

HEALTH SYSTEM EFFECTIVENESS

A PRINCIPLES APPROACH TO ACHIEVING HEALTH SYSTEM EXCELLENCE IN CANADA

Health System Effectiveness Defined

Health systems in Canada involve many complexities. Health system effectiveness is about clarifying roles and responsibilities and defining ‘rules of engagement’ to ensure good working relationships among the many stakeholder groups involved in health systems across Canada, including governments, trustees, and executives.

The Canadian Healthcare Association (CHA) believes in a well governed, well managed, and publicly accountable health system, where responsibility is shared among governments, trustees, and executives. An effective health system not only meets the needs of Canadians, but also has their confidence.

The Benefits of an Effective Health System

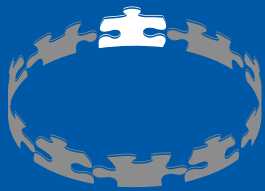
An effectively governed, managed, and accountable health system that shares responsibility is necessary to provide high quality, accessible, and cost-effective health services. It contributes to ensuring a healthy workplace for those who work in the system and to the sound safety net of public services on which individual Canadians and Canadian businesses rely.

CHA’s Leadership on Health System Effectiveness

A range of stakeholders, including federal, provincial, and territorial governments, health system trustees and executives, health providers, and others must work together to achieve health system excellence in Canada. In January 2005, CHA and CCAF-FCVI Inc. (a national, non-profit research foundation focused on the areas of public sector accountability, governance, management, and audit) released *Excellence in Canada’s Health System: Principles for Governance, Management, Accountability and Shared Responsibility*. The brief promotes eleven principles that provide the common ground needed for stakeholders to work successfully together to address mutual objectives. In the context of possible devolution to the provinces and territories and transferring of tax points, it is important to have principles in place that ensure a well-functioning health system.

Through our principles framework, we propose that an effective health system requires 1) strategic direction and leadership, 2) public accountability and involvement, and 3) clear roles and responsibilities.

As a follow-up to the dissemination of the principles framework and the advice received from discussions with key individuals interested in promoting organizational effectiveness, CHA hosted a National Roundtable on Health System Effectiveness in December 2005. The Roundtable brought together federal, provincial, and territorial




government representatives; chairs and CEOs of provincial and territorial health organizations, and representatives of selected organizations interested in public and private sector organizational effectiveness from across Canada. The message of Roundtable delegates to CHA was *“We want to work in partnership with you on this important and timely issue, and we want to build on the success of organizations that are already implementing the principles.”*

Implementation Success Stories

Over the past decade, health systems across Canada have undergone considerable change in their governance, management, accountability, and shared partnership practices. At CHA’s National roundtable, a cross-country session highlighted current efforts to implement the principles framework. Government representatives, trustees, and executives from Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, Canada’s territories, and Manitoba reflected on health system effectiveness practices in their jurisdictions. John Abbott, Deputy Minister of Health for Newfoundland and Labrador reported that his department is within 85-90% of implementing the principles and *“it is the clear intent of the government to move in the direction outlined by the framework document.”*

CHA’s Continued Leadership

While there have been some tremendous successes, CHA recognizes that there are more improvements to be made in provincial and territorial health systems across Canada. Through CHA’s determination to transform the health system, we will work with our partners in the health system, government and the business community to promote the adoption of health system effectiveness principles and to achieve health system excellence in Canada.

1		2	Canadian Healthcare Association
9		0	Association canadienne des soins de santé
3		0	
1		6	75 years of service / 75 années de service

CHA is the federation of provincial and territorial hospital and health organizations across Canada. Through our members, CHA represents a broad continuum of care, including acute care, home and community care, long term care, public health, mental health, palliative care, addiction services, children, youth and family services, and housing services. These services are provided through regional health authorities, hospitals and other facilities and agencies that serve all Canadians and are governed by trustees who act in the public interest. CHA is a leader in developing, and advocating for, health policy solutions that meet the needs of Canadians and is the champion for a publicly funded health system that provides access to a continuum of comparable health services throughout Canada.