

# Health Sciences North 2022 Annual General Meeting

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Report from the Chief of Staff  
**Dr. John Fenton**



Health Sciences North  
Horizon Santé-Nord

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Annual General Meeting – June 15, 2022**

Even though COVID continued to wreak havoc on our hospital system over the past year, we were still able to achieve many productive and positive goals. To me, this is a testament to the dedication and resilience of our people. I feel fortunate to work with exceptional individuals and teams who continue to demonstrate their commitment to improving care for patients and making HSN a better place. It is with gratitude that I serve the members of the Medical Staff, the organization and the community as your Chief of Staff.

It is my pleasure to report on my 2021-2022 performance goals and the activities of the medical staff at HSN this past year.

Despite the restrictions due to COVID, I'm pleased to share that we had another exceptional year for medical staff recruitment. Eleven new family medicine physicians, and 25 new specialists have been successfully recruited to Sudbury throughout 2021-2022, thanks to the partnership between HSN, the City of Greater Sudbury and the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce. We were thrilled to be welcoming new specialists in Anesthesia, Cardiology, Gastroenterology, General Surgery, General Internal Medicine, Medical Oncology, Ophthalmology, Orthopedic Surgery, Plastic Surgery, Psychiatry, Pediatrics, Radiology and Stroke Neurology.

Having new physicians from such a wide range of specialities greatly improves access to care for the people of Northeastern Ontario for now and many years to come.

Recruitment efforts are also well underway for the 2022-2023 recruitment year, with 13 confirmed recruits already! Thank you to everyone involved in bringing these new physicians to HSN, it truly takes a village to make this happen.

Outcome #5 of our 2019-2024 Strategic Plan calls for inter-professional proactive external reviews to take place in a majority of our medical departments by 2024.

To date, we have completed external reviews in Critical Care, Mental Health and Addictions and Surgery. In this last year, we completed the inter-professional external review focused on improving the quality of care in our Medicine Program.

Three colleagues from The Ottawa Hospital and Windsor Regional Hospital completed a comprehensive on-site review in March 2022. The external reviewers spoke highly of the quality of care provided at HSN and throughout the region. They shared 12 overall recommendations, which will guide the evolution and enhancement of our Medicine Program in the coming years.

Aligned with the Strategic Plan Key Goal to be Patient and Family-Focused, in the last year, there have been focussed efforts to define our current state and to develop a plan

to achieve the Canadian teaching hospital average for Hospital Standardized Mortality Ratio and Hospital Deaths Following Major Surgery.

Hospital Standardized Mortality Ratio and Hospital Deaths Following Major Surgery are mortality indicators that measure the rate of observed deaths compared to deaths predicted by statistical models.

This work will continue in 2022-2023 where we will focus on improving documentation, improving coding practices, and further assessing quality of care.

I would be remiss if I didn't take the opportunity to reflect upon the efforts of the Medical Staff related to COVID. These efforts have been evident across the organization, at every level, and have ensured that we were able to continue to provide high quality patient care despite high volumes of admitted COVID patients, exposures, outbreaks, surveillance testing and health human resource challenges.

Dr. Susan Vokey, Dr. Mark Henderson, Dr. Rob Lepage, Dr. Roger Sandre and Dr. Josée Thériault all served at Incident Command and have been invaluable leaders in guiding and providing direction for the organizational management of COVID.

I would like to extend my thanks to our medical leadership team which is comprised of our Chiefs of Departments, our Medical Directors and our Medical Staff Executive. This team of dedicated leaders have ensured that challenges and questions arising from our medical staff have been addressed in a timely fashion. They have also kept our medical staff informed with the most current information and decisions made through Incident Command.

Thank you to all members of our medical staff for your exemplary efforts. Our organization and our community are fortunate to benefit from your expertise and dedication to quality care. Thank you for all that you do to serve the patients and families of throughout the Northeast.

Despite the continued pressures of the pandemic, our teams at HSN have introduced new and innovative surgeries and procedures as we continuously improve on providing the best in patient care.

In June 2021, our Orthopaedic surgeons and medical staff were proud to say that HSN was one of the first hospitals in Canada to have the ROSA knee system in our operating room. ROSA stands for Robotic Stereotactic Assistance.

ROSA is a robotically-assisted surgical system that will improve the outcomes of patients receiving total knee replacements by minimizing the invasiveness of the procedure.

ROSA enables our surgeons to personalize each surgery, which reduces the amount of dissection required and leaves the patient with a more balanced "new" knee.

Aligned with HSN's 2019-2024 Strategic Goal to Be Digitally-Enabled, we expanded the use of technology, data, and analytics to improve how we care for our patients.

In July 2021, the Medical Imaging Department launched a pilot online service to support and empower their patients. PocketHealth is a digital platform for health records that gives patients ownership and control of their medical imaging records.

PocketHealth provides our patients with more accessible and secure access to their imaging records, with the potential for patients to make more informed decisions about their health care.

The new system also improves access for healthcare providers. With PocketHealth, HSN can share imaging records instantly with our physician community and other hospitals.

In October 2021, a team of surgeons from HSN successfully completed the very first bariatric surgery in Northeastern Ontario. Bariatric surgery, also known as weight loss surgery, serves as an option for some people who have not been able to lose weight through traditional means such as diet and exercise. It has been shown to be an effective intervention, which produces significant weight loss and improves medical conditions.

More than 5,000 patients from across Northeastern Ontario were referred for assessment from 2011 to 2019, with more than 1,900 of these patients being referred to Southern Ontario for bariatric surgery.

This development at HSN increases access and decreases wait times for patients, while reducing costs associated with patients travelling outside of the region for quality care.

Another innovation is the establishment of the Endovascular Treatment (EVT) Program at HSN. With HSN now offering this specialized stroke treatment 24/7, people from Northeastern Ontario no longer need to be transported by air ambulance to Southern Ontario for it. As a result, they get a better chance of recovering from a severe stroke than was possible before. It took a large team of staff, colleagues and partners to establish the EVT Program at HSN.

Seventy-three (73) EVT procedures occurred between the launch in February 2020 and May 2022. It has been life-changing treatment for many of our patients who have been now living without any disability.

These are only a few examples of the advances in the delivery of patient care. My appreciation goes out to all who have contributed to advancing health care at HSN over the last year.

Looking to the year ahead, my performance goals approved by the Board of Directors for 2022-2023 include the following:

- 1) Ensure HSN's readiness to support COVID pandemic response/recovery inclusive of recovery of surgical activity.
- 2) Achieve directions set in the 2022-2023 Quality Improvement Plan.
- 3) Align the Medical Human Resources Planning cycle with the HSN budget planning cycle and articulate a succession plan for all medical staff in Medicine, Psychiatry and Pathology who are at or nearing the age of retirement.
- 4) Complete the process for the Medicine Program External Review as per Terms of Reference. Where required, provide support for the advancement of the implementation plans from the completed Program External Reviews (Critical Care, Psychiatry, Surgery and Medicine).
- 5) With a focus on quality of care, support improvements to Hospital Standardized Mortality Rate and Hospital Deaths Following Major Surgery to achieve the Canadian teaching hospital average by March 31, 2023.
- 6) Successfully sustain the collaboration with the Joint Department of Medical Imaging (or JDMI) at the University Health Network-Sinai Health System-Women's College Hospital with a minimum of nine (9) Sudbury-based full-time equivalent radiologists and continued support from on-site JDMI radiologist presence.
- 7) Support and champion the successful implementation of the regional Electronic Medical Record in 2023, with adequate attention to change management.
- 8) In collaboration with the Medical Leadership Team and the Vice-President, Academic and Research Impact, support the definition of annual academic accountabilities for each Department.

I am looking forward to working with you to continue to evolve as an organization and to continue to improve HSN's delivery of quality care for our community.

Thank you.