



**New Brunswick
Health Council**

Engage. Evaluate. Inform. Recommend.

2013-2014 Business Plan

March 21st, 2013

I. Mandate of the NBHC

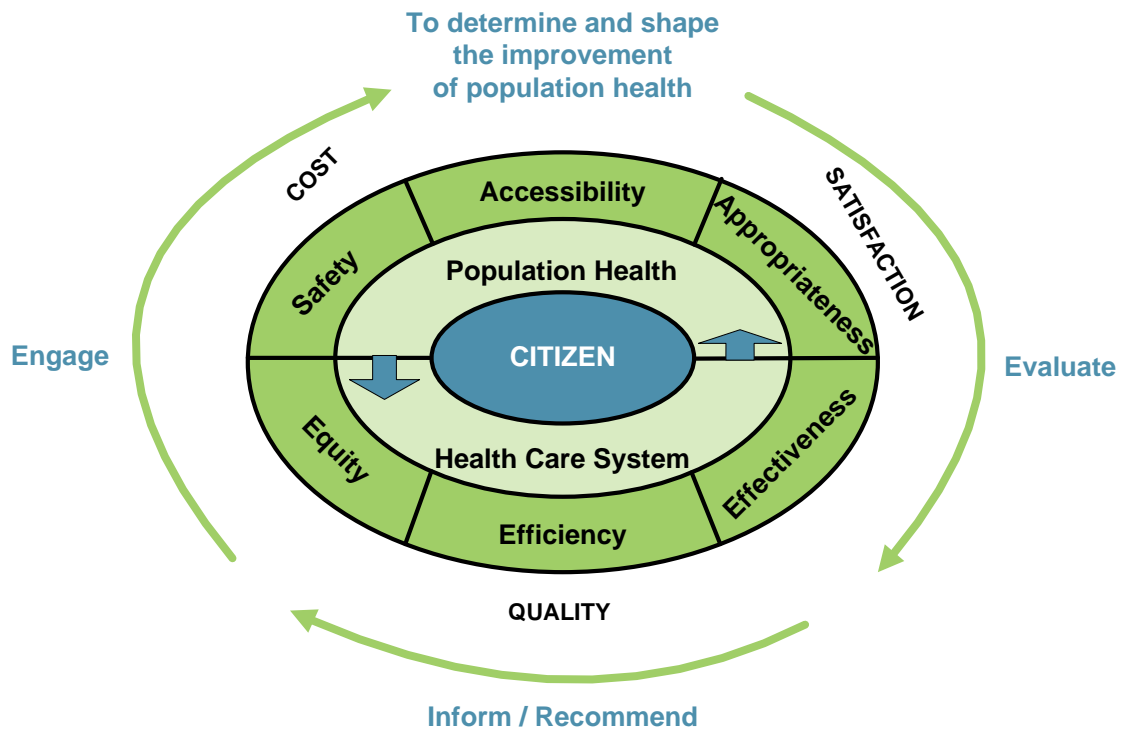
New Brunswickers have a right to be aware of the decisions being made, to be part of the decision-making process, and to be aware of the outcomes delivered by the health system and its cost. The New Brunswick Health Council will foster this transparency, engagement, and accountability by:

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 the Minister of Health.



II. 2013-2014 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.

While sharing the information from our reports and surveys to all health system partners, the NBHC has gained an appreciation of the perceived value of what often amounts to be new information. For many managers, and those having influence on the evolution of health services, they have never had access to the type of information that is now being made available. This is leading to the identification of many new opportunities for improving the quality of health services. The information organized by the NBHC can be used by the population and communities to support their positions and nourish evidence based decisions.

If this type of information was not previously available for so many people, it is important to also recognize that the ability to translate this new information into improvement strategies does not come naturally. The current Government Renewal Initiative, particularly the activities of the Office of Health System Renewal, will provide opportunities for capacity building regarding the use of performance indicators.

III. Objectives for 2013-2014

Here are observations and proposed key deliverables for each area of our work for 2013-2014:

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. Recent additions to the population health snap shot helped establish links between health status, health determinants, the prevalence of chronic illnesses and the top hospital admissions.

Our work in 2012-2013 has contributed to enhancing our collective perspective regarding potential years of life lost due to premature mortality. New Brunswick is above the Canadian average in these premature deaths (before the age of 75). Also, 72 per cent of this premature mortality is considered avoidable. New Brunswick compares well with other provinces when considering treatable mortalities, but not as well when looking at preventable mortalities.

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 2014;
- We will also have updated information regarding our Youth Population Health indicators in the fall of 2013.
- We will be leading the development of 34 community profiles, covering all of New Brunswick. These are expected to be completed by the fall of 2013.

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 and now has 137 indicators.

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). Now that the cycle is completed, each survey will be repeated every three years.

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

- We will have a public release of our Acute Care Experience Survey results in the fall of 2013;
- We will publicly release an update to our Health System Report Card in the winter of 2013-2014;
- We will be working on the preparation for the second edition of our primary care experience survey starting in the fall of 2013;
- In the fall of 2013, we will have completed reports regarding the assessment of diabetes clinics in the province of New Brunswick.

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.

The work of the Office of Health System Renewal during the 2012-2013 fiscal year has helped to better define the sustainability challenge and is providing opportunities for a more focused effort. In addition, the Minister of Health has clearly stated that he expects full collaboration from all organizations.

The work of the Office of Health System Renewal will require the support of the NBHC in the coming year. There will be many opportunities to leverage the work that has already been done by the NBHC, in addition to providing support in the preparation of new information. Consequently, this work will improve the ability of the NBHC to inform citizens regarding the sustainability challenge and on the health system's performance in facing this challenge.

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

- We will be collaborating with all health system organizations and the Office of Health System Renewal during the coming year;
- We will have a specific focus on increasing the level of information that is available for the public in the "sustainability" section of our web site;
- We will provide a public status report regarding the response to our first recommendations to the Minister of Health, this should follow the release of the next Provincial Health Plan.

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".

In 2010, the NBHC held its first provincial engagement initiative that was composed of nine full day dialogue sessions and prepared a report capturing "what was said" by citizens. Following this initiative, dialogue sessions targeting youth (university and college campuses) and local government representatives from across the province were also undertaken. In addition, the NBHC was mandated by the Minister of Health to facilitate discussions, capture what was being said and prepare a report on this content for the Provincial Health Plan consultations that occurred in the summer of 2012.

Citizens are also called upon to respond to our surveys and the results are leveraged to improve health service quality. Engagement has become a guiding principle in how the NBHC performs its work, whether in how we involve stakeholders in the preparation of our surveys or in the development and evolution of our reporting tool. When we add up all the individuals who

have been part of our various dialogue sessions, our surveys and development of our reporting tools, this represents approximately 25,000 New Brunswick citizens who have been engaged through our work.

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 health of our citizens, quality of our health services and we are also better informed pertaining to the available resources and their evolution. While recognizing the amount of work that has been achieved to date, Council members also acknowledge that much work remains in informing citizens on all we have learned through our work.

Keeping that in mind, we will:

- Hold dialogue sessions in all zones across the province, with the primary goal of informing citizens of what we have learned through our work, particularly as we assessed the progress that has been made in relations to our initial recommendations. The release of the next Provincial Health Plan will no doubt serve as a backdrop for these discussions.
- Strengthen our ability to inform stakeholders regarding the information stemming from our work. Our analysis will include a communications strategy, maximising the use of our web site and social media tools, web training, leveraging partnerships in circulating our information and how we make our various reports public.
- Plan our next steps pertaining to citizen engagement and dialogue sessions with related stakeholders.

In Conclusion, the members of the New Brunswick Health Council and its employees are proud of the work accomplished during the 2012-2013 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. The work of the Office of Health System Renewal has generated several new opportunities and we expect that this will continue in the coming year. The work of the NBHC provides a privileged perspective pertaining to the state of our provincial health system and its evolution. Council members are committed to providing quality reports pertaining to the work areas of the NBHC and leveraging this information to inform and engage citizens and in any future recommendations that are made to the Minister of Health.