

TOWARD

the modernization and transformation
of the health care system

Strategic Plan

• **2017-2020** •



Francophone leader
serving its communities

Table of Content

Toward the modernization and transformation of the health care system 3

Summary Table..... 4

Background..... 6

Methodology 6

Description of the organization 7

Environmental assessment 8

Corporate image 9

Mission..... 9

Vision 9

Values..... 10

Strategic direction

1. We will contribute to improving the health of people 14

2. We will provide continuous primary health services as close as possible
to people’s homes. 15

3. We will ensure fair access to care and services across the Network’s territory..... 19

4. We will promote a culture of excellence..... 23

5. We will optimize the university training and research mission. 23

6. We will promote the growth and development of the Network employees
and medical staff members. 27

7. We will promote transparency in communications and the involvement of
communities..... 30

Conclusion 31



Toward the modernization and transformation of the health care system

We are pleased to present the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan of Vitalité Health Network, which opens a new chapter in our organization's history. This plan details our major organizational objectives over the next three years and explains our core strategies to achieve them.

This plan, which is the end result of a coordinated and methodical process, is the primary document for conveying to all stakeholders, both internal and external, the broad directions in which our organization will be moving. Today's constantly changing environment makes it more essential than ever to plan our services with great care to ensure the expected results are achieved.

The strategic planning exercise that led to the development of this plan also provided the opportunity to renew our mission and vision statements and our values and to reaffirm the Francophone character of our organization through the addition of a signature to our corporate image. After analyzing our environment and the main challenges we face, seven broad strategic directions were developed and will form the cornerstone of our efforts over the next three years. Each direction is accompanied by one or more priority areas for action along with the expected strategic results.

In closing, we would like to highlight the participation and engagement of our employees, volunteers, and physicians in the development of this plan and the high rate of participation by our community partners and the general public during the consultation process. We also thank the members of our Board of Directors for their confidence.

This ambitious plan, with its resolute focus on the future, lays out a path to transform and modernize the health care system in order to improve the quality and accessibility of our services, meet people's changing needs more effectively, and ensure that our services are clinically and financially sustainable.

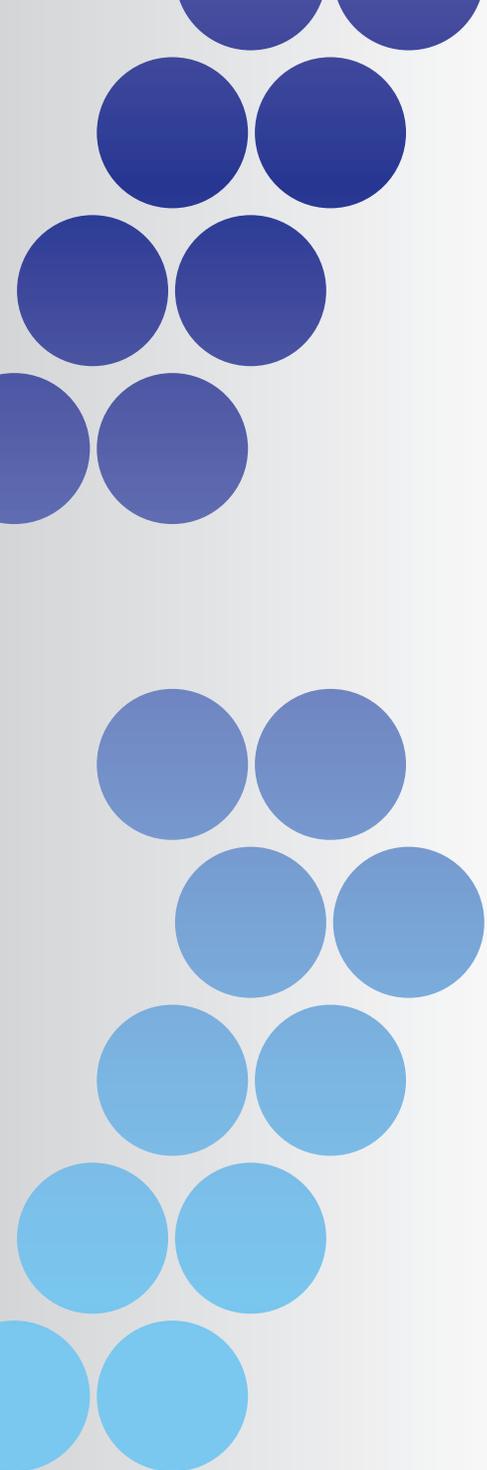
Michelyne Paulin
Chairperson of the Board of Directors

Gilles Lanteigne
President and Chief Executive Officer

Summary Table

<p>Mission Excel in improving people's health</p> <hr style="border-top: 1px dotted #ccc;"/> <p>Vision People responsible for their own health</p>	<p>Signature Francophone leader serving its communities</p> <hr style="border-top: 1px dotted #ccc;"/> <p>Values Respect • Compassion • Integrity • Accountability • Equity • Engagement</p>
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CHALLENGE 1	CHALLENGE 2	CHALLENGE 3	CHALLENGE 4	CHALLENGE 5	
Improve integrated and adapted primary health care services	Adapt health care services to the needs and varied realities of the public	Continuously improve the quality of care and services, safety and organizational performance	Engage employees and medical staff members in continuous improvement in clinical practices and in the care and services delivered to the public	Affirm the Network's engagement to the public	
Strategic Directions		Strategic Directions			
We will contribute to improving the health of people.	We will provide continuous primary health services as close as possible to people's homes.	We will ensure fair access to care and services across the Network's territory.	We will promote a culture of excellence.	We will promote the growth and development of the Network employees and medical staff members.	
Areas for Action		Areas for Action			
<p>a) Increasing health promotion programs with more intersectorial collaboration Strategic result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Network's support to intersectorial health promotion efforts related to obesity and smoking in some target groups will be increased. <p>b) Optimizing disease prevention programs Strategic result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The youth addiction prevention program will be revised and interventions will be improved. 	<p>a) Expanding alternatives to hospitalization Strategic results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra-Mural Program services will be optimized. • Ambulatory care services will be optimized. • Community services will be optimized. • Continuums of care and services will be optimized. • The management of hospital care episodes will be optimized. <p>b) Standardizing best practices in the continuous management of chronic diseases Strategic result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application of standardized practice guides for the continuous treatment of chronic diseases will be increased. <p>c) Optimizing mental health services Strategic result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health services will be increased using community-focused alternatives before institutionalization is considered and calling on informal support groups. <p>d) Developing a common decision approach with patients and their families in planning care and services Strategic results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The patient partner approach will become a best practice with patients suffering from chronic conditions and their families. • The social pediatrics approach focused on the needs and strengths of children and their community will be developed (interdisciplinarity and plurisectorial method). 	<p>a) Improving access to care and services, namely in rural settings Strategic results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of telehealth specialty services will be increased. • Mobile clinics will be increased. <p>b) Developing optimal access to specialty resources and services Strategic result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialty services available (medical and professional) will be increased. <p>c) Adapting services to the particular needs of seniors and targeted clients Strategic result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implementation of best practices in services to seniors and targeted clients will be accelerated. <p>d) Involving patients and their families in the identification of the Network's directions Strategic result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The patient partner approach will be implemented on the strategic level of the organization. 	<p>a) Maintaining and improving the evaluation and learning culture Strategic results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organizational capacity to support and maintain service improvement will be further developed. • Measures to assess quality and organizational performance will be used more widely to improve professional practices. 	<p>a) Using evidence-based data and innovative practices Strategic result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality improvement projects will be developed by employees and medical staff members and will be supported by administration. <p>b) Supporting the wellness of employees and medical staff members Strategic results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategy to enhance participative management will be implemented. • A wellness strategy for promoting employee engagement will be put forward. • A strategy to reduce the number of work accidents will be applied. • A strategy to improve the wellness of the organization managers will be put forward. • A strategy to apply the organization's values will be enhanced. • An internal communication strategy will be improved. <p>c) Recruiting experts and maintaining and enhancing skills Strategic results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to quality continuing training programs will be improved. • An organizational leadership development program will be initiated. • Pairing arrangements between experimented and new professionals will be made. • A recruitment strategy will be developed and implemented. 	<p>a) Continued community involvement in the identification of health needs and establishment of priorities for their settings Strategic results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The results of the needs assessments of the four targeted communities (Bathurst, Edmundston, Campbellton and Moncton) and the resulting implementation plans will be communicated to the individuals and levels concerned. • The strategy to evaluate the needs of communities will be reviewed. <p>b) Continuous information on existing services, the Network's capabilities, and challenges in service delivery Strategic result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A continuous communication strategy will be implemented. <p>c) Dissemination of best practices and the Network's successes Strategic result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The results of best practices will be acknowledged and celebrated within the Network.
Strategic Directions		Strategic Directions			
Areas for Action		Areas for Action			
We will optimize the university training and research mission.		We will optimize the university training and research mission.			



Background

Vitalité Health Network is one of the two regional health authorities of the province that were established under the *Regional Health Authorities Act*. The legal mandate of the regional health authorities is as defined under the act. It involves a dual responsibility for the delivery and administration of health care services in the regions for which the health authorities have been established. Vitalité Health Network has the distinctive feature of being a health authority under Francophone governance, providing the public with services in both official languages.

This is the Network's second strategic planning exercise since it was established in 2008. The Network recognizes the evolving needs of the public and must adjust to the new directions of the government and trends in the health field. In this context of change and adjustment, it became necessary to develop a strategic plan for 2017-2020. We needed to update the mission, vision and values of the Network and rally the various stakeholders around common objectives.

Methodology

To develop this new strategic plan, we collected data based on past and current development plans, several reports on people's needs, and data on the health status of the population.

This research enabled us to produce a first version of the strategic plan and conduct a broad consultation process. Feedback was obtained as part of retreats with Network committees and managers, a public survey in both French and English, interviews with partners, and a retreat for members of the Board of Directors.

We also received feedback and views from over 900 people on our mission, vision, and values, as well as on the challenges that the Network will face to improve the health of people.

This plan presents the consensus among our stakeholders regarding the components that are considered as imperatives to have a health system that satisfactorily meets the needs of people.

Description of the organization

Vitalité Health Network is a regional health authority delivering and managing health care services in an area covering all of northern and southeastern New Brunswick.



The Network is the only Francophone managed organization of its kind in the country and has nearly 70 points of service. The Network provides a range of health care services to members of the public in the official language of their choice:

- community and home-based care and services;
- acute care (hospitals);
- addiction services and mental health;
- public health;
- training and research.

The Network has approximately 7,400 part-time and full-time employees, over 570 physicians, including 269 specialists, and a little over 1,000 volunteers. The Network's 2015-2016 budget was \$626 million. Our points of service are distributed throughout the territory: 11 hospitals, including 5 regional hospitals and 6 community hospitals, 9 health centres, 5 clinics, 10 Community Mental Health centres, 4 Addiction Services centres, 2 veterans' centres, 11 Public and Sexual Health centres, and 12 Extra-Mural Program offices.

Environmental assessment

A strategic process should include an assessment of the context based on the internal and external environments of the organization. The internal environment assessment dealt with strengths, weaknesses and capabilities while the external environment assessment dealt with constraints, opportunities, threats (challenges) and trends. For our assessment, we took the documentation, the public consultation process, and retreats into account. The following table provides a summary of the major points in this assessment.

Vitalité Health Network's INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development plans already in place in the Network (e.g., Action Plan for Greater Equity in the Provision of Health Care Services, Transformation and Modernization Plan, Regional Health and Business Plan) • Needs analyses completed jointly with communities • Recognition of the university and research mission • Network's priorities in line with those of the provincial government • Network under Francophone management providing bilingual services • Staff focused on the needs of people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unstable organizational structure since 2008 • Young organizational structure • Insufficient investment in professional development • Lack of promotion of organizational values • Recruitment difficult (in some professions) • Limited resources for disease prevention and health promotion • Staff exhausted due to multiple changes • Lack of information technology plan and information technology service management by a third party
Vitalité Health Network's EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS (challenges)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of data made available by the New Brunswick Health Council • Support and desired collaboration from partners • Accreditation – Accreditation Canada • Support from the Acadians and Francophones for a Network under Francophone management • General movement towards strong primary health care and improved management of chronic diseases • Desire to move closer to and collaborate with the Department of Social Development • Federal government's desire to invest in home-based care and mental health • Current context favourable to innovation • Patient participation at all levels of the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health status below the Canadian average (obesity, smoking, lifestyles, etc.) • Aging population • Clients scattered across a large territory and rural migration • Potential privatization of the Extra-Mural Program and other services • Citizens among the least wealthy in Canada • Reduced expenditures in the health field, representing 40% of the provincial budget • Potential reduction of federal transfers for health

Corporate image

The Network has the distinctive feature of being a health authority under Francophone governance, providing the public with services in both official languages. The Network has decided to highlight this feature by adding a signature to its logo, changing its corporate image:



Mission

A mission statement describes the purpose of the organization. Our mission:

| Excel in improving people's health

We will provide quality health care services that will meet the needs of people and we will stimulate and support the engagement of our employees, medical staff members, and partners.

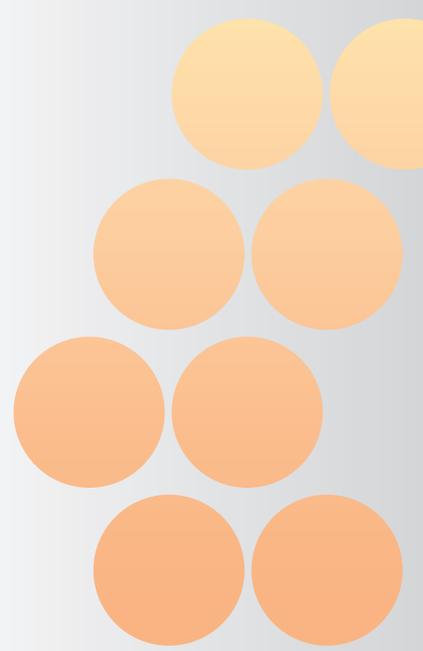
Vision

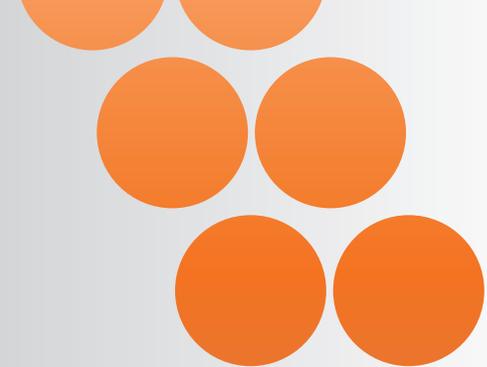
A vision statement is an ambitious and inspirational description of what we want to achieve. It mobilizes all efforts to achieve the desired results. Our vision:

| People responsible for their own health

New Brunswick is facing major health challenges with overall statistics showing a poorer health status than elsewhere in Canada. Even if the Network wants to excel in health care services, it will not be able to solve all health problems alone.

The key to success remains for people to take responsibility for their own health. For its part, the Network is committed to invest more in illness prevention and health promotion, better equip people, and work in collaboration with its partners.





Values

Values reflect the organizational culture. Values direct and guide the day-to-day behaviours and practices of employees, medical staff members, and volunteers. Our values:

Respect

We protect people's dignity. We show openness and willingness to listen and we promote dialogue. We take individual, cultural and intergenerational differences into account.

Compassion

We empathize with others and adopt a comforting and non-judgmental approach.

Integrity

We are honest and trustworthy and we protect privacy.

Accountability

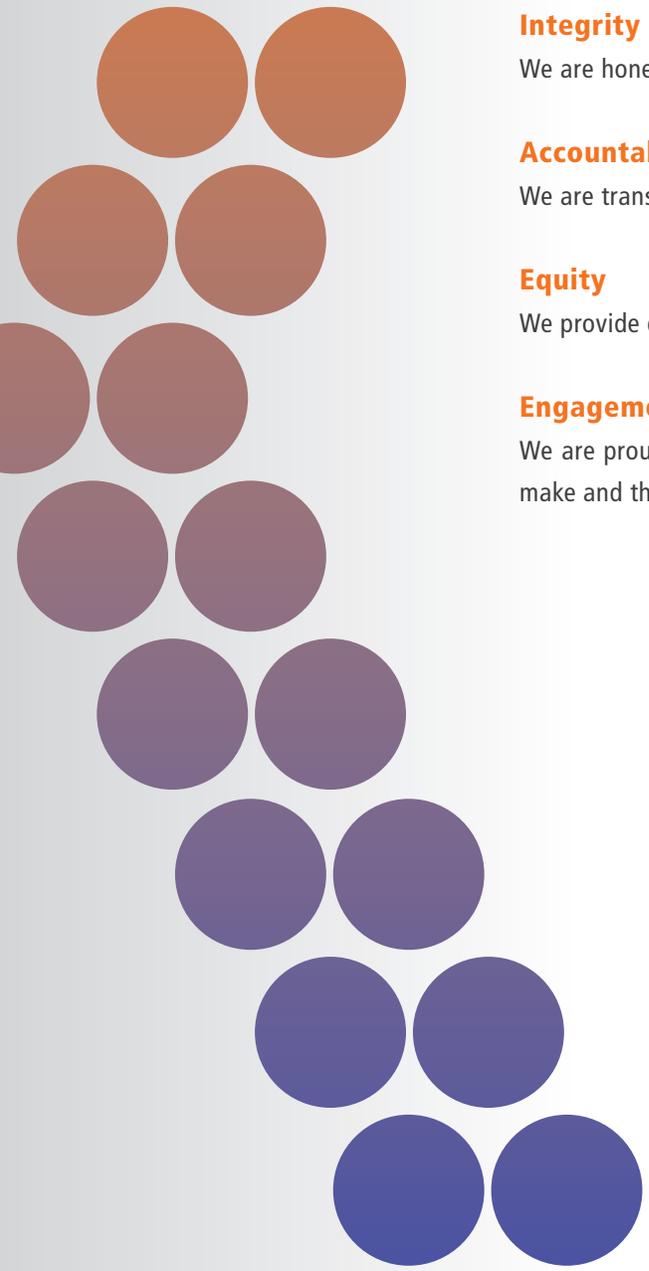
We are transparent, responsible and accountable for our actions.

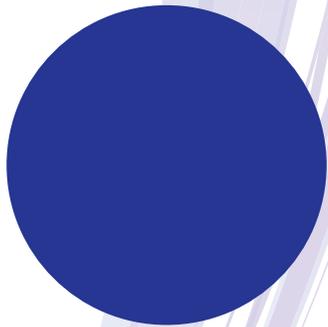
Equity

We provide quality care and services while ensuring the greatest possible access.

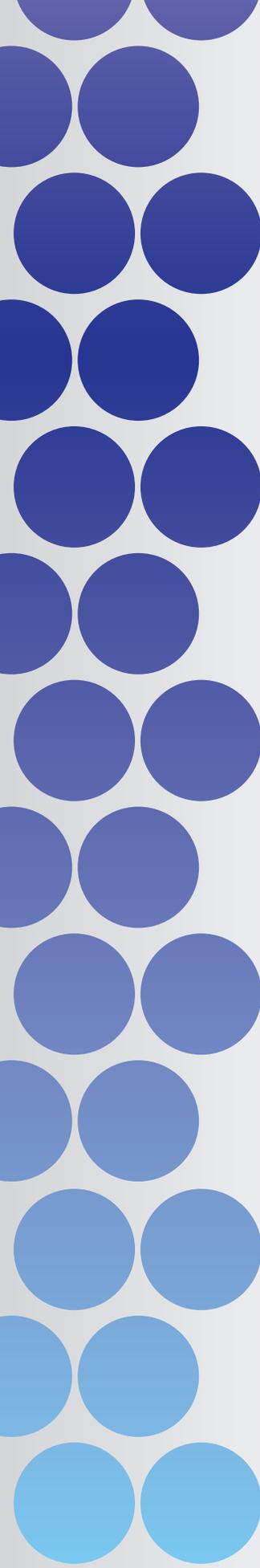
Engagement

We are proud to put a lot of effort into and strive for excellence. We value the efforts we make and the work we do. We celebrate our successes.





Improve integrated
and adapted primary
health care services



The main features of the Network's territory are as follows:

- The territory is generally disadvantaged on the socioeconomic level and in terms of the population health status, mainly in the northern zones;¹
- The population in the North is declining with a larger proportion of seniors;²
- The number of people with three chronic health conditions or more is currently increasing, hence the importance of improving illness prevention and health promotion;³
- The travel distances and difficult road conditions in the winter are inevitable limitations on access to services for residents of the province.⁴

According to the report card published by the New Brunswick Health Council (NBHC) in November 2016, the province obtained a grade of D for its performance (average length of stay in hospital, avoidable hospitalization, and acute bed use for alternate level of care). The NBHC attributes this low grade to the use of "acute care resources for services which would be better provided by primary or long-term care."⁵

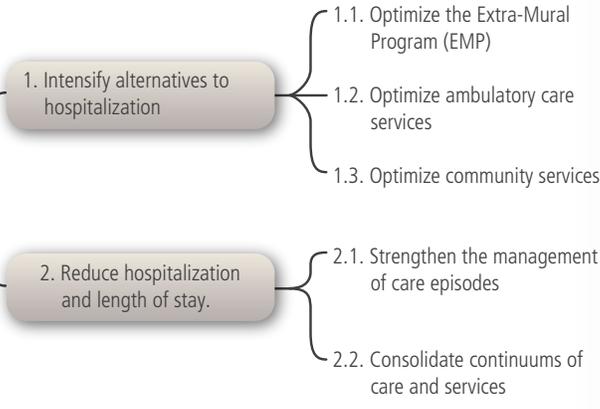
Sociodemographic realities have a real financial impact on the health system and its viability, and the Network must intensify efforts to ensure efficient management of its resources. In its Clinical Services Plan⁶ and in compliance with the health system strategy map, the Network proposes the following vision and directions:

1 Vitalité Health Network, Regional Health and Business Plan, Clinical Services Plan Appendix, page 38.
2 Idem.
3 New Brunswick Health Council, Chronic conditions and health service quality: Are we meeting the need?, October 2016.
4 Vitalité Health Network, Regional Health and Business Plan, Clinical Services Plan Appendix, page 39.
5 New Brunswick Health Council, 2016 New Brunswick Health System Report Card.
6 Vitalité Health Network, Regional Health and Business Plan, Clinical Services Plan Appendix, page 68.

PURPOSE → Improve the performance and sustainability of Vitalité Health Network

Vision: Implement a network of tiered services focused on primary health care, with a marked emphasis on ambulatory and community-based care as well as on home-based care and services.

Adapt organizational and clinical practices.

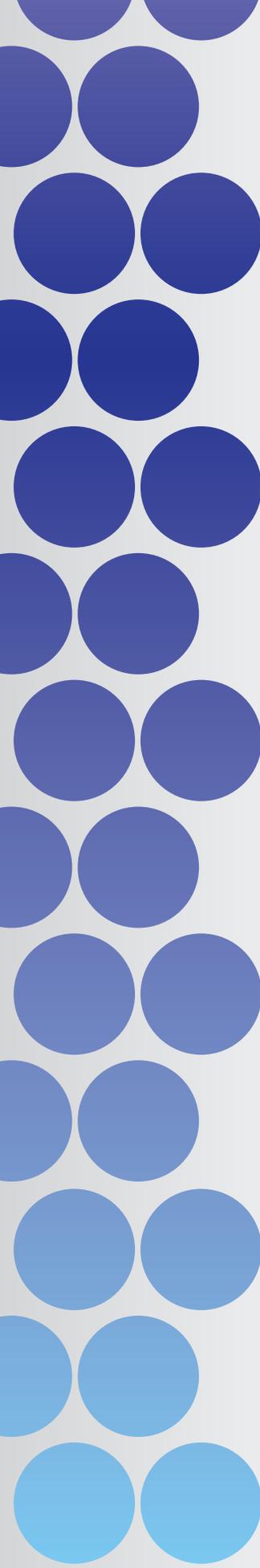


Finally, the determinants of health⁷ are categorized as follows:

- Health care: 10%
- Socioeconomic factors: 40%
- Health behaviours: 40%
- Physical environment: 10%

It is clear that improving health goes beyond the mandate of the Network. It is thus necessary to involve partners such as the school system, communities, and the Department of Social Development, as well as to empower people to be responsible for their own health.

⁷ New Brunswick Health Council, Recognizing and Focusing on Population Health Priorities, April 2016, page 2.



Strategic direction

1 We will contribute to improving the health of people.

Areas for action

Strategic results

Increasing health promotion programs with more intersectorial collaboration

- ▶ 1. The Network’s support to intersectorial health promotion efforts related to obesity and smoking in some target groups will be increased.

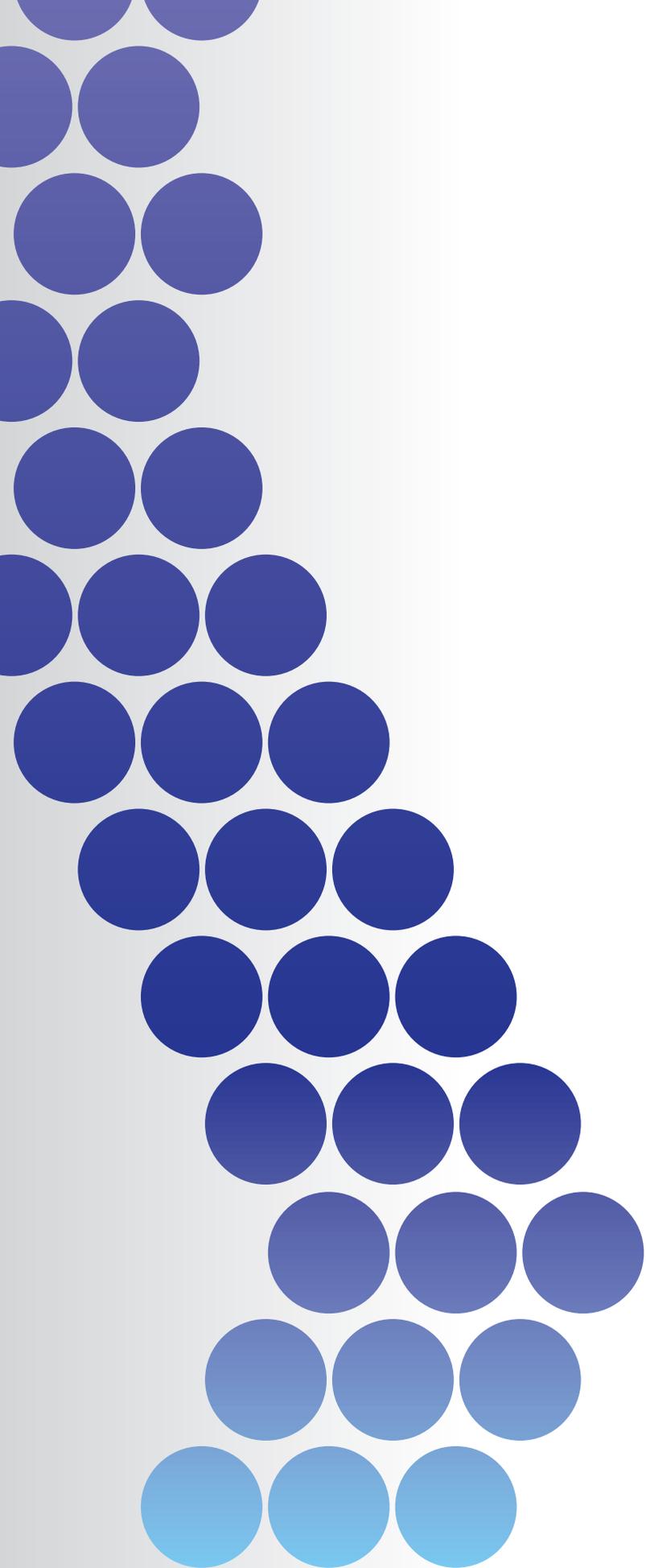
Optimizing disease prevention programs

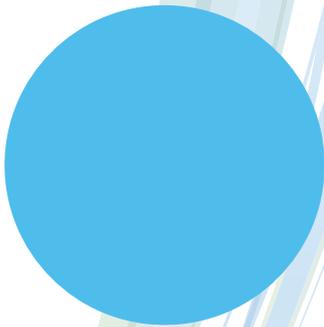
- ▶ 1. The youth addiction prevention program will be revised and interventions will be improved.

Strategic direction

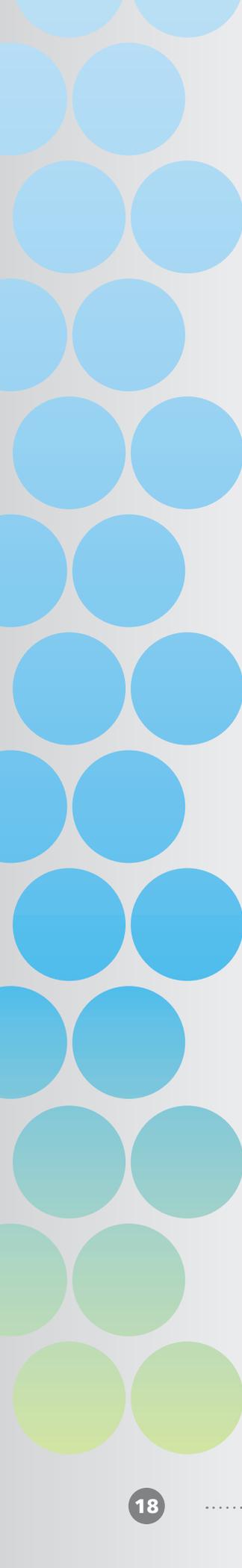
2 We will provide continuous primary health services as close as possible to people's homes.

Areas for action	Strategic results
Expanding alternatives to hospitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 1. Extra-Mural Program services will be optimized.2. Ambulatory care services will be optimized.3. Community services will be optimized.4. Continuums of care and services will be optimized.5. The management of hospital care episodes will be optimized.
Standardizing best practices in the continuous management of chronic diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 1. The application of standardized practice guides for the continuous treatment of chronic diseases will be increased.
Optimizing mental health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 1. Mental health services will be increased using community-focused alternatives before institutionalization is considered and calling on informal support groups.
Developing a common decision approach with patients and their families in planning care and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 1. The patient partner approach will become a best practice with patients suffering from chronic conditions and their families.2. The social pediatrics approach focused on the needs and strengths of children and their community will be developed (interdisciplinarity and plurisectorial method).





Adapt health care services
to the needs and varied
realities of the public



Access to services is a major challenge for the Network given the distribution of clients on a vast territory and the reality of an aging population with often reduced mobility. The Network must implement efficient solutions ensuring greater service proximity, including specialty services.

The New Brunswick Health Council gives a grade of C to equity and accessibility.¹ The aim of the Department of Health's five-year Action Plan for the Equitable Delivery of Services (catch-up plan) is to improve the distribution of services to Francophones across the province.² Thus, new or extended services are, or will be, more accessible to people residing within the territory served by the Network.

Finally, Accreditation Canada's standards emphasize that the primary focus should be "on including the client and family as true partners in service delivery. Client- and family-centred care is an approach that guides all aspects of planning, delivering and evaluating services."³

1 New Brunswick Health Council, 2016 New Brunswick Health System Report Card.

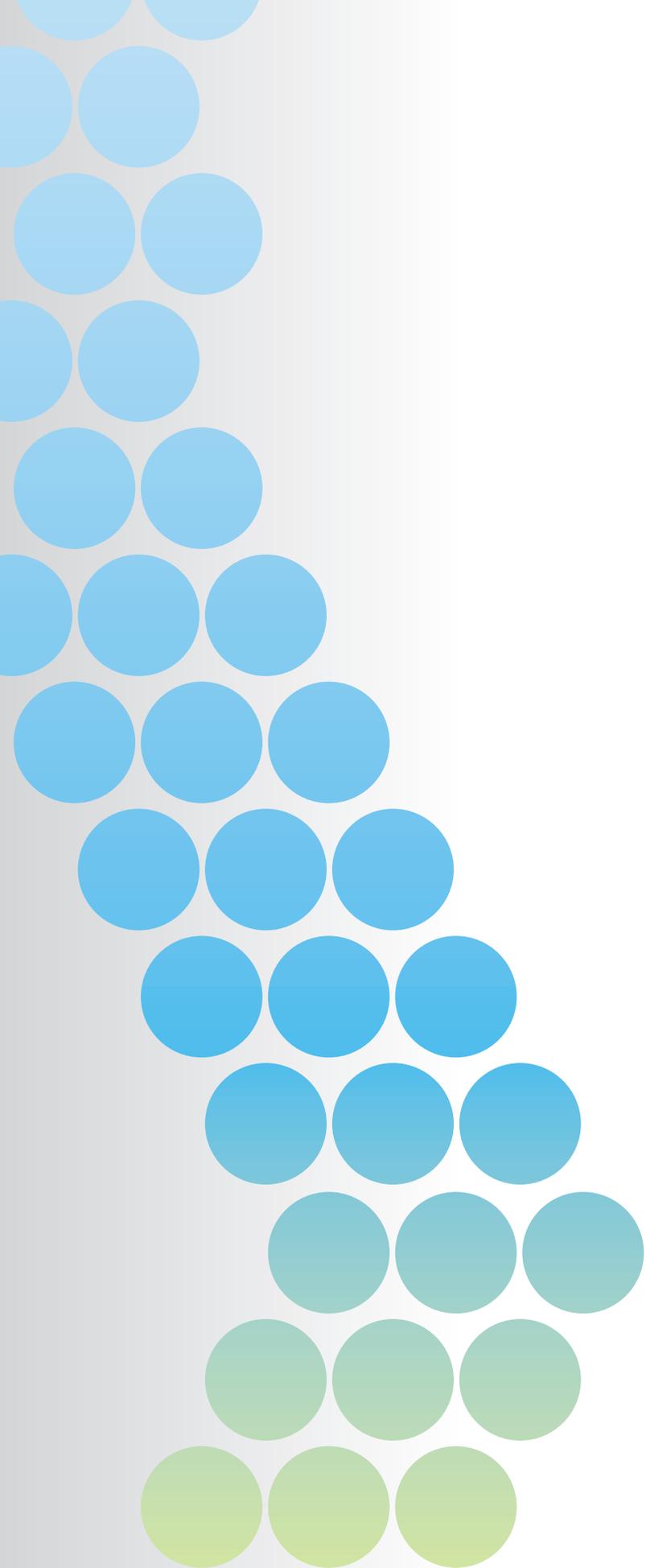
2 Province of New Brunswick, The Provincial Health Plan 2013-2018, Rebuilding Health Care together, page 16.

3 Accreditation Canada, Governance Standards, January 2016, page 1.

Strategic direction

3 We will ensure fair access to care and services across the Network's territory.

Areas for action	Strategic results
Improving access to care and services, namely in rural settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 1. The use of telehealth specialty services will be increased.▶ 2. Mobile clinics will be increased.
Developing optimal access to specialty resources and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 1. Specialty services available (medical and professional) will be increased.
Adapting services to the particular needs of seniors and targeted clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 1. The implementation of best practices in services to seniors and targeted clients will be accelerated.
Involving patients and their families in the identification of the Network's directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 1. The patient partner approach will be implemented on the strategic level of the organization.





Continuously improve the
quality of care and services,
safety, and organizational
performance



Accreditation Canada urges facilities to make the culture of quality improvement a strategic priority on the organizational level.¹ This entails increasing the skills of the teams, staff members and patients so that they can take an active part in quality improvement. To do this, resources must be allocated for the development of the culture and improvement projects. The Network is currently devoting resources to this but efforts to coordinate and disseminate knowledge will be required to reach a higher level.

In its transformation and modernization model integrated into the 2016-2019 Regional Health and Business Plan, the Network made a commitment to provide services based on a vision of overall performance, high quality standards, and evidence-based data.² This involves the pursuit of clinical excellence and efficiency to ensure quality. To do so, the Network wishes to further develop its academic and research mission and establish a culture of evaluation and excellence.

1 Accreditation Canada, Leadership Standards, January 2016, page 27.

2 Vitalité Health Network, Regional Health and Business Plan, Clinical Services Plan Appendix, page 67.

Strategic direction

4 We will promote a culture of excellence.

Areas for action

Maintaining and improving the evaluation and learning culture

Strategic results

- ▶ 1. The organizational capacity to support and maintain service improvement will be further developed.
- 2. Measures to assess quality and organizational performance will be used more widely to improve professional practices.

Strategic direction

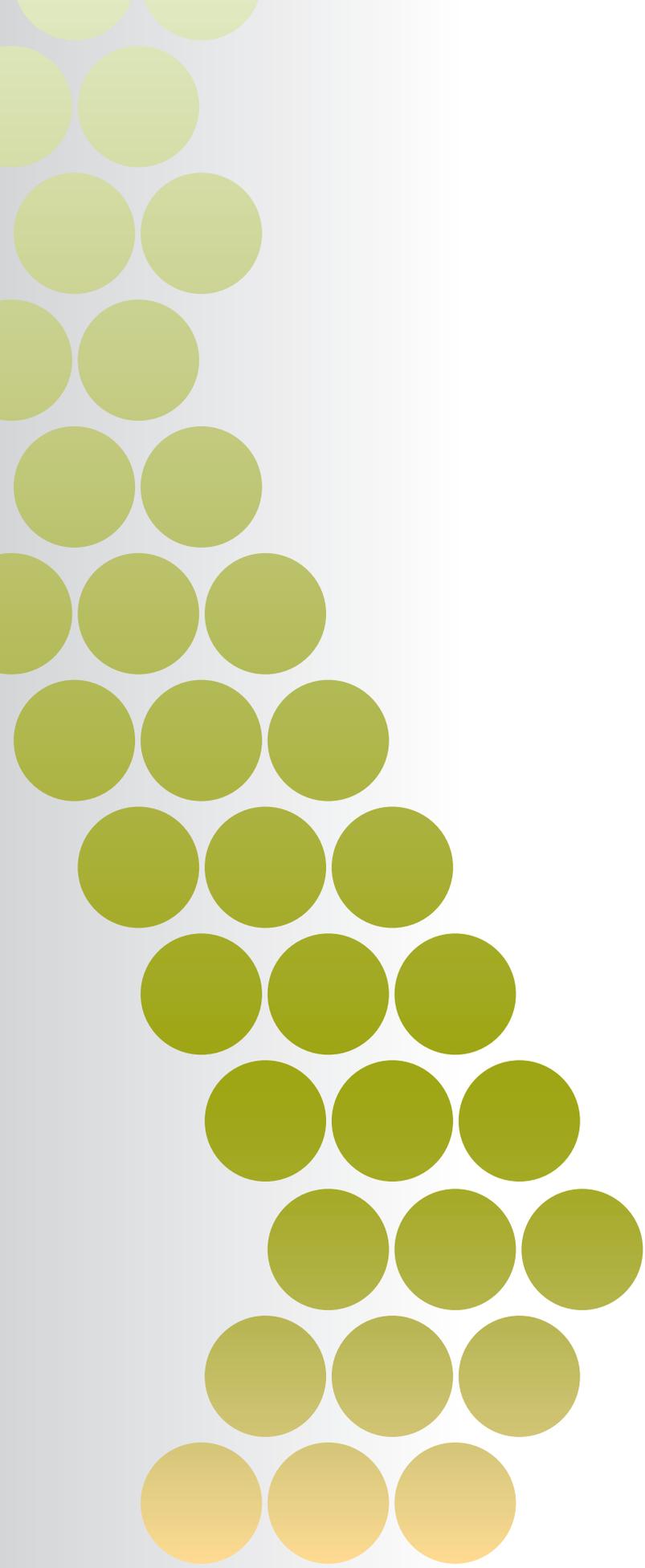
5 We will optimize the university training and research mission.

Areas for action

Developing the Network's university training and research mission

Strategic results

- ▶ 1. The university training and research mission development plan will be conceived and approved.
- 2. The resources required to implement the university hospital centre (UHC) and university hospital centre affiliates (UHCA) development plan will be secured.
- 3. The centre for precision medicine will be set up.
- 4. The psychiatry postdoctoral program will be developed.
- 5. The number of clinical trials will be doubled.





Engage employees and medical staff members in continuous improvement in clinical practices and in the care and services delivered to the public



To achieve anticipated outcomes as part of strategic planning, the Network needs to engage employees and medical staff members and support their skills improvement.

In the light of the results of the last Pulse survey¹ (survey on employee and medical staff engagement) and consultation as part of the development of the current strategic plan, the main needs identified by the staff are:

- Improved access to professional development;
- Improved two-way communication with immediate supervisor;
- Stabilization of the organizational structure;
- Application of values throughout the Network;
- Greater consideration of the staff's wellness.

Although the staff turnover is relatively low in the Network (about 2%, excluding retirements), the fact of the matter is that current and expected retirements and the number of vacant positions are challenges to the development and maintenance of services. Recruitment problems are particularly acute in some professions, namely pharmacists, psychologists, physiotherapists and medical laboratory technologists.

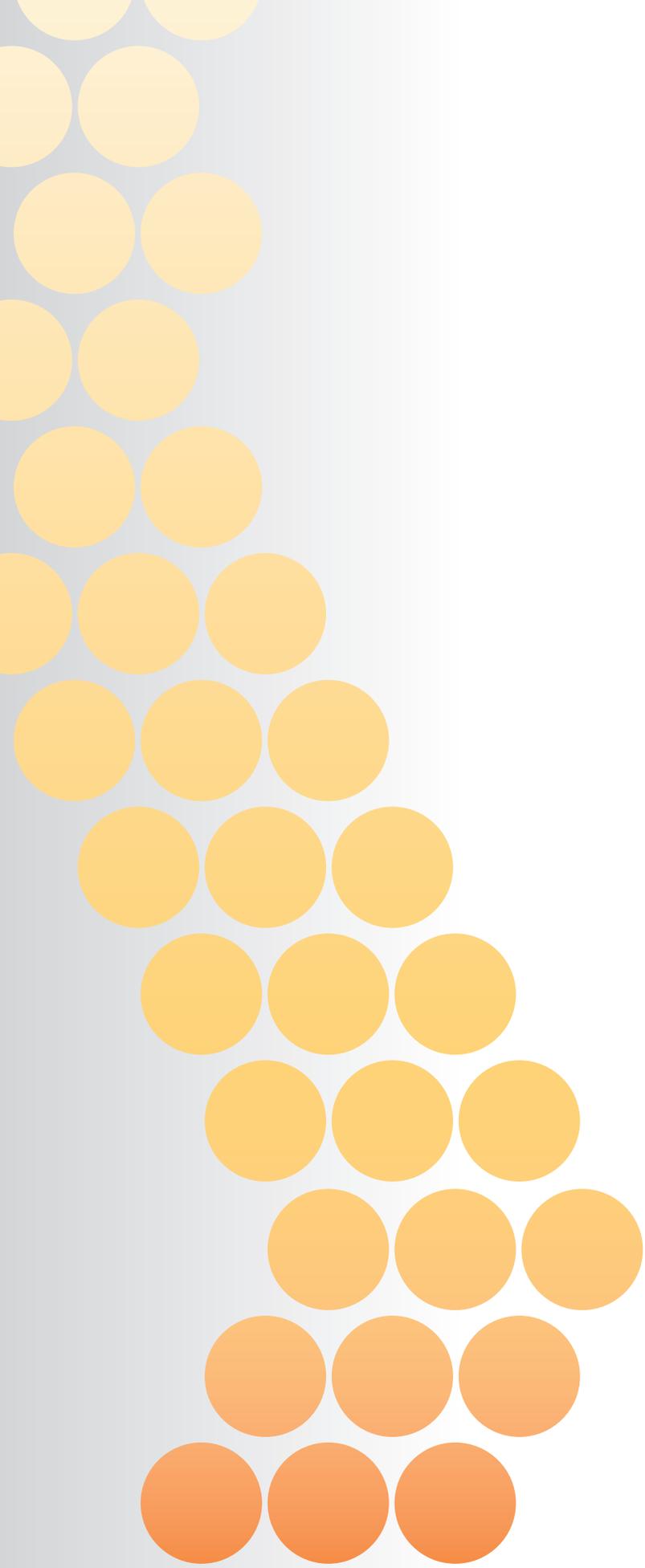
Recruitment and retention strategies must be put forward. Development of talents and possibilities is a precious means to ensure competent succession in both the delivery of direct services and management of the Network's affairs.

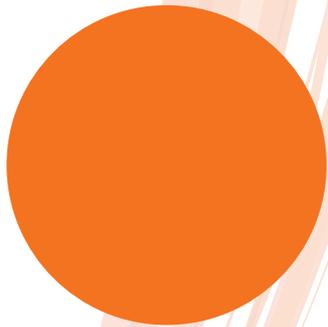
¹ Results of the 2015 Pulse survey (Accreditation Canada).

Strategic direction

6 We will promote the growth and development of the Network employees and medical staff members.

Areas for action	Strategic results
Using evidence-based data and innovative practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Quality improvement projects will be developed by employees and medical staff members and will be supported by administration.
Supporting the wellness of employees and medical staff members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. A strategy to enhance participative management will be implemented.2. A wellness strategy for promoting employee engagement will be put forward.3. A strategy to reduce the number of work accidents will be applied.4. A strategy to improve the wellness of the organization managers will be put forward.5. A strategy to apply the organization's values will be enhanced.6. An internal communication strategy will be improved.
Recruiting experts and maintaining and enhancing skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Access to quality continuing training programs will be improved.2. An organizational leadership development program will be initiated.3. Pairing arrangements between experimented and new professionals will be made.4. A recruitment strategy will be developed and implemented.





Affirm the Network's
engagement to the public



In the Clinical Services Plan and Transformation and Modernization Plan, the Network clearly stated its intention to engage communities, partners, and patients and their families in the identification of needs and priorities. Accreditation Canada also recognizes that clients and their families should play a key role in planning, delivering and evaluating services¹. To do so, the Network must promote the participation and empowerment of people on its territory.

The importance for the Network to establish a streamlined communication process was also highlighted during consultations on the strategic plan.

Strategic direction

7 We will promote transparency in communications and the involvement of communities.

Areas for action

Strategic results

Continued community involvement in the identification of health needs and establishment of priorities for their settings

- ▶ 1. The results of the needs assessments of the four targeted communities (Bathurst, Edmundston, Campbellton and Moncton) and the resulting implementation plans will be communicated to the individuals and levels concerned.
- ▶ 2. The strategy to evaluate the needs of communities will be reviewed.

Continuous information on existing services, the Network's capabilities, and challenges in service delivery

- ▶ 1. A continuous communication strategy will be implemented.

Dissemination of best practices and the Network's successes

- ▶ 1. The results of best practices will be acknowledged and celebrated within the Network.

¹ Accreditation Canada – Governance Standards.

Conclusion

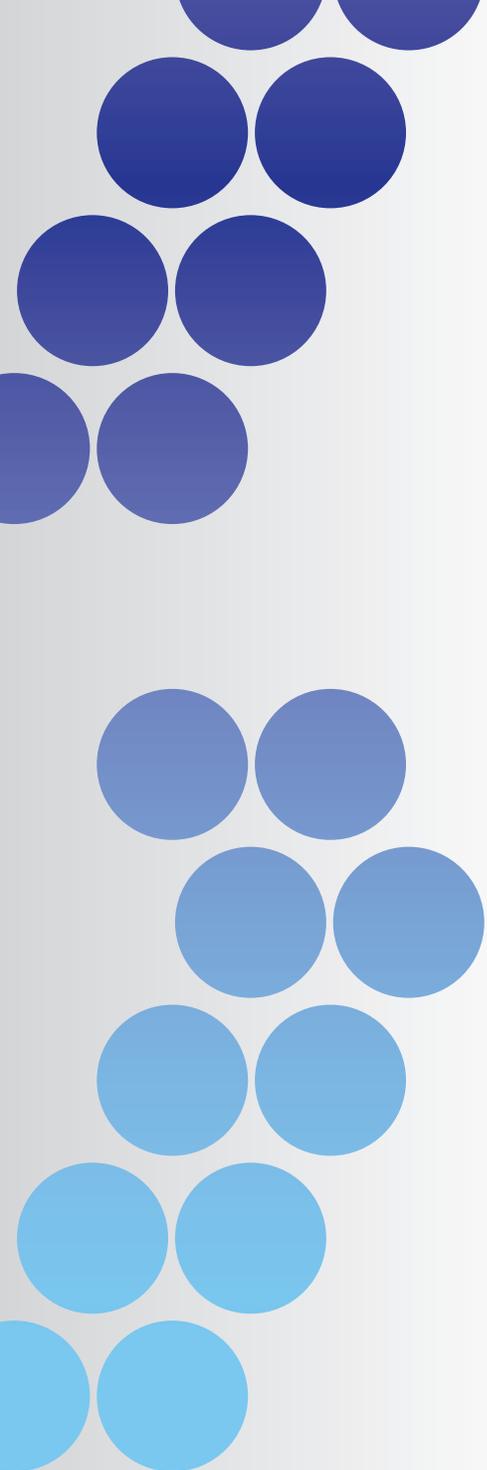
Our approach to developing the strategic plan rallied employees, physicians, administrators, partners, volunteers and community members around a common vision and priorities set for the next few years. The high level of participation made this exercise a success.



We are aware of the challenges that we must face, the Network's strengths, and the people's needs and the means required to help them improve or maintain their health.

In addition to our dedicated team, we are fortunate to be able to rely on the collaboration of our partners in achieving the targeted results.

We will move forward together with confidence in the next three years.



Vitalité Health Network • Head Office

275 Main Street

Suite 600

Bathurst NB E2A 1A9

Phone : 1-888-472-2220 (toll-free)

Phone : 506-544-2133

Fax : 506-544-2145

E-mail : info@vitalitenb.ca

Website : www.vitalitenb.ca

This document is available on the Vitalité Health Network website.

For the employees of the Network, it is also accessible on Boulevard.