

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, NUNAVUT, AND YUKON: DIFFERENT OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

THE EXPERIENCE OF IMPLEMENTING HEALTH SYSTEM EFFECTIVENESS PRINCIPLES

CHA's Leadership on Health System Effectiveness

The Canadian Healthcare Association (CHA), a federation of provincial and territorial hospital and health organizations across Canada, 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.

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. 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.

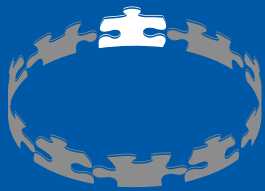
In the spring of 2005, CHA met one-on-one with key organizations and individuals from the health system to obtain feedback on how the principles might be adapted for use within the health system. We were pleased to note that most people expressed support for the principles. We were also encouraged to continue our work by validating them with a larger audience and describing how they could be applied.

As a result, CHA hosted a National Roundtable on Health System Effectiveness in December 2005, attended by federal, provincial, and territorial government representatives; chairs and CEOs of provincial and territorial health organizations, other key health stakeholders, and representatives of the business, auditing, and quality communities. Through constructive dialogue on the achievement of best practices in health system effectiveness and an exploration of current practices across Canada, the Roundtable revealed a real appetite among delegates to learn from experiences with implementing the principles and to work in partnership on this important and timely issue to build on current successes.

A cross-country session on efforts to implement the CHA-CCAF principles framework featured the experiences of provincial and territorial governments, trustees, and executives. Representatives from Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, Canada's territories, and Manitoba reflected on health system effectiveness practices in their jurisdictions. In one presentation, Ron Browne, CEO of Whitehorse General Hospital presented on how the varying experiences in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and the Yukon reflect the CHA-CCAF principles framework.

“CHA's agenda on health system effectiveness corresponds well with the role of the Health Council of Canada, as we are essentially an accountability tool for the public to assess health system performance”

Cathy Fooks, Executive Director of the Health Council of Canada and member of CHA's External Advisory Panel on Health System Effectiveness.



“ *The system is more focused on providing information to stakeholders internally within the system than externally to the public*”

*David Stewart-Patterson,
Executive Vice-President of the
Canadian Council of Chief
Executives and member of CHA's
External Advisory Panel on Health
System Effectiveness*

Context of Health System Restructuring

Mr. Browne gave a brief overview of geographic, demographic, and population health factors as well as the configuration of health and social services in Canada's three northern territories. He observed differences among these systems, including hospitals, regional health authorities, community advisory committees, self-governing First Nations services, and forms of physician compensation.

Strategy for Implementing Change

Mr. Browne noted the applicability of the CHA-CCAF principles framework to the health system in each territory. Recognizing the significant differences among the territories, he emphasized the importance of First Nations involvement in consensus efforts concerning the principles. Given continuous change in leadership, there needs to be recognition of and striving towards common leadership principles that have been proven effective.

Results

While principles of health system effectiveness inform the approach of each Territory to organizational effectiveness, it will be necessary to discuss a shared vision within each territory for applying the principles framework more rigorously, particularly with respect to the principles concerning clarifying roles and responsibilities and those relating to public accountability and involvement.

Strategic Direction and Leadership: Strong but Not Sufficient

- Health indicators used to set health priorities.
- Political leaders draw the attention of all governments in Canada to the crisis in health status within the territories.
- Promised additional federal funding will allow increases in health human resources, facilities, and equipment.
- Need for a better process to set detailed priorities beyond the five or six most obvious health needs.

Public Accountability and Involvement: Needs Discussion

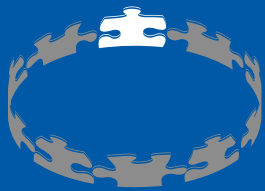
- Struggling to meet the reporting requirements of the Canadian Institute for Health Information.
- Challenged to meet accreditation requirements of the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation.

Clear Roles and Responsibilities: Needs Discussion

- Need for a discussion of what “public interest” means in terms of the provision of safe and complete care at a reasonable cost.

Number One Success Factor

Like many other jurisdictions, Mr. Browne pointed to collaboration as a key factor. “*A shared understanding and commitment to a leadership model may achieve more consistent progress towards a more responsive, integrated, and patient-focused system that improves health outcomes for all Canadians*” said Mr. Browne.



CHA's Continued Leadership

While Canada's territories have had some success in improving organizational effectiveness, as have most other jurisdictions, CHA and its member organizations recognize that there are improvements to be made in provincial and territorial health systems across Canada.

Governance and accountability frameworks are not as robust as they need to be. We also recognize that leadership for strengthening governance and accountability is a shared responsibility.

Working in partnerships, CHA and its member organizations, including our members in each of Canada's territories will seek the support of governments, trustees, and executives to further adopt and implement the principles framework.


With our partners, CHA is determined to transform the health system.

In addition to short documents on the principles framework and experiences with implementing the framework, CHA will engage all provincial and territorial governments in a dialogue around achieving best practices in governance, management, accountability, and shared responsibility. CHA will be taking steps to meet one-on-one with deputy ministers of health and other public officials.

Finally, through our External Advisory Panel, CHA will work with the Health Council of Canada, the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation, Canadian businesses, governments, and others to promote the adoption of health system effectiveness principles and to achieve health system excellence in Canada.

“ CCHSA is enhancing our accreditation program. The principles framework developed by CHA and CCAF is compatible with the proposed new governance standards”

Wendy Nicklin, CEO of the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation and member of CHA's External Advisory Panel on Health System Effectiveness.

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.