank you to the Committee Chairs, Board members, patient and family advisors, members of medical staff, administrative leaders and community members who serve on these committees.

Approximately 40 Board Standing Committee meetings took place this year.

These meetings were significant because the Committees have the role of identifying implications and making recommendations for Board deliberation.

These Committee meetings were also very well attended, as average attendance at regular Board and Committee meetings exceeded 80 percent.

Professional development of our Board members has continued to be a priority.

In January, the Board took a Saturday and devoted it to professional development for our members.

We took that time to hear from local leaders active in primary care and in home and community care, take a step back on our progress over the past three years, and hold in-depth discussions on seven Strategic Plan outcomes pre-selected by Board members, more specifically on:

- Our capital master plan;
- Virtual care models and remote patient monitoring;
- Improving access to mental health and addictions care;
- An integrated regional electronic medical record;
- Cultural safety and diversity training programs;
- Satisfaction of patients and families about their involvement in decisions about their care;
- Improving health outcomes of Indigenous peoples.

Five of our Board members also took part in Ontario Hospital Association professional development sessions.

I attended in September the annual Health Care Leadership Summit organized by the Ontario Hospital Association for Board Chairs and CEOs.

As part of an annual process conducted over the last two years, Board members who have served for at least one year completed a confidential self-assessment and peer assessment based on 29 duties articulated in our Board policy on roles and responsibilities of individual directors.

The results were collated and reviewed by the Governance and Nominating Committee, following which follow ups were made with individual Board members to provide positive and constructive feedback.

This process is important because, in combination with other evaluation tools, it allows the Board to regularly evaluate its performance and effectiveness.

This process in particular also informs the re-appointment of Board members who are eligible for renewal at the AGM.

Each year, the Board sets annual performance goals for the CEO and the Chief of Staff and monitors the progress made on each performance goal at each regular Board meeting.

In setting goals for 2020-2021, the Board acknowledged the unprecedented circumstances that HSN is facing in light of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

During the last year, we monitored targets identified in our 2019-2020 Quality Improvement Plan and set direction for our 2020-2021 Quality Improvement Plan.

We maintained a balanced budget in 2019-2020, for a second consecutive year.

We made a number of important decisions with regards to:

- The endorsement of a full application for an Ontario Health Team;
- Capital planning;
- The approval of business cases for an electronic medical record system and human capital management systems; and
- Privileges of medical staff.

As part of ensuring the Board is effective in running the hospital and living up to our commitments to patients and the public, we also reviewed 35 of our 60 policies as part of an 18-month policy review process.

We are committed to reviewing Board policies on a three-year review cycle.

In the past year, HSN's accreditation was renewed, with compliance on more than 98% of 2,938 standards.

This included 100% compliance on governance standards set by Accreditation Canada.

I want to extend congratulations to all HSN employees and medical staff for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to providing safe, high-quality health services every single day.

Surveyors noted that there was a sense of optimism within the organization, a thriving sense of pride and an interest in hearing feedback from patients as part of their daily work.

I am also pleased to announce that the Board re-appointed this month our Chief of Staff, Dr. John Fenton, for a second three-year term beginning on July 1st.

Dr. Fenton has been a vascular surgeon at HSN since 1994.

He has served in numerous capacities over the years, including as President of HSN's Medical Staff Executive between 1999 and 2003.

Pursuant to the Public Hospitals Act, the Chief of Staff is accountable to the Board on matters related to the quality of medical care and is appointed for a three-year term, renewable once.

Dr. Fenton has provided exceptional leadership over the past three years, and we are delighted that he has agreed to continue to serve in this role for another three years.

We are also very pleased by the strong leadership provided over the past three years by our President and CEO, Dominic Giroux.

As a Board, we are proud that over the past year, he has been appointed to the Governing Council of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

CIHR is the federal health research agency providing over \$1 billion annually in research funding to universities and hospitals.

Dominic is the only hospital CEO to serve on the CIHR Governing Council.

Our CEO was also appointed over the past year to the Board of Directors of the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA), as co-chair of the Northern Ontario COVID-19 Regional Steering Committee, and as a member of the Provincial COVID-19 Health System Response Oversight Table.

In closing, I would also like to say that the Board has been very impressed with the collective resolve of everyone at HSN throughout the pandemic.

Staff and physicians focussed on providing crucial care to patients and achieving zero transmission of COVID-19 among healthcare workers.

On behalf of the Board, I want to express my sincere appreciation to those on the frontlines.

We greatly appreciate and admire the determination, diligent preparation and commitment of our front-line care providers, and of our leaders who supported their efforts.

Thank you.