



**New Brunswick
Health Council**

Engage. Evaluate. Inform. Recommend.

2012-2013 Business Plan

Presented to the Minister of Health

April 2nd, 2012

I. Mandate of the NBHC

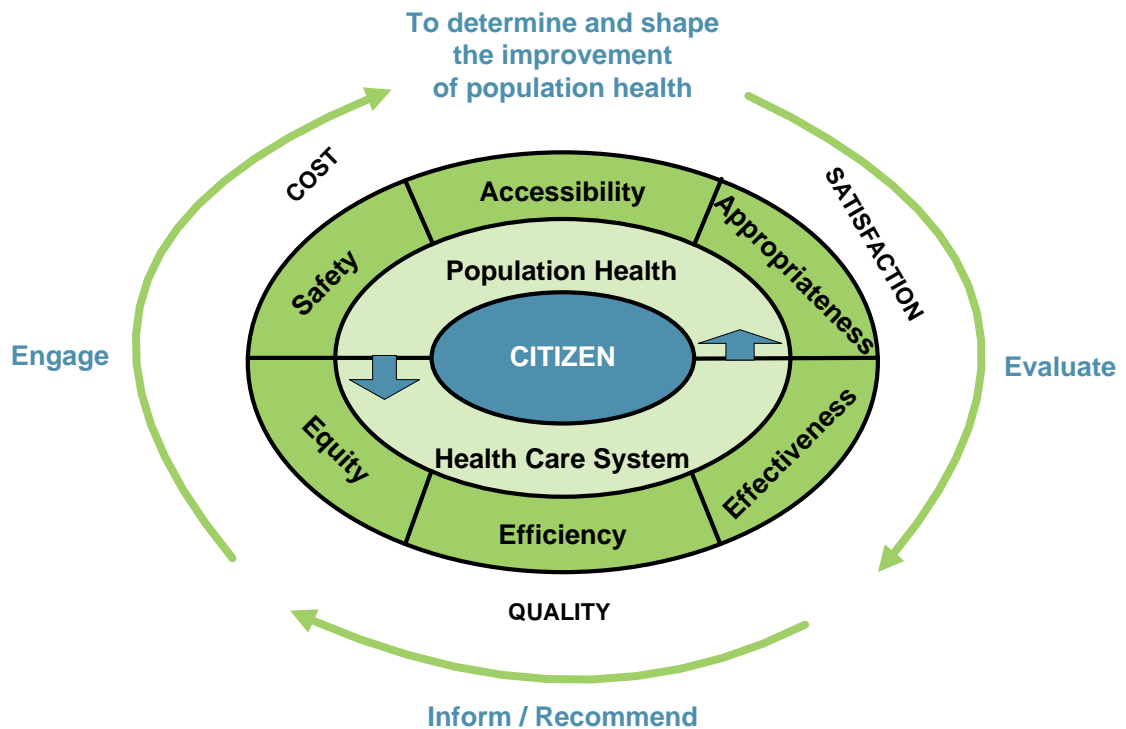
New Brunswickers have a right to be aware of the decisions being made, to be part of the decision-making process, and to be aware of the outcomes delivered by the health system and its cost. The New Brunswick Health Council will foster this transparency, engagement, and accountability by:

Engaging citizens in a meaningful dialogue.

Measuring, monitoring, and evaluating population health and health service quality.

Informing citizens on health system's performance.

Recommending improvements to health system partners.



II. 2012-2013 Proposed Business Plan

The work of the New Brunswick Health Council continues to be guided by the five strategic axes listed below. Furthermore, our Council was structured in four working groups; Engagement, Population Health, Care Experience and Sustainability.

Following are our five strategic axes with the respective working group appearing in parenthesis:

1. Develop and implement mechanisms to engage the population as well as other interested parties (*Citizen Engagement*)
2. To measure, monitor and evaluate the level of population health (*Population Health*)
3. To measure, monitor and evaluate health service quality (*Care Experience*)
4. To measure, monitor and evaluate the level of population satisfaction with health services and health service quality (*Care Experience*)
5. To measure, monitor and evaluate the sustainability of health services in New Brunswick (*Sustainability*)

While respecting our mandate and role in the health system, the nature of our work continues to evolve. We have built a constructive network of collaborators to feed the evolution and updating of our reporting tools.

Increasing the number of people who are aware of the information prepared by the NBHC remains a key challenge moving forward. Our work is perceived as essential to having healthier and engaged New Brunswickers, improved health services and a more sustainable health system. Meanwhile, we must also recognize that, for the most part, we are not equipping our managers to effectively implement the required change management initiatives. For example, citizens are not always informed of how to maintain their health when leaving the hospital or don't have access to prevention services in order to avoid being hospitalized. When they finally leave the hospital, there are important variations between health zones in the proportion of patients who know what to do when they return home.

We have communicated our observations and recommendations regarding required steps for effective change in our first recommendations to the Minister of Health in the summer of 2011. In January 2012, we also submitted to the Minister of Health a status report on sustainability. We will have the opportunity to monitor the response to these recommendations during the 2012-2013 fiscal year and report accordingly.

III. Objectives for 2012-2013

Here are observations and proposed key deliverables for each area of our work for 2012-2013:

Population Health

The NBHC is mandated to measure, monitor and evaluate the level of population health and to report publicly regarding this work. Our first task was to design a framework to measure population health followed by achieving agreement among various stakeholders regarding the frame work and best available indicators.

Our first report brought attention to the provincial obesity challenge; the second report brought attention to the importance of addressing mental health issues. The recent addition to the population health snap shot helped establish links between health status, health determinants, the prevalence of chronic illnesses and the top hospital admissions.

As our base tool continues to serve the purpose of monitoring the level of population health in order to inform citizens, other needs are being identified to help communities and related stakeholders understand where they can focus their efforts.

During the following year:

- We will be releasing our updated Population Health Snapshot in the winter of 2013;
- We will also have updated information regarding our Youth Population Health indicators in the fall of 2012.

Care Experience

The NBHC is required to report on the quality of our health services and on population satisfaction with health services and health service quality. Our Health System Report Card has helped highlight the need to focus on primary care and has also served as a reference tool for identifying performance indicators regarding our health services. In fact, the perceived value of the tool within the system helped increase the number of commonly agreed upon indicators from 48 for the first report card to 111 for the second.

In addition to the Health System Report Card, the NBHC is also developing annual care experience surveys in order to cover the full scope

of services: Acute Care (2010), Primary Care (2011), Home Care (2012) and long term care (2013). Once the cycle completed, each survey will be repeated every four years.

In the coming year, we will be doing the following work:

- We will have a public release of our Home Care Experience Survey results in the fall of 2012;
- We will publicly release an update to our Health System Report Card in the winter of 2012-2013;
- We will be working on the preparation for our long term care experience survey starting in the fall of 2012.

Sustainability

As a province we compare favourably to the rest of the country when it comes to how much we spend on health care and the level of resources at our disposal. Meanwhile, we don't compare as well when it comes to the health of our population and on many quality standards regarding our health services.

The NBHC has contributed to raising awareness regarding our health system sustainability challenge, but much work is still needed by all stakeholders. There has been an increase of interest in the sustainability information prepared by the NBHC and our work continues in this area.

Although we have built base information for informing citizens and stakeholders of the sustainability challenge, our ability to report on performance is limited by what has been identified as clear system objectives. The Government Renewal initiative represents an opportunity to improve this situation. The NBHC is contributing to the health system efforts of providing the provincial government with clear targets and measures.

In 2011, the Canadian Institute of Actuaries approached the NBHC to discuss the potential for a collaboration regarding the issue of health system sustainability. As a profession, they believe that health systems would be better equipped to deal with the sustainability challenge by having an actuarial perspective. After discussions with national stakeholders, they identified the NBHC as a potential partner. This represents a valuable contribution in light of the various provincial demographic trends that can affect the distribution of health services in the future.

Therefore, here are the proposed deliverables for the coming year:

- We will be contributing to the development of common health system targets and measures in support of the current Government Renewal initiative. Work has already been initiated.
- During 2012, we will be reporting on the result of the collaboration with the Canadian Institute of Actuaries.
- We will provide a public status report regarding the response to our first recommendations to the Minister of Health in the winter of 2012.

Citizen Engagement

The NBHC is mandated “to develop and implement mechanisms to engage the citizens of New Brunswick in meaningful dialogue for the purpose of improving health service quality in the province”.

Building on our 2010 provincial citizen engagement initiative, we have held dialogue sessions with university students and local governments in 2011. We will continue reaching out to local governments in 2012 and our focus will also turn to students in our provincial community colleges. In addition to initiatives targeted towards the public, there is a growing recognition of the need to better inform those who work in our health services. We will be pursuing opportunities aimed at raising awareness regarding the information produced by the NBHC.

Healthier and engaged citizens, improved health service quality and a sustainable health system are the key drivers of NBHC’s work. Based on the results of our tools, we now have a better appreciation of areas requiring attention regarding the quality of our health services. The NBHC will be exploring how to combine the proposal of mechanism to engage citizens with the identified areas of health services that require improvements.

Keeping that in mind, we will:

- Complete presentations to local municipal networks and to the sub-groups of municipalities across New Brunswick.
- As a follow-up to the dialogue sessions held on all provincial university campuses in 2011, we will complete a tour of NBCC campuses by winter 2013.
- We will also develop mechanisms targeting health system stakeholders, including front line workers and community groups, with the goal of increasing awareness of the information prepared by the NBHC and build capacity in using this information.

In Conclusion, the members of the New Brunswick Health Council and its employees are proud of the work accomplished during the 2011-2012 fiscal year. We will continue our efforts to diversify, to analyse and to promote our information regarding the health of our citizens and the performance of the New Brunswick Health System. These efforts will guide our discussions as we prepare our next recommendations for the Minister of Health.