

# **Health Sciences North 2023 Annual 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 Meeting – June 2023**

Let me begin by acknowledging the resiliency of the individuals who have worked tirelessly at HSN and throughout the region this past year. I am very proud to work alongside the teams who continue to commit themselves to improving care for patients and ensuring that HSN continues to be a tertiary care centre of excellence. Thank you. Merci. Miigwetch.

It is my pleasure to report on the progress towards achieving the 2022-2023 performance goals and the activities of the HSN medical staff this past year.

This past year has been a journey of rebuilding and recovery of our services at HSN as we moved through the post-pandemic era. As the Chief of Staff, I continue to meet with Chiefs of Departments, Medical Directors and the Medical Staff Executive at least monthly to ensure effective communication of the most current information, to understand the challenges and questions arising and to address issues in a timely fashion.

Not unlike many hospitals, HSN and our region are experiencing significant gaps in health human resources. This year, the medical human resources planning cycle was re-aligned with the budget planning cycle in order to ensure that resources and potential budgeting impacts could be considered for the following year. Through a comprehensive review of our medical human resources, identification of high-risk areas allowed us to strategize solutions. For instance, a succession-planning framework was developed to assist us in identifying future recruitment needs.

Recruitment efforts across these high priority areas and all services are well underway with 24 medical staff recruits confirmed for this year. Thank you to the Medical Affairs team, the Credentials Committee and the Medical Human Resources Planning Committee. Your hard work and dedication are an example to everyone. Thank you for being your best every day!

HSN's collaboration with the Joint Department of Medical Imaging, a multi-hospital department that serves five hospital sites belonging to the University Health Network, Sinai Health System and Women's College Hospital, continues to provide quality and timely care to patients. What this means for patients is that the proportion of medical imaging read by fellowship-trained radiologists who specialize in a sub-specialty of imaging has gone up from 20% in 2019 to over 80% today. The number of on-site radiologists has increased. The average turnaround time for imaging reporting for patients in the Emergency Department decreased from 7 hours in 2019 to one hour today. Meanwhile, the average turnaround time for imaging reporting for inpatients decreased from 15 hours in 2019 to two hours today, despite a 31% increase in volumes during the period. The average turnaround time for outpatient imaging reporting improved from 17 days in 2019 to 6 days today, despite an 80% increase in

volumes during the period. This results in more specific and reliable diagnostic imaging, shorter wait times in the Emergency Department, a reduced length of stay for inpatients, and quicker answers for outpatients.

Colleagues from the Ottawa Hospital and Windsor Regional Hospital conducted an inter-professional review of the medicine program. Throughout this process, many positive comments regarding the quality of care provided at HSN and throughout the region were shared. Overall, 12 recommendations were received. The medicine program leaders are working together to enhance the service delivery model and optimize and coordinate patient centered care in this department.

Aligned with HSN's 2019-2024 Strategic Goal to be Digitally Enabled, efforts are underway to engage the medical staff to support the successful implementation of the Regional Electronic Medical Record. The ONE initiative or ONE Health Information Technology System is a regional alignment of HSN and 23 of our partner hospitals across Northeastern Ontario in the utilization of one electronic medical record. The primary goal of this initiative is to enhance safe, evidence-based and patient- and family-centred care through a clinical transformation enabled by workflow redesign and supported by technology systems.

Thank you to our medical leadership team: Department Chiefs, Medical Directors and our Medical Staff Executive. This team of leaders has worked tirelessly to ensure that challenges and questions of the medical staff are addressed in a timely manner. For those whose tenure has come to an end, thank you for your service and dedication. For those starting in new roles, thank you for stepping forward and accepting this important role.

Thank you to the entire medical staff - physicians, midwives and dentists. I want to acknowledge how you worked together through the continued pressures in our health care system. The ongoing stressful situations of capacity challenges, regional pressures, surgical wait times, workplace violence events and staffing shortages across the multidisciplinary care teams were always present. Yet, you rose above and took care of patients, their families, our communities and each other.

It is the teamwork and collaboration at HSN that encourages me to share Sean Gilroy's story with you.

Sean is 36 years old and his life took an unexpected turn in late 2022 when he suffered a sudden stroke. He was at risk of being permanently disabled or possibly dying.

Sean was a candidate for a procedure introduced at HSN in February 2020 called endovascular thrombectomy or EVT, a specialized and time-sensitive treatment to remove a stroke-causing blood clot from a person's brain.

Sean's life-saving care was possible thanks to the dedication and expertise of dozens of staff and physicians from over 15 departments at HSN including the Acute Stroke Unit,

Intensive Care Unit, Emergency Department, Medical Imaging Department, Intensive Rehabilitation Unit, and others. It is the dedication of our teams at HSN, and our regional partners, to providing quality care to the people of Northeastern Ontario that allow for stories like Sean's to be told. Sean is one of the more than 125 patients who have benefited from the EVT procedure right here in Northeastern Ontario.

Thank you for the opportunity to have served as your Chief of Staff since 2017. It has been an honour.