
Trustee Remarks

**Health PEI Annual General
Meeting**

**Charlottetown, PEI.
October 23, 2018**

Honourable Minister Mitchell, Members of the Legislative Assembly, fellow Islanders and guests: Welcome to the 2018 Annual General Meeting of Health PEI. Also, a special hello to everyone joining our meeting through the live webcast. If you don't listen to anything else I say, please heed my request to get a flu shot! It is safe and a proven beneficial healthcare choice!

This is the eighth Annual General Meeting of Health PEI and I am very pleased with the turnout tonight and the interest which has been shown in these meetings over the past seven years. I am, of course, not surprised given the very important role Health PEI plays in every Islander's life. At the outset, I want to thank the hundreds of Islanders who volunteer throughout the year as well as our healthcare foundations and those who contribute to them. You are a key part of our success. I also have met with representatives of the Official Opposition and other parties to get their insight, and I appreciate their views and feedback which was supportive and helpful.

During the past year, I served as a Board member and after a short time off, as Trustee. During this time, I have observed the continued progress of Health PEI fulfilling the mission of the One Island Health System supporting improved Health for Islanders. I am pleased to report that the 2017-2020 Health PEI Strategic Plan remains the focus of our organization, which is available at the Health PEI website. Shortly following this meeting, the Health PEI 2017-2018 Annual Report which highlights how our efforts are monitored will also be added to the website. Our Vision is founded on three key goals:

1. Quality and Safety
2. Access and Co-ordination
3. Innovation and Efficiency

While they are listed as three "equal" goals and compatible with one another, I have, in my previous tenure as a Board Member, considered these goals as ranked in such a manner. In delivery of Health Care - *Quality and Safety are paramount*. During my eight years

on the Health PEI Board, I considered the most important Health PEI Board Committee to be the Quality and Safety Committee. As Islanders, we were fortunate to have it chaired by leading healthcare professionals recognized, not only in PEI but throughout Canada. It will undoubtedly remain an active committee with regular visits to our healthcare facilities to observe and hear first hand from our health care professionals and report back through the Board to Islanders. It is also one of the ways that the Board fulfills its role of accountability to Islanders.

The second key goal of Access and Accountability is imbedded in our mandate as One Island Health System. In Canada, we strive—most successfully, I would argue—to provide equal healthcare to all, something which has been demonstrated consistently to the Health PEI Board. Every day, people travel from Charlottetown to Summerside, O’Leary to Alberton, Souris to Montague and Montague to Charlottetown to access healthcare. Every day, countless numbers of dedicated healthcare workers travel throughout PEI to provide services whether it is home care, physiotherapy or similar supports.

While some services by definition of their specialty are required to be performed in one of our two larger communities in Summerside and Charlottetown, Health PEI will continue to be cognizant of the need to invest throughout PEI---the new investments in the long term care facilities due to be opened in the first half of 2019 in Montague and Tyne Valley is but one example. Similarly, investments in dialysis and palliative care are also examples where our Health PEI leaders have taken steps following consultations with patients, staff and community leaders to promote change.

One thing I am often reminded of is that ‘access to health care’ also means much more than delivering the service on P.E.I. Rarely discussed in settings such as this is the importance of Islanders being involved in a regional delivery of health care outside of PEI. Every day, Islanders access health care at wonderful facilities such as the I.W.K in Halifax, cardiac care procedures in New Brunswick or specialized cancer care in Moncton or Halifax. We should be grateful for being able to access that out-of-province health care when it can only be

delivered safely outside of our province—that is something which is key to our access and costs our province tens of millions of dollars every year and which is money well spent.

I also want to acknowledge the hard work which continues to be done in primary care. Challenges remain throughout our province involving timely access to physicians, nurse practitioners and mental health experts regardless of where one lives. Investments continue to be made as illustrated by the number of nurse practitioners who work side by side with our physicians as well as the new Student Wellbeing Program where community mental health staff, social workers and physiotherapists are working with our children to promote a healthier populace.

Innovation and Efficiency

For us to successfully deliver and sustain our healthcare system, we must continue to invest in people and new technologies. Few people today operate in a workplace where advancements in technology have not altered how we approach our work and healthcare is not different, despite the large amount of necessary human interaction. Through the assistance of hospital foundations, new equipment is introduced to our system which allows for better diagnosis, safer treatments and faster recoveries. Investments in training lead to our professionals working to the scope of their education. One example I want to point out: At the October 15, 2018 Health PEI Board Trustee Public Meeting, a presentation from our Chief Nursing Officer was delivered (a copy of which is also soon available on the Health PEI Board website) which identified that, for each of the next three years, Health PEI will be hiring **annually** approximately 50 newly graduated Registered Nurses. These new nurses will be trained on new equipment and educated on the best practices for their profession. This group will be a key cog in the future sustainability of healthcare delivery on PEI and we will need to invest in their training to successfully onboard them into our system.

One of the advantages of investing in innovation, in addition to ensuring we are able to handle in a safe way, is the opportunity to repatriate services to PEI. We must be cognizant that, in other jurisdictions, demands are being imposed on their healthcare professionals

which may mean longer wait times for some procedures and health assistance. By training and introducing new technologies, we will be able to deliver here on PEI some of those services which were not previously done. Clearly, we are doing many procedures and providing services today on PEI in healthcare that were not available here five years ago. All Islanders need to support our leaders in all health professions in ensuring the training and equipment is available for today and into the future.

Engagement

Engaging with stakeholders, partners and the general public has always been a priority of the Board. The Health PEI Board and I, in my role as Trustee, have met with healthcare foundations, community organizations, municipal leaders, healthcare professional groups and many others across the province. As noted the Board meets throughout the Island and takes time to tour local HPEI facilities, meet staff and engage with local stakeholder groups.

Throughout the year, the new Community Health Engagement Committees have met and their work continues to evolve. With the changes to the *Health Services Act*, the Chairs of these committees will now sit on the Health PEI Board of Directors and a direct communication line to senior management is formalized.

I am also pleased with the success of the Patient and Family Steering Committee's work this past year. Through this process, Health PEI believes that the voice of the patient and family is heard in all areas of health care. Those interested in becoming a patient / family advisor may apply through Engage PEI.

Accreditation

During 2018 Health PEI received full accreditation from Accreditation Canada and our results were an improvement over the prior accreditation review. This success was a result of many factors, including the emphasis by the Health PEI Board to ensuring an outstanding result and the hard work by everyone across our system throughout the accreditation process. One of the key individuals in achieving that success was Janet Hodder R.N. who

oversaw the accreditation process for Health PEI for many months of the year and is present here tonight. Much thanks.

I want to congratulate staff involved in the Care of Older Adults in the Community or at Home (COACH) program. This Health PEI initiative was selected from 80 submissions for the Innovation Award at the Canadian Frailty Network Conference in September.

I also want to express my thanks for the efforts of the Health PEI Finance Team. Health PEI is the largest corporate organization in the province with a budget of just under \$700 Million in Revenue and Expenses in 2018. Recently, I met with the Provincial Auditor who performed an audit on our operations. We received a favorable opinion which is a testament to the stewardship of our past Board and Members.

I also want to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for the significant contributions to the members of the Health PEI Board who served in 2018. During my period as Trustee, they have been supportive and have provided encouragement and wisdom. All Islanders owe a significant debt of gratitude for their service and commitment to Islanders' health care and the work they performed. To all of them: Phylis Horne, Alex MacBeath, Rosemary Herbert, Kay Lewis, Dagny Dryer, Blaine MacPherson, Sally Lockhart, George Saunders, Brenda Worth, John Horrelet and Sandra Gaudet. Many thanks.

I also want to acknowledge the efforts of our Health PEI Leadership team, especially former CEO Keith Dewar and our interim CEO Denise Lewis Fleming. Over my tenure with Health PEI as a Board member, they have led system-wide exercises with success.

I also want to welcome the new members of the Health PEI Board just announced by the Minister. When I reviewed their biographies and accomplishments, they clearly demonstrate the skills needed for the Health PEI Board. After a period of orientation, I look forward to working with them and benefiting from their experience, wisdom and insight. I also want to thank the Minister for expressing confidence in me to serve.

In closing, I am reminded of my remarks to a friend about serving on the Health PEI Board. I am not from a family who had worked in healthcare so I did not have day-to-day experiences. When I assumed the responsibility of a Board member, I was obliged to view and

experience the planning, hard work and effort which come with the 24 hour/ 365 day organization. I am proud of Health PEI, the people who work in our organization and am honored to serve.

I once again thank you for coming out tonight and for your interest in our One Island Health System.

Thank you.