



yukon
hospital corporation

operating whitehorse general hospital



Strategic Plan

2009 - 2013

Updated September 2010



Introduction

Our Strategic Plan represents the collective work of the Board of Trustees of the Yukon Hospital Corporation (YHC) and includes input received from our stakeholders. This plan will guide the creation of a safe, seamless, responsive and sustainable acute care system.

The original YHC Strategic Plan was produced in 2008 to cover the operating years 2009 – 2013. To ensure this Plan remains fresh and dynamic, it has been updated in 2009, and again in 2010. The updates are specifically designed to effectively position the YHC to meet future challenges

As the implementation of this Strategic Plan progresses over the next five years, the Board of Trustees will continue to annually review and update the Plan to ensure that new and emerging challenges are effectively addressed. We welcome the views of our stakeholders and invite our stakeholders to work together with us to build an exciting future.





Strategic Plan Commitment

As a sign of our commitment to the vision outlined in this document, the members of the Board of Trustees of the Yukon Hospital Corporation have affixed their signatures below.

Craig Tuton, Chair

Wes Wirth, Alternate-Chair

David Borud

Richard Durocher

Dr. Sherillynne Himmelsbach

Donna Hogan

Millie Johnson



Clarke, LaPrairie

Florence Roberts

Tanya Solberg

Adeline Webber

Frances Woolsey

Joe MacGillivray, CEO
(Board Ex-Officio)



Our Mission

***To Provide
Quality Acute Care
For the Life and Health
of Yukon People***





Our Vision

Our vision is that by the year 2013, the following statements will describe the Yukon Hospital Corporation and the health care it delivers:

The Yukon Hospital Corporation continues to be highly successful in providing quality acute care services to the people of the Yukon. Our scope of services is now broadened, enabling us to diagnose and treat many conditions in multiple locations. Competent and skilled physicians and nurses, along with dedicated support staff, continue to care for our patients. As training hospitals, we take pride in our progressive excellent service.

YHC employees remain our greatest asset. We operate with a full complement of committed staff. As an “employer of choice”, our vacancies are filled quickly with competent, well-trained individuals. YHC has a Yukon-based and ethnically-diverse employee complement. The First Nations Health Program continues to be a model for health services in Canada.

The latest technologies are available to our patients and physicians, and our expanded emergency departments and operating facilities are fully functioning. Our facilities now include the Whitehorse General Hospital, Watson Lake Hospital, Dawson City Hospital and a range of facilities designed to complement and support our legislated mandate. Our WGH facilities include a secure mental health unit and an expanded visiting specialist clinic. A new YHC



campus residence has been constructed and is available for use. An electronic medical records system promotes patient safety and consistency in treatment across all of our facilities while allowing us to work more efficiently.

Our leading-edge environmental programs and practices ensure that we are using the latest in programming and technology to protect our patients and the environment.

Government continues to provide secure and stable core funding, and we have a fully-funded pension plan. Excellent funding partnerships have been established with a variety of businesses and industries, and we enjoy an unprecedented level of donations. As a credible and trusted partner in the broader Yukon health care community, we support the efforts of our colleagues and provide a seamless transition back to the community for our patients. The YHC's Board of Trustees and our hospitals' Senior Management Teams continue to provide strong and sound leadership, allowing the YHC to adapt to the changing environment and to offer innovative and creative health solutions for Yukon people.





Our Values

Accessibility

We offer open and unrestricted access to all people seeking acute care services.

Compassion

We believe in acting through empathy, understanding and kindness.

Respect

We believe in human dignity, human rights and honour for the individual; and in demonstrating courtesy for the feelings and circumstances of others.

Collaboration

We believe in working together with others to achieve common goals.

Excellence

We believe in achieving exemplary performance.



Our Goals

The following goals represent our priorities for the next five years.

- ***Provide Safe, Comprehensive Patient Care***
- ***Build a Stable and Skilled Workforce***
- ***Achieve Financial Stability***
- ***Become a High-Performing Organization***
- ***Establish a Modern and Efficient Infrastructure***



- ***Develop a Network of Effective Working Partnerships***



Our Challenges, Philosophy and Approach

Over the next five years, we will face a number of challenges in addressing each of our goals. In order to accomplish these goals, we have clarified our philosophy, described our challenges and designed our approach. This is presented in the following pages, along with definitions to ensure a full understanding of our goals.





Goal One **Provide Safe,** **Comprehensive Patient** **Care**

Definition

Comprehensive patient care includes a broad range of acute care services encompassing the entire life of the individual, offered in a high-quality, timely, accessible and culturally-appropriate manner. Patient safety is defined as the prevention and mitigation of unsafe acts within the health care system.

Our Philosophy

We believe that the health and well-being of people is physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. All people have the right to timely, compassionate, high-quality, safe health care so that they may return to an optimal level of health.

YHC is committed to playing a major role in improving patient safety and care through its participation in the Accreditation Canada program and other quality initiatives. Participation in federal, territorial and local quality initiatives is a way of identifying best practice and conditions of unsafe practice; making necessary improvements and promoting safe patient care. In particular it is a means of reducing risk and fostering attention to



continuous quality improvement. By complying with National and Territorial best practices, patient care is enhanced, and the potential for adverse events occurring with YHC facilities is reduced.

YHC supports healthy childbirth; early detection of illness; minimal pain; minimized impact from illness and the side effects of hospitalization; recovery levels which meet or exceed generally-accepted standards; and, appropriate and timely referral when necessary. We believe that dying patients have choices regarding end-of-life care. We believe in the important contribution which comes from the support of family, friends and community.

First Nations people have unique needs, culture and history, and comprise a significant portion of the Yukon's population; therefore, our First Nations patient care programs must reflect those needs. We believe that in order to provide quality care to aboriginal peoples, our programs must be culturally-appropriate and based on aboriginal traditions.

Our Challenges

Over the next few years, the population of the Yukon will grow and there will be increased competition for health care funding. Our facilities are already taxed, our population is aging, and chronic and more complex diseases are on the rise. This requires more sophisticated and costly diagnostic tools and treatments. Public expectations of the health care system are also expanding, resulting in increased demands and changes to health care policy. The demand for health care professionals is increasing,



and attracting these professionals to the Yukon will require special measures. Vacancies will result in increased pressures on our dedicated staff and their life/work balance. Ensuring we have the human resources required to offer the best care possible in all our facilities will be our most demanding task.

We provide culturally and traditionally appropriate programs to meet the needs of First Nations people. These include recruitment, training and retention of qualified First Nations staff to operate the programs; providing cross-cultural training to all hospital employees; linkages to First Nation communities outside Whitehorse; and providing discharge planning, language, traditional medicine, and dietary needs for First Nations patients. Financial issues continue to be a challenge in providing our unique First Nations Health Program.

Our Approach

Our approach to providing safe, comprehensive patient care will be as follows:

- We will ensure our priorities are very clear, and will direct all programs and services toward achieving our primary goal of high quality safe, comprehensive care for our patients.
- We will create and sustain a culture throughout YHC in which patient safety is paramount.
- We will continue to pursue “best practices” through participation in the Accreditation Canada program and other federal and territorial quality initiatives.



- We will focus on delivery of core services throughout YHC facilities, balancing safety, quality, accessibility and affordability.
- We are committed to a model of care which supports the delivery of timely, compassionate, high-quality and safe health care services and utilizes our staff to the best of their abilities.
- YHC has a unique and internationally-recognized First Nations Health Program and we are committed to maintaining our leadership excellence in this area. Not only will we maintain current programs, but we will also address new and emerging needs of our First Nations patients.





Goal Two **Build a Stable and Skilled** **Workforce**

Definition

A stable, skilled workforce is a team of competent and well-trained health care professionals who have appropriate credentials, and who are dedicated to providing quality acute care. This workforce has a strong commitment to compassionate patient care, ongoing learning and achieving work/life balance in the Yukon. The YHC Workforce includes our employees in all our facilities throughout the Yukon.

Our Philosophy

We believe a stable and skilled workforce is the key to achieving comprehensive patient care. We believe our employees are our most important asset. Each individual employee has unique value and potential for growth and the inherent desire to take on personal responsibility. We believe employees must be provided with a work environment which facilitates their health, growth and learning, and which promotes work/life balance so that they may offer their best care to patients. We believe in empowering employees, involving them in decision-making, promoting ongoing learning and offering advancement opportunities within the corporation.



Our Challenges

All health care organizations in Canada are experiencing challenges in attracting and retaining qualified health professionals. Given the Yukon's distance from major centres, we experience unique challenges in attracting employees, especially to our more remote locations. The costs of offering competitive compensation and benefits packages are increasing, and we must compete with organizations which are more financially able to offer incentives. In addition, our current workforce is aging and many retirements will take place within the next five years. This will put greater stress on our existing employees. We must also offer culturally appropriate programs such as our First Nations Health Program. Offering employees modern, well-equipped facilities within which to work will be a continuing challenge. Perhaps most important to our success is the continual creation of an organizational culture which respects, involves and empowers employees so that they choose to remain with the YHC throughout their careers.

Our Approach

Our approach to building a stable and skilled workforce will be as follows:

- We will become an “employer of choice”. This means offering supportive working environments in which employees can learn, grow and advance



within the organization and can realize the value they bring to patients and to the organization.

- We will enhance our recruitment and retention programs. This will involve a variety of initiatives including the development of sound recruitment and training policies; a competitive recruitment package and targeted recruitment programs.
- We will enhance our performance and career development programs. This will assist our efforts to retain competent and capable employees and develop an adaptive and flexible workforce.
- We will emphasize succession planning and promotion from within. This will be an important component of our retention program, together with training, programs to attract students and local candidates for employment, and strengthening relationships with accredited medical teaching facilities.
- We will make more effective use of volunteers to support employees and programs.

Although we are small hospitals, we have many benefits to offer including:

- highly dedicated staff
- high quality physicians who practice with us
- great access to specialists
- a strong Board and Management Team
- community and Government support
- a unique First Nations Health Program
- good facilities with quality programs
- clear direction.



Goal Three

Achieve Financial Stability

Definition

Financial stability is sustained, adequate, flexible funding which allows us to meet our stated goals.

Our Philosophy

We believe that adequate funding is essential to meeting our vision and goals. Given the anticipated increases in the costs of providing health care services, we know that we must operate as efficiently as possible and seek and create alternative funding opportunities.

Our Challenges

The needs of health care outweigh the financial resources available. Tremendous pressure is being placed on the health care system, due to the rising costs of salaries, benefits, pharmaceuticals, technology and equipment, as well as the needs of an aging population with more complex health care issues. Governments will be continually challenged over the next few years to keep health care a priority for tax dollars. We, like other jurisdictions, are experiencing greater competition for funding for our programs.



Our Approach

Our approach to achieving financial stability will be as follows:

Our funding challenges require our priorities to be very clear. This Strategic Plan is the first step in clearly setting priorities for the next five years.

Given that government is our primary source of funding, we must continue to lobby for adequate funding with a view to creating a multi-year agreement for core funding.

- We may explore new alternatives such as borrowing from banking institutions and public-private partnerships within the realms and principles of the *Canada Health Act*. We believe this area presents a unique opportunity for funding certain programs and services for the future.
- We will actively pursue operational efficiencies, economies of scale and promote innovation to optimize use of our existing resources.



Goal Four **Become a High-Performing** **Organization**

Definition

A high-performing organization has the following characteristics:

- Clearly articulated vision and values
- Clearly defined results and priorities
- A high degree of corporate alignment and accountability
- A strong, adaptive culture
- High quality decisions
- Excellent leadership and management capabilities
- A strong ability to achieve results
- Good corporate citizenship

Our Philosophy

We believe by adopting the high-performing organizational model we will be able to provide better patient care and an optimal working environment in all our locations for our employees. We will be able to achieve greater efficiency and adaptability, enabling us to optimize the use of the resources available to us. Innovation and change are natural to a high-performing organization, and this will enable us to offer quality comprehensive service.



Our Challenges

In order to become a high-performing organization, we must be current and in-line with the best practices of other hospitals in Canada. We must be “green”, reliable, adaptable and efficient. Our first challenge is to maintain a full complement of staff. Staff vacancies can create stress for our employees and make it difficult to fulfill our vision. Funding challenges make it difficult to take on new programs and initiatives, to offer staff incentives or to make improvements in existing programs and facilities. As a group of smaller hospitals, we experience the challenges of geographic distance and economies of scale. Vacancies create challenges in communicating throughout the organization. Our traditional health care models result in reluctance to change. Workloads make it difficult to take the time to innovate or creatively address the challenges.

Our Approach

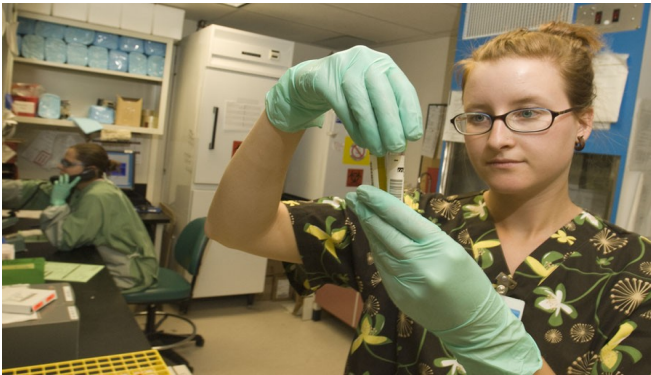
Our approach to becoming a high-performing organization will be as follows:

- We will continue to provide focus and clear direction through strategic and business planning.
- We will continue to build the strength and capacity of the Board of Trustees and the management team.
- We will align organizational operations with our vision and values and ensure a high degree of corporate accountability through implementation



of balanced scorecard and quarterly reporting processes.

- We will enhance decision making processes with clear accountability frameworks, an integrated risk management framework, business continuity plans, and decision support tools.
- We are committed to developing a learning organization which demonstrates our values, supports our strategic goals, and is adaptive, responsive and flexible.
- We will ensure that YHC continues to be a “good corporate citizen” by continuing to comply with all relevant legislation, and ensuring our business practices are legal, moral and ethical.





Goal Five **Establish a Modern and** **Efficient Infrastructure**

Definition

The YHC infrastructure includes three hospitals: the Whitehorse General Hospital, the Watson Lake Hospital and the Dawson city Hospital, as well as various buildings on the YHC Whitehorse Campus. These facilities include a variety of capital equipment, and information technology. To establish a modern and efficient infrastructure requires that we effectively utilize all our facilities, pursue the latest in technology, provide services which meet the needs of our patients and employees, and allow for the greatest ease in accomplishing work with the least cost and effort.

Our Philosophy

We believe our infrastructure provides the foundation for safe, comprehensive patient care across the Yukon and patient care can be improved through capital investment in facilities and equipment. Well-designed, well-functioning hospitals, with the latest relevant technology and equipment, greatly enhance our ability to offer safe, quality patient care. New facilities can assist us in expanding our diagnostic and treatment programs to cover a broad range of conditions. In addition, efficiencies can be achieved through investments in information technology.



Our Challenges

Building new hospitals, and upgrading facilities and equipment are the most costly ventures for an organization. Our funding challenges make it very difficult to invest the large amounts of money required for these purposes. Building hospital facilities is not only costly, but extremely time-consuming. Medical technology is very expensive and changes continually. We will also need to recruit skilled staff to support the operation of these new technologies.

Our Approach

Our approach to establishing a modern and efficient infrastructure will be as follows:

- Ensure hospital facilities in Whitehorse, Watson Lake and Dawson City are safe, functional and well-designed for the future.
- Focus on providing staff with appropriate infrastructure to work productively and safely.
- Develop a five-year capital program to set priorities and identify funding for critical projects.
- Ensure all capital projects and technology purchases are in complete alignment with the Strategic Plan.
- Continually research and investigate new equipment and technologies and their applicability to the YHC.
- Investigate innovative means of funding facility and equipment purchases through partnerships, donations and innovative financing options.
- Develop an effective environmental program.



Goal Six **Develop a Network of** **Effective Working** **Partnerships**

Definition

A network of effective working partnerships requires the YHC to work more closely and collaboratively with other health care providers to integrate services to Yukon people. The intent of this network of partnerships is to provide the full range of health services to all people, based on the core competencies of each organization involved, so that care is provided seamlessly.

Our Philosophy

We believe that working cooperatively and collaboratively with our health care colleagues in a variety of communities will result in seamless transitions between health care providers for our patients. We believe each organization involved in health care has a unique mandate and capability to fulfill specific health care needs. The dynamic integration of these various organizational competencies will result in better service to patients, greater coordination and efficiency as well as opportunities for collaboration in new health care ventures.



Our Challenges

The challenges to developing this network of effective working partnerships include: time; commitment from the various partners; a willingness to participate and commit to change; geography; the cost and availability of technology; finances; and, overcoming traditional perceptions of roles and mandates.

Our Approach

Our approach to developing a network of effective working partnerships will be as follows:

- We will participate in health care forums throughout the Yukon to remain abreast of issues and opportunities.
- We will foster close and harmonious working relationships with our Yukon communities.
- We will communicate regularly with other health care providers.
- We will pursue alternative governance and delivery mechanisms with a focus on “safe patient care”.
- We will formalize various cooperative working relationships with health care partners to offer services.
- We will identify and approach potential health care partners and seek to establish cooperative working arrangements.
- We will encourage a YHC team approach to health care delivery.



Our Commitment

We at the Yukon Hospital Corporation in all our facilities, and in all our locations are committed to achieving the vision and goals outlined in this document. It is our intent to align all existing programs and activities with the contents of this plan. In order to achieve our vision, a key element will be ongoing communications and consultations with the stakeholders in our business – our patients and our employees. We are constantly looking for ways to enhance relationships with our employees and others, in order to engage them in the process of achieving great success. We commit to an ongoing process of measuring and reporting progress, and continually redefining our business plan to ensure the vision and goals contained in this Strategic Plan are achieved. At the end of 2013, we intend to celebrate our success in achieving what we have defined in this document – the continued provision of safe, quality comprehensive acute care services to improve the lives and health of people in the Yukon.



Photos by Archbould Photography