



Connects

Vol. 3, Num. 1



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RÉSEAU DE SANTÉ

Horizon
HEALTH NETWORK

Horizon Board

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Connects

Dear staff and physicians,

It is with great pride that I recently celebrated my one year anniversary with Horizon. This last year represents a significant journey, as I have met with staff, volunteers, patients and community members throughout the region. Horizon is a large organization, serving a significant portion of this province. To achieve the fiscal stability that it has is a remarkable accomplishment, and I am proud of the work that all of staff continue to undertake in order to find efficiencies and ensure financial sustainability.



John McGarry,
President and CEO

With support from staff and physicians, Horizon has begun shifting its corporate focus to ensure it is responding to the needs of the community and providing a quality care experience for patients and their families. In order to better serve and understand the needs of public, patients and their families we will continue to engage our stakeholders as we move forward in the Patient and Family Centred Care process. The end goal is greater integration of patients and their family members as true partners within the provision of care. Horizon's commitment to patient centred care is discussed in more detail in this edition of Connects.

Horizon is also in the process of developing a new strategic plan that will reconsider the organization's mission, and focus its service efforts. Lead by the Board, focus group meetings have been held with key stakeholders whose feedback will be incorporated into the final plan. These focus groups provided only a sampling of our communities' suggestions and concerns. I hope that others will be encouraged to participate by reviewing the Strategic Planning Primer and completing the Feedback Questionnaire which are both available on www.HorizonNB.ca.

Furthermore, as a part of our ongoing public communication, we have recently enhanced our social media presence. In addition to our corporate Facebook and Twitter accounts, you can now follow me on Twitter [@JohnCEOHorizon](https://twitter.com/JohnCEOHorizon). My account will feature staff accomplishments and success stories, health-care news, and other organizational updates.

Horizon hopes to enhance our avenues for direct and open communication with our public and staff. Over the next couple of months I plan to meet with staff to hear their ideas for improvements, their concerns, and how they can be involved with putting the patient and families perspective in their day to day work. The dates of these sessions will be posted on Skyline, Horizon's intranet, as well sent to the local areas through email.

I am confident in the dedication of our staff and as we move forward in providing quality patient and family care.

Sincerely,

John McGarry,
President and CEO

@JohnCEOHorizon

Horizon's social media presence expanded

HORIZON – As part of Horizon's ongoing commitment to improving communications with patients, public and staff, Horizon's CEO, John McGarry, has joined the world of Twitter ([@JohnCEOHorizon](#)). Mr. McGarry will be tweeting about staff accomplishments and success stories, health-care news, and organizational updates. He will also share his personal experiences from talking with patients.

In addition to Mr. McGarry's Twitter account, Horizon has corporate [Facebook](#) and Twitter ([@HorizonHealthNB](#)) accounts. Horizon's corporate social media accounts are used to communicate corporate information such as news, updates, healthy living information, and to share our organization's publications such as the [Community Report](#) and [Horizon Connects](#).



In order to effectively serve our patients, public and staff, Horizon has developed [Social Media Principles](#) which are now available [online](#). We encourage everyone to review them to better understand our process.

Horizon develops new strategic plan

HORIZON – Horizon's Board is in the process of developing a new strategic plan that will guide the organization's mission and focus its service efforts. The process it has adopted to do so creates opportunities for Horizon's key stakeholders, patients, employees, physicians, community and business members to have a say in defining our future priorities.

One of the ways that the organization has identified to solicit feedback from stakeholders is through facilitated planning sessions. Horizon is hosting a number of planning sessions with various internal and external stakeholders in February and March.

As we move along in this process, there are multiple factors that will impact how sets priorities. They include:

- Trends in health care delivery in Canada
- Trends in New Brunswick

- Provincial health system priorities
- Basic facts and information about the Horizon Health Network
- Current Horizon priorities and challenges



A Strategic Primer has been prepared, which discusses these issues, and is available on our website. Horizon will not be able to meet with everyone in the province but we encourage you to review the primer, and send your feedback to StrategicPlanning@HorizonNB.ca.

The new strategic plan should be complete this summer.

Focusing on patient care

HORIZON – Delivery of care must be aligned with the needs, desires, beliefs and cultural sensitivities held by our patients and their family members. To do this, Horizon is shifting its focus to meeting the needs of patients, their families and the community. This is done through a community engagement process.

Compassion, dignity, respect, communication and coordination of care to meet the unique needs of each patient will be a key driver of Horizon's success. Consideration of the values, perspectives and choices of patients through collaborative partnership will be embraced fully within our health-care model. This endeavour will introduce a change in culture within our organization – it is a journey as opposed to an objective. Horizon is also committed to providing patients, their family and all members of the public with quality health care in the official language of their choice, and will use increased vigilance to ensure access to services for both linguistic communities.

A greater focus on patient centred care will encompass an increased level of commitment toward improved patient safety, quality improvement and performance measurement practices. The end result will be greater integration of patients and their family members as true partners within the provision of care.

Key steps to attaining Patient and Family Centred Care include:

- Engage executive leadership to ensure participation and accountability for system redesign.
- Develop priorities and action plans using patient, family and community engagement processes and models.
- Create a Patient and Family Advisory Council, with a broad-based focus to improve patient care experiences at all levels across Horizon.
- Involve staff and physicians at the front-line level, in addition to managers and directors, to design and implement changes in care delivery policies, processes and practices.
- Integrate Patient / Family Advisors across the health network in key committees and program groups.
- Commit to ongoing measurement and improvement of patient satisfaction with the care experience across the continuum, with initial focus on the acute care system.
- Embrace an enhanced culture of safety, with focus on improved outcomes in measures of infection, incidents with harm, and hand hygiene.



MARGARET MELANSON

Vice President Quality and Patient Centred Care

- Reaffirm the organization's vigilance toward full implementation of all Required Organization Practices as delineated by Accreditation Canada.

Patient and Family Centred Care – To Date:

- 1. Focus Groups:** 'Ideas and Solutions' focus groups were held in Fredericton, Moncton, Saint John and Miramichi with members of the public who had indicated interest. In addition, further focus groups will be scheduled in smaller communities, and with specific patient populations including young adults, parents and mental health patients.
- 2. Directors Council / Leadership Advisory Committee Presentations:** Meetings have been held with Horizon's management, including its senior leadership, to introduce the patient and family centred care initiative and seek support as projects are undertaken.
- 3. Identification Cards:** Focus groups have also been undertaken within each geographic area to seek input toward new staff identification cards. Improvements to I.D. cards will ensure staff members' first name and title/position will be more visible to patients and the public.
- 4. Official Languages:** A detailed action plan to improve the Active Offer (offering patients and the public the opportunity for service in their language of choice), and to audit the response to the offer, will be developed in collaboration with the Université de Moncton.

Next Steps:

- 1. Operational Plan:** An operational plan with specific objectives and actions for the Patient and Family Centred Care initiative to be completed.
- 2. Indicator Dashboard for Patient and Family Centred Care:** A dashboard with metrics designed to monitor improvement in patient centred care will be prepared.
- 3. Patient Satisfaction Surveys:** A plan for conducting biannual patient satisfaction surveys will be prepared.

Addictions and Mental Health Services improve readmission rates

MIRAMICHI – Over the last three months, Miramichi Regional Hospital's readmission rates for mental health patients has decreased by 81%.

In May 2013, Addictions and Mental Health Services in the Miramichi area looked for ways to reduce readmission rates at the Miramichi Regional Hospital as part the Performance Excellence Process (PEP).

"The success in Miramichi is not a coincidence. It exemplifies the dedication, collaborative effort and commitment of the frontline workers and all involved in making this a success."

DR. SANJAY SIDDHARTHA
Chief of Psychiatry

The goal of the project was to reduce the current rate of unplanned admissions (15%) down to the national average of 9%. In order to achieve this, the PEP team was established to include process owners Dr. Sanjay Siddhartha, Chief of Psychiatry and Cynthia MacDonald, Director of Miramichi Addictions and Mental Health Services. Along with Services' representatives from the community and hospital, the team looked at current practices within the clinic to identify any work-related inefficiencies.

They identified potential opportunities to streamline processes while continuing to promote best patient care.

LEAN Six Sigma (LSS) process steps were used to define the problem and measure and analyze contributing factors. Based on the data analysis, LSS helped to develop and implement process improvement and control plans, which included a review of all hospital mental health pre-admission, admission, treatment, pre and post-discharge processes.

Specific improvements to current processes include:

- a heightened awareness and application of admission criteria
- enhanced documentation, individual patient care plans and communication with community Addictions and Mental Health services
- regularly scheduled communication with the Department of Social Development

SONYA GREEN-HACHÉ
Quality Consultant



- a new pre-discharge process was also developed and implemented in order for mental health hospital patients to receive an appointment with Community Addictions and Mental Health services

Through PEP, the team not only exceeded their goal but also surpassed their target. By November 2013, the rate was reduced to an average of three readmissions over a three month period, an improvement of 81%. This has also resulted in an added bonus of a soft savings of over \$23,000.



From left: Cynthia MacDonald, Director Miramichi Addictions and Mental Health; Dr. Sanjay Siddhartha, Chief of Psychiatry, Miramichi; Sonya Green-Haché, Quality Consultant

The team continuously evaluates its new and enhanced processes by completing monthly audits. These results are posted for staff and physicians so they can visually determine their success.

Mental health patients receive the greatest benefit of these improved processes as they are receiving the right care at the right time in the right place.



Safe winter walking and snow removal

HORIZON – Winter can be a challenging season for regular outdoor activities. Freezing rain, hard-packed snow and icy surfaces are often hazards for unsuspecting pedestrians. Just one bad fall can bring lasting long-term consequences. However, taking a few simple precautions can make outdoor activities safer this time of the year.

Choose appropriate winter footwear as a first step. For warmth and stability, the choice of a light weight, well-insulated and waterproof boot with a thick, non-slip tread sole can reduce the risk of a fall. A low and wide heel is also recommended.

Seniors can opt to use ice grippers on footwear or attach an ice pick at the end of their canes in order to increase their available traction. However, such accessories can become dangerously slippery and must be removed before walking on smooth surfaces such as stone, tile and ceramic.

It is always better to avoid hazardous environmental situations by planning a safe route for walks ahead of time, but often it is not a possible option. Facing an icy surface can be a paralyzing experience that can discourage people from enjoying outdoor activities. A few modifications of body movements while walking

DR. RICHARD LOUIS

*Injury Prevention Coordinator
NB Trauma Program*



can increase stability on an icy surface. According to the Canada Safety Council:

- Slow down and think about your first move. Keep your body as loose as possible and spread your feet to more than a foot apart to provide a base of support. This will stabilize you as you walk.
- Next, keep your knees loose and do not let them lock. If you can, let them bend a bit. This will keep your center of gravity lower to the ground, which further stabilizes the body.
- Now you are ready to take a step. Make the step small, placing your whole foot down at once. Then shift your weight very slowly to this foot and bring your other foot to meet it the same way. Keep a wide base of support.
- Some people prefer to drag their feet or shuffle them. If this feels better to you, then do so. Just remember to place your whole foot on the ice at once and keep your base of support approximately one foot or about 1/3 metre wide.
- In areas where it is possible, putting salt or sand on the ground after the removal of ice and snow is a great way to reduce possible injuries.

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Safe winter walking and snow removal

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Snow removal safety

It is important to warm up and stretch your shovelling muscles – especially your legs, arms and back, before going out into the cold. Lunges and jumping jacks are a good way to get your blood flowing to your muscles.

Then choose a shovel that is the right fit. If the shovel is too big, you may have to push and lift a load that could be too heavy. On the other hand, a shovel that is too small will increase the time it takes to complete your task, allowing for more repetitive strain on your back.

Once the proper shovel is chosen, use a broad-based grasp with your hands spaced shoulder-width apart on the handle. This will provide the leverage necessary to efficiently and safely finish the job. Always lift using the larger muscles of your legs and bend at your knees. When tossing the snow, avoid twisting the back – toss the snow directly in front of you.

It is highly recommended to have snow removed from your roof by specialists who have the proper skills, experience and the required equipment for the job.



Photo by Sue Mulhall.
Submitted as part of the 2011 Horizon Photo Contest.



Photo by Karen Baird.
Submitted as part of the 2011 Horizon Photo Contest.

However, follow these additional safety tips if you decide to do the task for yourself.

- Never work alone on a roof. Have someone nearby in case of an incident.
- If possible, remove the snow from the ground by using a roof rake with a telescopic handle.
- If you need to get on the roof, secure the ladder into a pile of snow in order to increase its stability. Do not place it on an icy, flat surface.
- Use a safety harness fastened to a strong anchor point, such as your chimney.
- Stay away from the edge of the roof, as snow drifts can be deceiving.
- Be careful when using your ladder to come down from your roof. Do not try to jump off into a seemingly safe pile of snow.

Finally, pay attention to your body's signals, such as minor aches and pains or tiredness and fatigue. Take a break every 15 minutes to stand up straight, walk around, and drink water to avoid dehydration and overheating.

By following these simple safety tips, you can minimize the potential risks associated with certain winter activities while maximizing the benefits of being outside during these cold months.

[Click here](#) for more information about staying safe in winter or contact the [New Brunswick Trauma Program](#) by [email](#) or telephone 648-8040.

Prevention of Venous Thromboembolism (VTE)

HORIZON – Venous Thromboembolism (VTE) is a condition where an abnormal blood clot (thrombus) develops inside a deep vein of the leg or arm, referred to as a *Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)* or to the lungs, which is referred to as *Pulmonary Embolism (PE)*. It is one of the most common and preventable complications of hospitalization. Every year, VTE is responsible for the death of more people than breast cancer, AIDS and motor vehicle crashes combined.

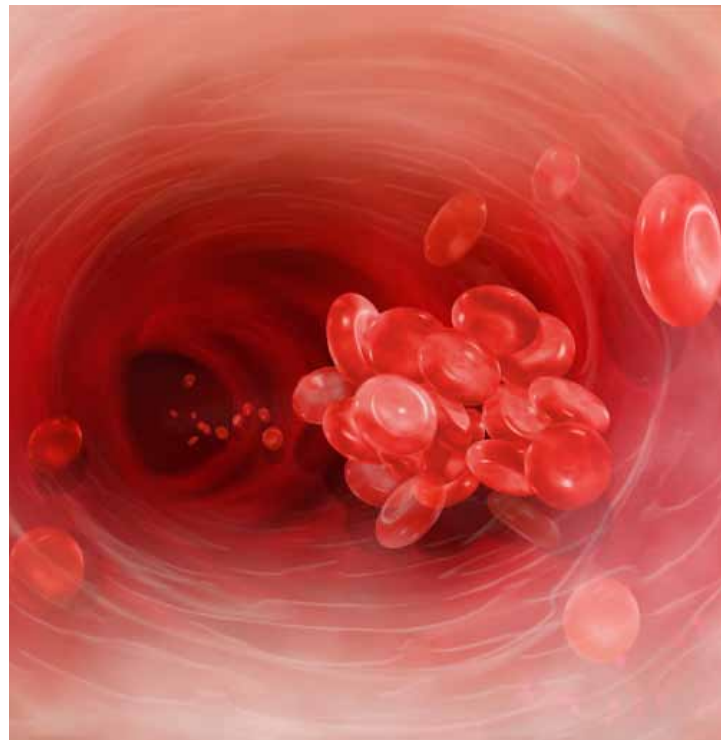
The prevention of VTE is a priority for Horizon as VTE is a serious and common complication for patients in hospital or undergoing surgery. Evidence shows that incidence of VTE can be substantially reduced or prevented by providing appropriate, evidence-based medication to prevent blood from clotting too much.

Within Horizon, a consistent approach is used to identify risk factors and provide interventions. This includes screening of hospitalized patients to determine if they are in a high-risk group of developing VTE and providing interventions such as walking, leg exercises and if required medication. Specifics related to these interventions are communicated by the health-care team to patients. These initiatives are being audited to evaluate success.

Patients are encouraged to speak to their health-care provider about their risks and recommendations to prevent VTE.

DIANE BEAULIEU

Patient Safety Consultant



The risk factors for VTE are increased by the following factors:

Factors influenced by the patient	Factors related to underlying disease or medical condition	Factors introduced by medical or surgical treatment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Age ✓ History of thrombosis ✓ Immobility ✓ Obesity ✓ Thrombophilia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Heart Failure ✓ Malignancy ✓ Pregnancy ✓ Trauma ✓ Varicose veins ✓ Venous insufficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Caesarean section ✓ Chemotherapy ✓ Concomitant medication ✓ Major surgery ✓ Orthopaedic surgery (hip or knee)