

# Health Sciences North 2021 Annual General Meeting

---

Report from the Board Chair  
**Floyd Laughren**



Health Sciences North  
Horizon Santé-Nord

[hsnsudbury.ca](http://hsnsudbury.ca)

**Report from the Board Chair  
Floyd Laughren  
Annual General Meeting – June 16, 2021**

It is my pleasure to present you with the 2021 Report of the Board Chair of Health Sciences North.

This was my second and final 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 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.

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 educated ourselves about the provincial health care landscape through a dialogue with Anthony Dale, the President and CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association.

We heard directly from 12 of our front-line leaders about their role through the pandemic, lessons learned and what the Board should know about the pandemic response.

We took the time to hear from local leaders involved in long-term care.

We reviewed the roles and responsibilities of our Quality Committee, and did a deeper dive on the implementation of our Human Capital Management Solution and Electronic Medical Record.

We reviewed how HSN is performing relative to historical and peer benchmarking.

We considered advice from the Senior Leadership Committee on the relatively higher priorities among our Strategic Plan outcomes.

We reviewed the status of the implementation of the 19 Strategic Plan outcomes.

We learned more about HSN's role in the COVID-19 vaccination roll out and reflected on how Board members can assist across the region.

Throughout the year, we heard directly from leaders of our Patient and Family Advisory Council, the HSN Foundation, the HSN Volunteer Association, the NEO Kids Foundation, the Northern Cancer Foundation, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine and Ontario Health (North).

As part of an annual process conducted over the last three years, Board members who have served for at least one year completed a confidential self-assessment and peer assessment based on the 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.

In November, we also carefully reviewed our performance relative to xx governance standards from Accreditation Canada.

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.

During the last year, we monitored targets identified in our 2020-2021 Quality Improvement Plan and set direction for our 2021-2022 Quality Improvement Plan.

We monitored very closely our financial performance throughout the year in light of the pandemic, providing direction to management informed by our Board policies, accountability agreements, evolving provincial funding policy and guidance from Ontario Health.

I am pleased to report that HSN completed the 2020-2021 fiscal year once again with a surplus from hospital operations.

The Board Treasurer will provide more details in his report.

Since the last AGM, we have made a number of important decisions with regards to:

- The approval of the 2021-2022 budget;
- The relocation of the Children's Treatment Centre to Southridge Mall;
- The capital budget and contracts for the implementation of our Human Capital Management Solution and Electronic Medical Record;
- HSN's participation in a new corporation being created by Northeastern Ontario acute care hospitals to support the new integrated regional Electronic Medical Record;
- The approval of the 2021-2022 Medical Human Resources Plan;
- The creation of medical departments for Pediatrics, separate from a department for Gynecology, Obstetrics and Midwifery; and
- Privileges of medical staff.

As you can see, one recurring topic for us as a Board, from a governance perspective, has been the oversight of the planning and implementation for a new integrated regional Electronic Medical Record.

One of the five key goals in our Strategic Plan is to be digitally enabled.

Our aspiration is to expand the use of technology, data and analytics to improve care.

Outcome #7 of our Strategic Plan calls for the implementation and sustainment of an integrated regional Electronic Medical Record.

There are three outcomes that we aim to achieve under this key goal of our Strategic Plan.

One of them is the implementation of an integrated regional Electronic Medical Record.

The Electronic Medical Record is connecting HSN with 23 Northeastern Ontario acute care hospitals with a single fully electronic patient chart supported by best practice standards of care.

It is more than just a new system.

It is how we listen and support patients and families throughout their journey.

It's how we share health information with other care providers to reduce the need for patients to re-tell their stories or repeat tests.

It's one source of patient information across the region, allowing our clinicians to focus on what

they love and do best: provide exceptional patient care.

The EMR will be implemented at HSN in April 2023.

It represents a \$42.4 million capital investment by HSN, amortized over 15 years.

All hospitals in the North East are required to make comparable investments.

I am proud of the seriousness of the due diligence demonstrated by the Finance Committee and the Board on this important undertaking.

As part of ensuring the Board is effective in running the hospital and living up to our commitments to patients and the public, we reviewed 20 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.

One of the most important decisions that a Board needs to make is the selection and renewal of the President and CEO and of the Chief of Staff.

At the last AGM, we announced that our Chief of Staff, Dr. John Fenton, had been renewed for a second three-year term until June 2023.

Today, I am pleased to announce that the Boards of HSN and HSNRI re-appointed our President and CEO, Dominic Giroux, until October 2027.

His current five-year term was ending in October 2022.

Dominic provided sound leadership to HSN and HSNRI over the past four years, improving our financial performance while enhancing our patient experience survey results.

He developed a strong executive team and guided our organizations through a new strategic plan, a regional cybersecurity incident, accreditation, a new capital master plan and our digital transformation.

We have seen significant capital approvals from the Ministry related to the Labelle Innovation and Learning Centre, the relocation of the Children's Treatment Centre, the creation of 52 new bed spaces, the second MRI and a planning grant for NEO Kids.

Collaboration has been enhanced with our foundations and volunteer groups, leading to impressive results.

Dominic set the right tone internally through the pandemic while providing system leadership as Co-Chair of the COVID-19 Northern Regional Steering Committee, as member of the Provincial COVID-19 Health System Response Oversight Table and of the Executive Committee of the Ontario Hospital Association.

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.

Employees and medical staff focussed on providing crucial care to patients and minimizing transmission of COVID-19 among healthcare workers.

The Board has been very impressed with the response to these unprecedented times.

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

You have been tested like no one else during this pandemic, and have continued to meet every challenge with compassion and strength.

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.

On a personal note, I want to say it has been a privilege to serve as Board Chair for the last two years.

While I will be stepping down as Chair, I will remain as an active Board member and continue supporting the Board and the organization going forward.

Three Board members are leaving the Board: Vasu Balakrishnan, Dr. Killian de Blacam and Chris Redmond.

We will honour them later on tonight.

Their contributions have been invaluable over the years.

I'm proud to leave the organization as Board Chair in a very strong position.

The future is bright for healthcare in Northeastern Ontario.

As you will attest tonight, there were many accomplishments this year that we can all be proud of in pursuing our Purpose to provide high quality health services, support learning and generate research that improves health outcomes for the people of Northeastern Ontario.

Our teams have a passion for delivering the best patient care, education and research, and it's thanks to that passion that we will be well positioned to tackle the challenges and opportunities health care will be facing in the coming years.

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

I also want to acknowledge the critical role of the Health Sciences North Foundation, the Health Sciences North Volunteer Association, the NEO Kids Foundation and the Northern Cancer Foundation, their respective board members and staff.

Not only do they raise important funds for our patient care, education and research endeavours, they are exceptional ambassadors of HSN and are very engaged in the communities that we serve.