

Strategic Directions 2011

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Our health care system has come a long way since the 2003 *First Ministers' Accord on Health Care Renewal* and the 2004 *10-Year Plan to Strengthen Health Care*, but there is still a lot of work to do to achieve the First Ministers' vision, shared by all Canadians: A more accessible, higher quality, and sustainable health care system.



The Health Council of Canada's role is to let governments and the Canadian public know how progress towards this vision is coming along. It's what we've been doing consistently since we were formed eight years ago. Our voice is unique in its independence, and its pan-Canadian perspective on health care reform.

More and more, our focus is on identifying best practices and innovation, so that planners, providers, administrators, and the public know where progress is being made, and how. The real challenge of health system renewal is that we don't have one Canadian health care system, but rather a collection of 14 individual systems—one for each province, territory and the federal government—that are well served by learning from one another.

The health accords were rooted in the health care landscape of their time, and so was the Health Council of Canada. As a result, eight years into our existence, we took the time to reflect on our past, assess the Canadian health care landscape, look at jurisdictional advances in data collection and reporting, and imagine our role in a future where public reporting on progress leads to a health care system that better serves the Canadian public. The result is our five-year strategic plan.

Dr. Jack Kitts
Chair, Health Council of Canada



The Health Council of Canada

Canada's First Ministers established the Health Council of Canada in 2003¹ and enhanced the Council's role in 2004².

First Ministers agreed to establish “a Health Council to monitor and make annual public reports on the implementation of the Accord, particularly its accountability and transparency provisions. The Health Council will publicly report through federal/provincial/territorial Ministers of Health and will include representatives of both orders of government, experts and the public.” (2003 *First Ministers' Accord on Health Care Renewal*)

1 2003 *First Ministers' Accord on Health Care Renewal*

2 *10-Year Plan to Strengthen Health Care* (2004)

Following the 2004 *10-Year Plan to Strengthen Health Care*, the Council was given the additional responsibility of reporting annually on health status and health outcomes.

In April 2010, governments completed a review of the Health Council's scope, mandate, role, objectives, effectiveness and continued relevance. Governments confirmed a new set of directions which require the Health Council to:

- continue reporting on progress related to the accord elements based on a multi-year cycle;
- place greater emphasis on identifying, reporting and disseminating best practices and innovation in its public reports; and
- increase government engagement in the planning and development of its public reports to ensure greater value-add to the jurisdictions.

In addition, the Council's governance structure was streamlined. The work of the Council is now managed by a board of directors (the Council) which is composed of 12 Councillors and one ex-officio Councillor. The Council is supported by a Secretariat with expertise in health policy, research, stakeholder and government relations, and communications.

The corporate members of the Council are the federal Minister of Health, and the Ministers of Health of British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, who in turn appoint the Council.

The Council approaches its mandate by taking a system-wide perspective on health care renewal in Canada and reports findings to Canadians, their governments, and key stakeholders through public documents. Ultimately, the Council considers progress in terms of its overall impact on the health status and health outcomes of Canadians.

Since 2008, the Health Council has released 19 publicly accessible reports and bulletins that outline progress on the accords to date, identify best practices in policy and program delivery, and inform Canadians about the major health issues that face their country.

THE CONTEXT FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

This strategic plan is a key building block for the Council. This document sets out the strategic priorities the Council will pursue to achieve the goals outlined by the First Ministers.

As part of our strategic planning exercise, we took stock of the past eight years, reflected upon the lessons we learned along the way, and considered our place in the future health care landscape. Here are some of our conclusions:

- The Council has a unique voice and point-of-view in the public dialogue on health care delivery and the health care system.
- There is not a “one size fits all” solution. Our work should reflect the individual challenges and paths to health care renewal taken by different jurisdictions across the country.
- The Council must continue to make complex issues understandable to the general Canadian public.
- The Council’s work should highlight potential solutions to barriers or challenges in health care renewal, including the dissemination of best practices.

- In addition to our reports, there are many different ways to communicate the Council’s work and multiple streams for sharing our findings. We can make greater use of social media and other web-based technology to extend the reach of our messaging. Sharing our messages at meetings, conferences or other venues—whether hosted by the Health Council or not—is essential. The Health Council can also play a role in bringing interested parties together to share information and to learn from one another.

OUR VISION

A leading voice that informs and strengthens Canada’s health system.

OUR MISSION

To report on the renewal of Canada’s health system, focusing on best practices and innovation.

OUR VALUES

In our public reporting role and the conduct of our business, we are:

- inclusive;
- objective;
- transparent; and
- independent (arm’s-length).

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To fulfill our mandate, the Council will achieve success by focusing on the following four strategic priorities:

Informing – We monitor the health accords and we are a trusted source of information and evidence on Canada’s health system renewal.

Communicating – Our work is easily accessed by health organizations, stakeholders, governments and the public, and we seek their ongoing input and feedback.

Collaborating – We maintain strong working relationships with governments, stakeholders and other health organizations to add value to one another’s work to improve Canada’s health system.

Having Impact – We strive to measure the contribution of our work in strengthening Canada’s health system.

Each of these priorities is described in further detail on pages 10 and 11.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. Informing

- Our reports are eagerly anticipated by governments, our key stakeholders and the public
- Our information is trusted and leads to:
 - A public that is more informed about health care issues
 - Governments having additional information with which to make decisions
 - Patients who can participate more fully in their care
 - Providers who know of best practices and innovation, both nationally and internationally
 - Policy, program and service changes that strengthen our health system

2. Communicating

- The Council (and its brand) is well established and recognized across the country, and internationally
- We are a trusted source that provides an informed perspective on health care renewal
- We are a leader in using current and emerging information and communications technologies, and media platforms to disseminate our reports and engage our audiences

3. Collaborating

- The Council has the trust and confidence of governments and key stakeholders through ongoing and effective two-way communication
- Governments and others engage the Council based on the quality and relevance of our work; they seek and value the Council's input
- We are seen as leveraging the work of others to fulfill our mandate; we know that others are using our work to meet their goals

4. Having Impact

- The Council is widely acknowledged by governments, the public, and other stakeholders as having an informed view on health renewal initiatives, and highlights best practices and innovation
- We can measure how governments, the public and others use our work to help strengthen our health care system

KEY STRATEGIES

- Monitoring developments in health care reform
- Our annual work plans and reporting will focus on key areas of the accords:
 - Aboriginal Health
 - Access to Care in the North
 - Access and Wait Times
 - Health Human Resources
 - Public Reporting on Health Status and Health Outcomes
 - Home and Community Care
 - Pharmaceuticals Management
 - Prevention, Promotion and Public Health
 - Primary Health Care
 - Health Information Systems and Electronic Health Records
- We will focus on identifying best practices and innovation to demonstrate how our health system can be strengthened
- We will build capacity internally and with the stakeholder community to ensure that our reports are relevant and of high quality
- We will measure the impact of the accords on health system results and health outcomes

- Our multi-year communications strategy will build key messages for defined audiences, promote the uptake of our key findings, and monitor our desired outcomes for our reporting initiatives
- We will leverage existing and emerging communications channels to disseminate our work and engage in dialogue to ensure our findings are relevant and resonate with the health care system

- The Council will define key partners and work to optimize these collaborative relationships
- We will engage governments and key stakeholders in planning our work
- We will work collaboratively to develop content for our work
- We will disseminate widely across governments, stakeholder organizations and the provider community

- The Council will develop an internal evaluation framework to assess the impact of our work on health care renewal
- The Council provides information on best practices and innovation to health care providers and policy makers within and outside governments

CONCLUSION

The Health Council of Canada will continue to make an important contribution to the renewal of our health care system. We believe our Strategic Directions provide a solid foundation for advancing our vision and mission, and for meeting the expectations of the Council, governments, and Canadians.

ABOUT THE HEALTH COUNCIL OF CANADA

Created by the 2003 *First Ministers' Accord on Health Care Renewal*, the Health Council of Canada is an independent national agency that reports on the progress of health care renewal in Canada. The Health Council provides a system-wide perspective on health care reform, and disseminates information on best practices and innovation across the country. The Councillors are appointed by the participating provincial and territorial governments and the Government of Canada.

To download reports and other Health Council of Canada materials, visit www.healthcouncilcanada.ca.

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The Health Council of Canada would like to acknowledge funding support from Health Canada. The views expressed here do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada.

Strategic Directions 2011: Five-Year Strategic Plan
August 2011
ISBN 978-1-926961-21-7 PDF
ISBN 978-1-926961-22-4 Print

HOW TO CITE THIS PUBLICATION:

Strategic Directions 2011: Five-Year Strategic Plan.
Health Council of Canada. (2011). Toronto: Health Council of Canada.
www.healthcouncilcanada.ca

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