



# Vitalité, moving toward the future

Quarterly Report  
to the Community

SEPTEMBER 2023



# Table of contents

- Purpose, major directions and strategic priorities ..... 2
- Message from the President and CEO and the Chairman of the Board of Directors ..... 3
- Improvement initiatives and projects
  - Patient experience ..... 4
  - Employee experience ..... 8
  - Building closer ties with communities ..... 11
- Health care workers and volunteers, the driving force behind the Network ..... 13
- Follow our progress ..... 14

## Purpose

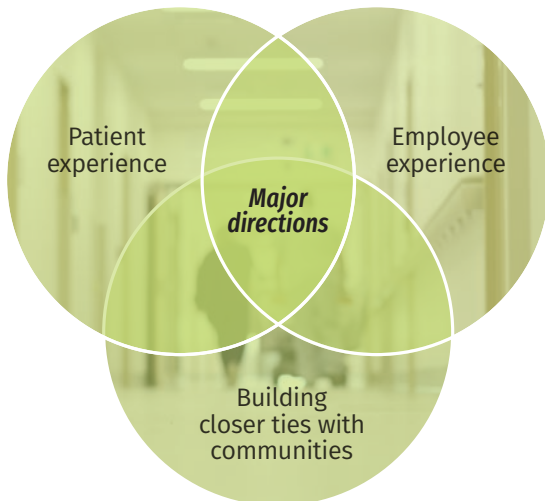
Vitalité Health Network has revised its purpose to align it with its commitment to serve people better by optimizing the care and services provided in hospitals and in the community and to recognize and support the teams working in the field.

Resulting from extensive discussions with the Network teams and with communities, the new purpose statement conveys a common, unifying plan that nurtures hope in teams, people and communities for the future of health care and services.

Statement adopted in June 2023

***To foster the health of our patients and communities, today and tomorrow.***

*Through a collaborative, learning approach, we foster the health of our communities and ensure the best care for our patients. We are an innovative, forward-looking network, where everyone’s voice counts, and where patients and families come first.*



# Vitalité, moving toward the future

## Message from the President and CEO

This Quarterly Report to the Community presents the highlights of progress made since July 1, 2023. Every year, during the summer months, we experience a certain slowdown in our activities. Although improvement projects were continued over the summer, we are seeing slightly more modest gains due to this slowdown.

I would, however, like to congratulate our teams for their perseverance over the past few months and for the results obtained as part of initiatives arising from our three major directions, namely **employee experience, patient experience, and building closer ties with communities.**

These projects and initiatives will continue in the fall on 90-day execution cycles, implementing concrete actions that will be carried out and measured until objectives are attained.

This approach is part of the Network's learning culture in which all organization members are open-minded and willing to learn and improve constantly in their day-to-day activities within the Network.

The theme "Vitalité, moving toward the future" reminds us of the importance of this learning culture in a context of transformation, innovation and mobilization toward a health system that meets needs more effectively, today and tomorrow.

This report is for anyone who is interested in the advancement of our health care system, as well as for health care workers, our partners, and members of the Network communities. Enjoy the reading!



## Message from the Chairman of the Board of Directors

As Chairman of the Board of Directors since the beginning of this quarter, namely July 2023, it is with great pleasure that I welcome this Quarterly Report to the Community.

As an entrepreneur, I recognize the importance of a systemic approach to continuous improvement in which gains are measured, challenges are analyzed, and every opportunity to perform better is taken.

I know that the business world and the health field are quite different but I commend the efforts of the Network teams to provide the best possible services to patients, families and communities.

I take this opportunity to thank health care workers for their exemplary commitment. I look forward to following their progress and that of the whole Network.





# Improvement initiatives and projects

## PATIENT EXPERIENCE

### Surgical suite optimized at the Edmundston Regional Hospital

Surgical services at the Edmundston Regional Hospital have achieved significant results with the implementation of an improvement project in the surgical suite.

Processes were revised to optimize the planning of appointments and work schedules, the use of the rooms, the start of surgeries, and the management of urgent cases.

The restructuring made it possible to open a third operating room for most of the year. Certain procedures that were being done in the surgical suite will now be done in ambulatory care clinics.

According to projections, these improvements will mean that nearly 900 additional surgeries can be performed per year without adding human resources, which will result in faster patient management.

#### Key results



- Decrease in the waiting list
- Improved operating room use (as of July). Target: 80%
- Decrease in the percentage of emergency surgeries performed in the evenings and on weekends

-22%

93%

40% to 25%

### Surgical short stay unit implemented at the Chaleur Regional Hospital

An eight-bed surgical short stay unit was implemented at the Chaleur Regional Hospital in June.

By limiting the length of stay after surgery to 24–36 hours, we were able to reduce the number of admissions and the volume of transfers to nursing units, which compensated for the lack of beds in the facility.

Prioritization of patients is more effective and a larger number of certain types of surgeries can be performed. This approach helps stabilize and, in some cases, reduce wait times.

#### Key results



- Improvement (58% to 69%) for hip surgeries performed within timeframes
- Improvement (56% to 64%) for knee surgeries performed within timeframes

+19%

+14%





## Other surgery results

- 2021–2022 to 2022–2023: **31% decrease** in the number of people who have been waiting for surgery for over 12 months
- 2021–2022 to 2022–2023: **25% increase** in the number of hip and knee surgeries performed
- Since February 2023: **150 robot-assisted surgeries performed**
- Our team at the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont University Hospital Centre surgical suite **achieved exceptional performance in implementing and starting a new robotic surgery program.**

## Efficiency improved in the Campbellton Regional Hospital Emergency Department

A project was conducted to improve operations in the Emergency Department of the Campbellton Regional Hospital. A dashboard to facilitate information sharing was developed and measures to optimize space were taken.

Furthermore, to alleviate the physician's workload, it will now be possible for a physiotherapist to assess certain cases.

## Integrated primary health care model implemented

Over the past year, we have worked on developing an integrated primary health care model, including a wide range of coordinated services provided by a team of health professionals who are interrelated and complementary.

This model must offer patients access to a collaborative, interdisciplinary team rather than a single provider. The goal is to ensure improved integration and extensive collaboration between all care providers, and to refer the patient to the right provider quickly.

The model was initially launched in the Dieppe and surrounding communities as well as in the Edmundston, Rivière-Verte and Lac-Baker areas.

One of the project components is the implementation of a coordination and referral centre that delegates care delivery to the right provider. The model also includes access to a common electronic health record for health care professionals on the team throughout the continuum.

## Attendants trained to specialize in hemodialysis care

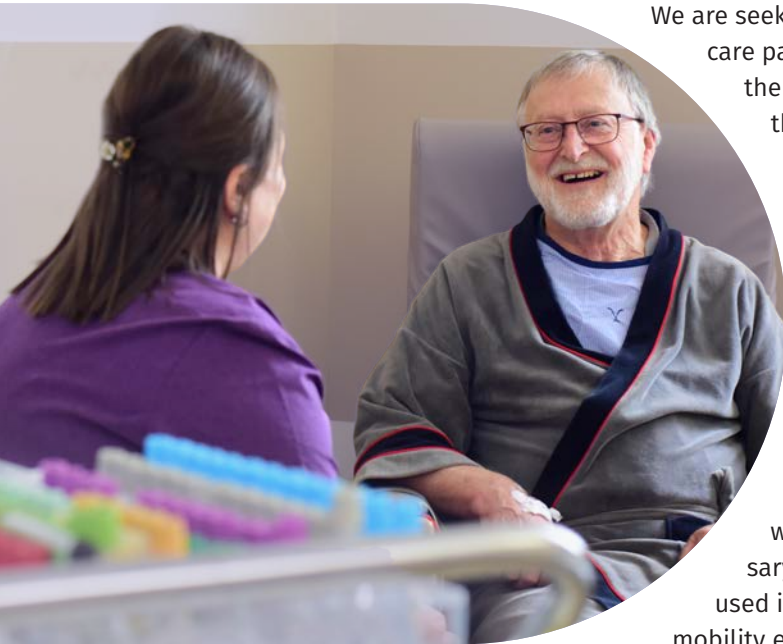


A new program to train attendants to specialize in hemodialysis care was recently developed within the Network.

Over the summer, 12 attendants took a 12-week workplace training program that combines theory and clinical practice. The learners were paired with a nurse instructor who was responsible for their supervision.

Once they obtain their certificate, the learners will join a care team made up of three attendants specialized in hemodialysis care and a nurse. This initiative will enable us to optimize patient services and build multidisciplinary and collaborative teams. This model is a first in Atlantic Canada.

## Patients and families included as care partners



We are seeking to actively include patients and their families as essential care partners in the care process but also as active participants in the management of their own health. Studies have shown that this approach has a significant favourable impact on the staff's quality of life as well as on patient satisfaction and the overall effectiveness of care. This results in an improvement of general health, a decrease in admission and readmission rates, and a reduction in the number of visits to the emergency department.

An initial pilot project was launched in the Tracadie Hospital long-term care unit, where welcoming meetings are now being held every week. The patient (if able to participate) and family have the opportunity to discuss the patient's current state of health, the family's expectations with the level of care provided, care planning, and the necessary steps before discharge. Whiteboards and pictograms are used in the patient rooms to offer advice to the family on activities, mobility exercises, and food choices.

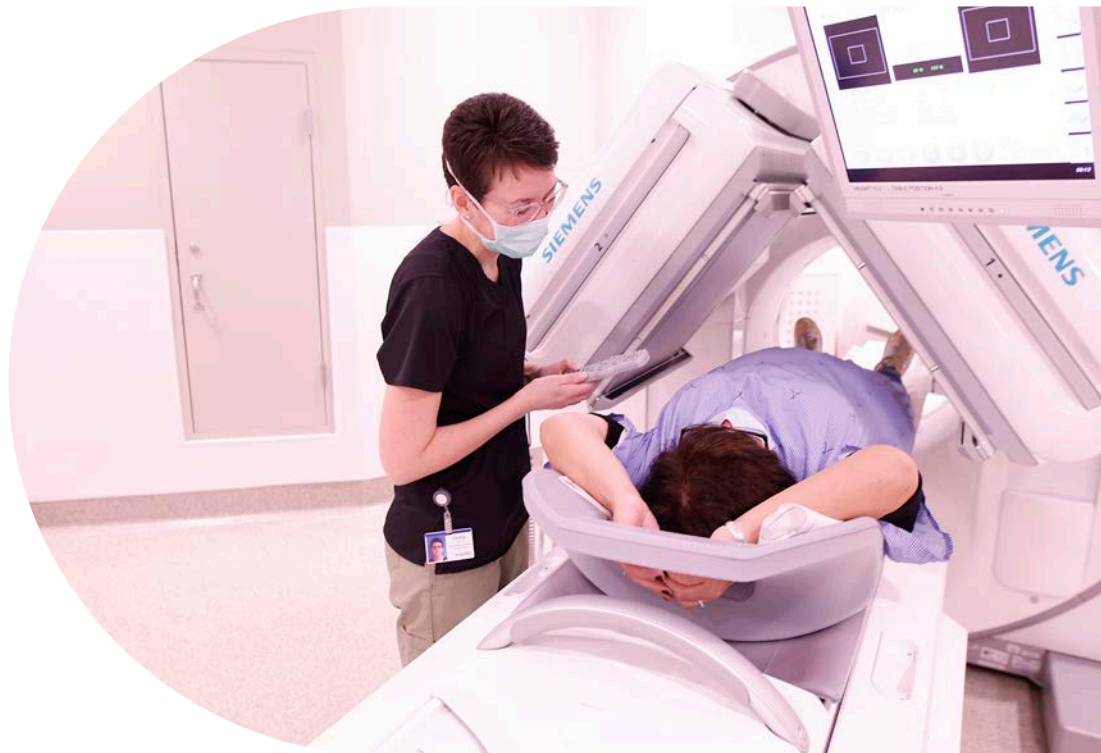
A system measuring the patient and family experience will make it possible to gather more specific comments and feedback. By identifying areas for improvement, we will then be able to implement concrete initiatives to better include patients and families.

This model is expected to be rolled out across the Network over the next year.

### Key results

Increase in the number of meetings with families

+20%





## Medication reconciliation deployed

Medication reconciliation (MedRec) is a formal process in which health professionals work with patients, families and other health care providers to minimize medication errors when transfers or changes to care occur; patients and their families as well as the various professionals involved all benefit.

This method involves compiling a list of a patient's medications, prescribing the medications that the patient is actually taking, and informing the patient about changes during their hospital stay or when they are discharged so they receive optimal medication therapy at all times.

An improvement project has already served to implement MedRec at admission across all Network's facilities. Phase 2 of the project will implement this model for ambulatory care teams and patient transfers.

## Other projects underway

- ▶ 1. Implementation of the collaborative care model
- ▶ 2. Project to manage hospital occupancy rates
- ▶ 3. Implementation of integrated mental health and addiction services (Edmundston Regional Hospital Emergency Department)
- ▶ 4. Implementation of the Public Health Laboratory

## Patient partners' contribution

While care and services are at the heart of the patient experience, patient partners provide the Network with a unique and significant perspective.

Patient partners are community members who are the voice of patients, sitting on various committees or participating in various improvement projects. They help the teams identify and remain focused on patient needs.

For instance, André Daigle, a patient partner, took part in the EXTRA project providing support to nurse practitioners (NPs) in primary health care. For him, two elements needed to be preserved and enhanced, i.e. time given by NPs to their patients and their availability.

*"This rewarding experience leads me to believe that it is desirable and even essential that patients fully take part in improvement projects and, above all, that they be involved from the very beginning of the projects."*

- André Daigle, patient partner

## Key results

### Rate of improvement in BCM compliance rate

• At transfer at the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont UHC

+67%

• At admission at the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont UHC

+31%

• At admission at the Stella-Marie-de-Kent Hospital

+17%



# EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

*An enriching employee experience makes for a high-performance organization*

## Recruitment and retention (nursing)

The talent acquisition team is meeting daily to accelerate new nursing hires. These meetings set recruitment priorities and ensure that efforts are constantly aligned with the organization’s needs.

### Our recruitment and hiring initiatives include:

- Following up on known potential candidates quickly;
- Helping staff to relocate and integrate into the community;
- Providing financial incentives;
- Improving the experience of student employees;
- Improving access to recruitment information and data;
- Improving recruitment event planning.



## International recruitment

Our international recruitment efforts are ongoing. Our overseas missions have identified over 500 potential candidates, and over 400 job offers have now been accepted.

In 2022–2023, Network representatives attended job fairs in Africa, France and Belgium. This summer, our recruitment team has been busy planning the next overseas missions, which are scheduled for the fall.

These efforts are bearing fruit. Many people will be joining us in the coming weeks and months, including New Brunswick graduates, health care workers from other provinces, and international recruits.

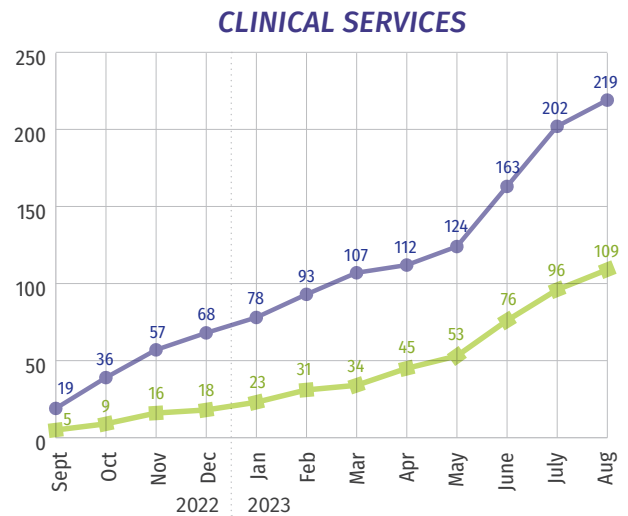
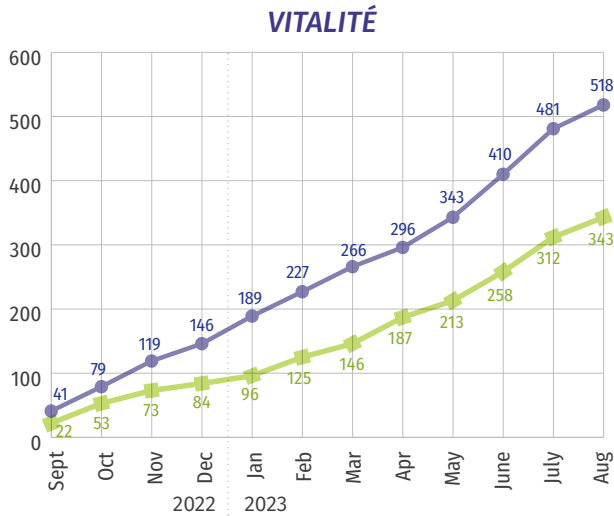
Key results	Number of graduates hired (accepted offers)	Number of international hires (accepted offers)	International offers for which a response is pending	Other hires (accepted offers)
Registered nurses	87	15		47
Licensed practical nurses	55			41
Patient care attendants	32	400	60	56
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>144</b>



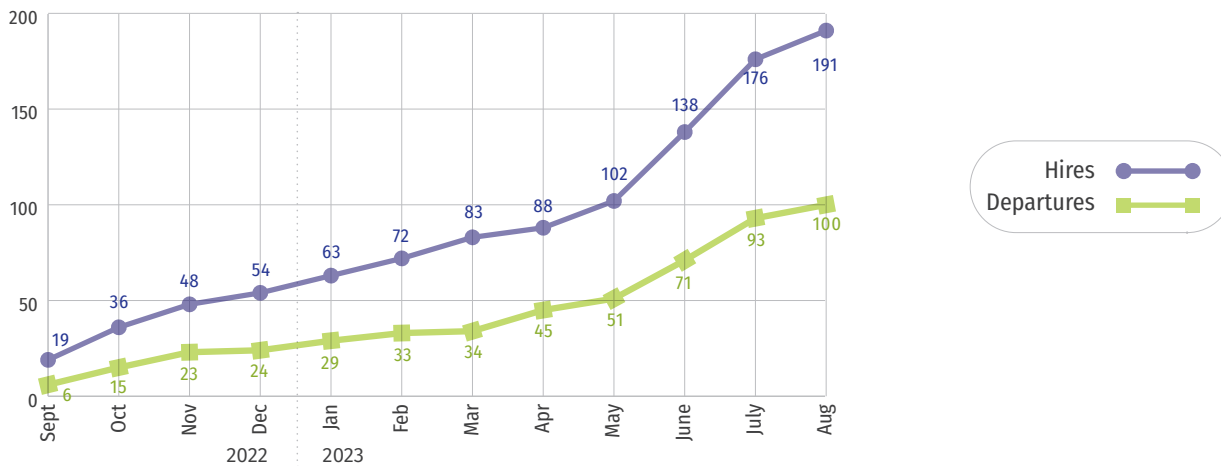
## Retention

To promote retention, exit interviews are being conducted with all nursing employees who leave their positions. The Network staff turnover rate was 4.63% in 2022–2023. The trend toward more hires and fewer departures continues.

## Key results



### VITALITÉ (registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, patient care attendants)



## Single entry point for placements

Starting this fall, all our learners will be able to register for their placement through a computerized placement portal.

This single entry point will enable the Network to manage placements more effectively, help students respond to requirements online, and allow educational partners to enter their placement needs. This initiative will help improve the student experience and reach out to the Network’s next generation of professionals.



## Other projects underway

- Interview process to retain employees (pharmacy and mother/child sectors)
- Process to welcome and integrate new employees (Beauséjour Zone and future deployment in all zones)
- Accommodation for newcomers
- Leadership skills model for directors
- Policy and strategy on diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility for the Network staff
- Legal compliance audit for occupational health and safety
- Review of recruitment initiatives
- Daily management of work attendance

## “I choose Vitalité!”

Video segments highlighting Network champions have been posted on social media in recent months as part of the “I choose Vitalité!” campaign, which is also the new Network image. With employee experience being one of the Network’s major priorities, this slogan continues to support initiatives around staff and volunteer appreciation and efforts to recruit and retain health care workers.



### Say hello to Virginie Dupont!

Virginie Dupont, a native of Belgium, has settled in Neguac, on the Acadian Peninsula, where she works as an administrative assistant for the Network.

*“ I feel useful here and I appreciate the friendliness and warmth of the people who welcomed me with open arms. What I like the most about my job is the variety of tasks.”*

- Virginie Dupont, administrative assistant for Quality and Patient Safety, Volunteers, Planning and Performance Improvement

## BUILDING CLOSER TIES WITH COMMUNITIES

### *Engaged communities become healthy communities*

During the summer, the Network continued to work on building closer ties with communities and supporting initiatives to promote people's health.

The Network is responsible for conducting community health needs assessments over a five-year cycle. The results of these assessments help guide the strategic choices of partners (public, private and community sectors) with respect to initiatives promoting people's health. They offer a promising avenue for forging links between the Network and stakeholders and for collectively addressing the gaps identified while building on existing community strengths.

It is now the turn of the Dalhousie community to conduct this exercise. A community advisory committee, made up of 29 members, was set up. Four out of the six meetings scheduled as part of the assessment process have been held to date. In addition, four focus groups and four individual interviews have been held with people from the community to understand their realities and needs. Much work still remains to be done to draw conclusions but, according to schedule, the members of the community advisory committee will validate the results in December 2023 and the report will be available to the community in the spring of 2024.



*“ I really like hearing what people think about our community's health needs. As Deputy Mayor, I'm aware of the issues but the diversity of voices in the community gives me a better understanding. The assessment will also be useful to us as a municipality. ”*

- Sophie Maltais, Deputy Mayor of Bois-Joli Village

The Network has also met with other communities to plan the prioritization of their health needs. The following municipalities were approached: Shediac, Cap-Acadie, Saint-Quentin, Haut-Madawaska and Grand Falls. As for the next steps, the Network will offer personalized support to each of these communities to gather and mobilize stakeholders and review the results of their latest health needs assessment. The goal of this process will be to determine whether their needs have changed and how the communities wish to proceed to meet these needs.

Apart from the activities related to community health needs assessments, the Network team is sensitive to the issues that each region faces. It is therefore with openness and collaboration that these meetings and activities to build closer ties with communities will continue this fall.



## Planet Youth New Brunswick launched

The Planet Youth project was launched on the Acadian Peninsula and in the Kent County. It is a community prevention model to reduce addiction and substance use in youth.

This program, which has been shown to be effective in Iceland for over 20 years, will be replicated in New Brunswick through the participation of many community stakeholders and the involvement of Public Health teams.

A range of projects aimed at acting on environments, promoting healthy lifestyles among youth, and making cultural activities accessible to youth will be launched over the next few months.

## Health care workers and volunteers, the driving force behind the Network



*For the Network, recognizing health care workers and volunteers is part and parcel of its values. In addition to being well deserved, recognition contributes to engaging and valuing the people at the heart of professional and volunteer activities.*



*“ On behalf of my colleagues and of patients, families and communities, I would like to thank the health care workers who continued to work hard this summer. I know that the nature of the services delivered by the Network forces health care workers to limit their vacation days during the summer. I therefore wish to commend their loyalty to patients and to the Network. ”*

- Dr. France Desrosiers, President and CEO

### For Alfreda Gautreau and her son Francis, volunteering is a family affair!



Alfreda Gautreau has been volunteering with the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont University Hospital Centre Volunteer Association for over 35 years. Over the years, she has visited patients with the snack cart, coordinated kindergarten class visits to the hospital, and managed the sale of lottery tickets and fudge.

Alfreda is currently the lead volunteer for the Appel Dumont Response program. This is a personal emergency reporting system that helps clients live independently in the comfort of their own homes.

Alfreda's son, Francis Gautreau, has always followed in his mother's footsteps and hopes to take over from her one day. What he enjoys most is the satisfaction of the people he is helping.

The Network currently has over 400 volunteers who, like Alfreda and Francis, have chosen to contribute to changing the lives of people. New volunteers are still being recruited and anyone interested in joining our team of volunteers is welcome.





## Volunteering programs in the hospital setting

- **Hosts:** greet and direct patients and visitors when they enter the hospital, and provide comfort and support to patients and families by offering them a light snack, beverage, etc.
- **Recreational activities:** lead or help lead recreational therapy. You will enable patients to socialize and have fun by helping them participate in group activities (e.g. crafts, bingo, music).
- **Friendly visits:** make inpatient stays more pleasant by visiting patients in their rooms. Create social stimulation and friendly ties with those who could benefit from interacting with others.
- **Patient experience partner:** work in partnership with the Network management and teams to help improve and guide decisions, policies and practices that affect patient care and services.
- **Palliative care:** comfort patients at the end of life and support families during the illness of a loved one by providing them with emotional support and comfort.
- **Spiritual and religious support:** provide spiritual and religious support to patients and their families. Help the spiritual care workers and/or clergy members by serving communion or assisting with worship services.

*You have some spare time and you would like to join the team of volunteers at your hospital?*

**Contact the facility closest to you for more information:**

### Acadie-Bathurst Zone

(Bathurst and Acadian Peninsula)  
benevoles6.volunteers@vitalitenb.ca  
506-544-3660

### Beauséjour Zone

(Moncton and surrounding areas)  
benevoles@vitalitenb.ca  
506-862-4267 (Moncton)  
506-743-2037 (Sainte-Anne-de-Kent)

### Northwest Zone

(Edmundston and surrounding areas)  
benevoles4.volunteers@vitalitenb.ca  
506-739-2857

### Restigouche Zone

(Campbellton and surrounding areas)  
benevoles5.volunteers@vitalitenb.ca  
506-760-4408



Claudette Levesque provides hairdressing services to patients who request them at the Edmundston Regional Hospital (in the photo, the client is Louise Nadeau, a volunteer).



## Openness and transparency, to serve you better

### Follow our progress

#### See the [Performance Report](#)

- The report is published on the Network’s website and updated on a quarterly basis.

#### For each key indicator, the report provides the:

- Benchmark (national or international figure for the same indicators);
- Network’s target for the current quarter;
- Results for the current quarter;
- Trend over recent quarters.

#### The colour code shows the progress made:

- ■ Green – exceeds target
- ■ Yellow – meets target (+/- 5%)
- ■ Red – below target

### Performance Report



[Vitalité performance indicators](#)  
[vitalitenb.ca](http://vitalitenb.ca)

The items measured are chosen based on the improvements to be made. It is normal to see yellow and red, which indicates a gap between the current performance and desired performance.



Visit our website  
[vitalitenb.ca](http://vitalitenb.ca)

### Follow us on social media

- [vitalitenb](#)
- [vitalitenb](#)
- [@vitalitenb](#)
- [vitalitenb](#)
- [vitalitenb](#)

### Contact us

Share your feedback, suggestions or comments with us by email at [engagement@vitalitenb.ca](mailto:engagement@vitalitenb.ca)



