



## Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, August 5, 2021  
7:00 p.m.  
Via Zoom

### MINUTES

Present: Ron Lavoie, Chair  
Jack Alblas, Gary Austin, Dr. Candi Flynn, Dr. Chuck Gatfield, Joani Gerber,  
Steve Hearn, Barry Hutton, Dr. Kevin Lefebvre, Joe Looby, Dr. Heather Percival,  
Dr. Nadine Potvin, Kim Ross Jones, Greg Stewart, Tricia Wilkerson, John  
Wilkinson, Andrew Williams, Mary Cardinal, Ken Haworth, Sue Davey

Regrets: Deborah Wiseman, Kerri Ann O'Rourke, Dr. Alistair Smith

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**1. Welcome & Call to Order**

Ron Lavoie, Board Chair called the meeting to order, introductions were made and quorum was confirmed.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

It was moved by Jack Alblas, seconded by Steve Hearn:

**THAT the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance Board of Directors approves the meeting agenda as circulated.**

**CARRIED**

**3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

There was no conflict of interest declared by any members.

**4. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

**4.1 June 3, 2021**

It was moved by Joe Looby, seconded by Steve Hearn:

**THAT the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance Board of Directors approves the minutes from the meeting held June 3, 2021.**

**CARRIED**

**4.2 June 17, 2021 – Organizational Meeting**

It was moved by Kim Ross Jones, seconded by John Wilkinson:

**THAT the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance Board of Directors approves the minutes from the Organizational Meeting held June 17, 2021.**

**CARRIED**

**5. Patient Story**

Andrew Williams presented positive feedback that was received and requested to be shared with the Board which was pre-circulated with the agenda package. A note was also received today and read to the Board that complimented and recognized the greeters (Pandemic Healthcare Workers). This positive feedback will be shared with them and Andrew explained the feedback process noting that feedback received (positive and negative) is always acknowledged and followed up appropriately as required.

**6. Consent Agenda**

It was moved by John Wilkinson, seconded by Tricia Wilkerson:

**THAT the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance Board of Directors approves the August 5, 2021 Consent Agenda that included reports from the:**

- Chief Nursing Executive
- President & Chief Executive Officer

**CARRIED**

There was discussion about provincial incentives available for nursing recruitment and it was noted that due to the criteria to be eligible for this funding, our hospitals are not eligible for these opportunities. He added that the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance continues to work with the Ministry around different approaches and opportunities for staffing small organizations.

**7. Governance****7.1 Board Committee Reports****7.1.1 Governance & Stakeholder Relations Committee**

Greg Stewart presented the highlights from the meeting held on July 27<sup>th</sup> that were included in the agenda package. The Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance (HPHA) Governance Policies will undergo review this year. The Quarter 1 Communications Report was received highlighting that the new website is providing analytics, the Communication Plan is being refreshed and social media channels are busy. A detailed Quarter 1 Commitments to Our Communities update on the Huron Perth & Area Ontario Health Team was received and details were included in the highlights. The HPHA Board Work Plan was included in the agenda package for consideration.

It was moved by Greg Stewart, seconded by Kim Ross Jones:

**THAT the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance Board of Directors approves the 2021/2022 Board Work Plan.**

**CARRIED**

**7.1.2 Local Advisory Committees**Clinton Public Hospital

Greg Stewart presented the report from the meeting held on June 23<sup>rd</sup> for informational purposes. The Committee received an update on site patient activity, as well as a number of facility projects underway at the site, included in the highlights. The Clinton Public Hospital Foundation was recognized for its generous transfer of \$1.01M to the hospital and for other targeted fundraising toward equipment. The temporary reduction of hours in the Emergency Department (ED) is ongoing and recent staffing challenges led to the closure of the ED for a day over the August long weekend.

#### St. Marys Memorial Hospital

The St. Marys Local Advisory Committee met on June 29<sup>th</sup> and the report was presented by Kim Ross Jones for informational purposes. She referred to the updated timeline for the patient room refresh project noting that construction is planned to begin next spring and last for approximately two years. The St. Marys Health Care Foundation is launching a new fundraising campaign and their Annual Golf Tournament is being held on September 2<sup>nd</sup>.

#### Seaforth Community Hospital

The Seaforth Local Advisory Committee met on June 24<sup>th</sup> and the report was received for informational purposes.

#### Stratford General Hospital

Jack Alblas presented the report from the meeting held June 24<sup>th</sup> for informational purposes. He noted the Stratford General Hospital Foundation's "In Our Hands" Campaign goal of \$30M and the current \$5M ask that is pending from the City of Stratford. A number of facility projects are underway including upgrades and improvements to parking lots with plans for more handicapped parking and the addition of electric vehicle charging stations.

The Board recognized and commended the efforts of all of the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance Hospital Foundations for their support of our organization and their efforts to continue to fundraise during the pandemic, which has seen an increase in philanthropy from our communities.

### **7.1.3 Medical Advisory Committee**

The Medical Advisory Committee met on June 24<sup>th</sup> and Dr. Lefebvre presented the meeting highlights that were pre-circulated for informational purposes. He highlighted the that physician human resources are stabilized and a detailed report was included with the Resource & Audit Committee report to the Board. Recruitment successes include the addition of two new ophthalmologists to the region starting in September. He also noted that the Senior Midwife role has been formalized with an agreement and stipend attached to this position.

### **7.1.4 Quality Committee**

Kim Ross Jones presented the report from the meeting held on July 28<sup>th</sup> for informational purposes. She highlighted the operational indicators not meeting target/standard for Quarter 1 mainly related to COVID-19 and details were in the report presented. The Patient Partner Program is undergoing a refresh to include rebranding to "Patient and Caregiver Partner Program" reflecting the importance of caregivers, and to include opportunities for interaction and involvement in the forms of participating in sharing, consulting and collaborating roles.

Andrew Williams noted that the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance was recognized for accepting patients from the GTA by the William Osler Health System in a social media video message (<https://twitter.com/i/status/1421103365170335747>).

### **7.1.5 Resources & Audit Committee**

The Resources & Audit Committee met on July 29<sup>th</sup> and Joe Looby presented the report pre-circulated. He reported that as at June 30<sup>th</sup> the organization was essentially balanced versus the budgeted deficit of \$0.5M with the variance driven primarily by funding received for operations. The year-end forecast is a deficit of \$3.5M. Capital

expenditures year-to-date total \$1.9M and the forecast reflects \$17M. Projects, supply availability and costs are affected by COVID-19, but on track. It was noted that the line of credit has not been accessed during Quarter 1.

It was moved by Joe Looby, seconded by Jack Alblas:

**THAT the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance Board of Directors approves the Quarter 1, June 30, 2021 financial statements and associated reports.**

**CARRIED**

Andrew Williams provided an update on the ongoing staffing challenges in the Clinton Public Hospital Emergency Department that led to the recent closure of the Clinton Public Hospital Emergency Department over the August long weekend due to nursing staffing challenges. He explained the processes undertaken that led to the difficult although necessary decision to close, for the safety of both potential patients and staff. Contingency plans were put into place quickly the day prior, communication was shared widely, with the media and across social media. There were no negative outcomes for patients due to the closure and a few low acuity patients were diverted and seen at the Seaforth Community Hospital. Andrew explained that in reaching out to partner hospitals in the region for staff to avoid closure, regional hospitals are experiencing the same issues, a situation that is seen by hospitals across the province. It was noted that there are several vacant positions across the organization which include nursing, and a number of contributing factors to include COVID-19 fatigue, retirements, extended sick and maternity leaves and more vacant positions than human resources to fill them. Being an employer of choice remains top priority. Hospitals are competing for the same pool of human resources and there are more vacant positions than people available to fill them. All team members were commended for their efforts. It was noted that the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance continues to work with the Ministry for strategies to address rural ED operations.

A lengthy conversation was held related to vaccination as the Board reviewed the Briefing Report that was presented to the Committee and included in the agenda package. Highlights included:

- Vaccine uptake across the organization and current statistics for staff and physicians;
- The declination process, processes being undertaken for new hires and considerations taken into account given the staffing crisis being experienced;
- Volunteers will be mandated to be vaccinated prior to returning to on-site presence;
- Recommendations for vaccination of those working in healthcare settings;
- The importance of ensuring that individuals are getting vaccine information from reputable sources and taking opportunities to instill vaccine confidence for individuals undecided; and
- Considerations for patients, visitors and caregiver vaccination requirements.

There was discussion and the Board agreed that the overall priority of the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance is ensuring patient, caregiver and staff safety, and optimizing the number of staff and professional staff who are fully vaccinated.

It was moved by Joe Looby, seconded by Tricia Wilkerson:

**WHEREAS the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance (HPHA) Board of Directors is committed to ensuring as safe an environment as possible for all working at, and receiving care and support at the HPHA;**

**Whereas the Board of Directors very much appreciates the incredible impact the Pandemic has had on all, both within the HPHA and across our broader society;**

**Whereas the Board of Directors agrees that the most effective strategy in addressing the pandemic is a combination of vaccinations and strong Public Health measures;**

**Whereas the Board of Directors has been advised of all current provincial and Public Health directions in relation to vaccinating health care providers;**

**Whereas the Board of Directors supports consistent, system based strategies for vaccinations;**

**Whereas the Board of Directors supports a focus on vaccine confidence efforts as a primary strategy to increase vaccination uptake;**

**Whereas the Board of Directors acknowledges the incredible commitments already in place through current vaccine rates and commitment to health and safety measures; and**

**Whereas the Board of Directors remains open to supporting more directive strategies, up to and including mandatory vaccinations for health care providers;**

**Be it RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance endorses the operational strategies in place and proposed across the HPHA to increase vaccination rates, specifically focusing on vaccine confidence and supporting the individual needs and concerns of team members. Be it further RESOLVED, should Management feel that vaccine rates ultimately do not support and reinforce the HPHA's primary accountability of safety and our communities need to address the pandemic, that further measures are supported, up to and including mandatory vaccines.**

**CARRIED**

**8. In-Camera Session**

**8.1 Motion to Move to In-Camera Session**

It was moved by Steve Hearn, seconded by John Wilkinson:

**THAT the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance move in-camera at 8:06 p.m.**

**CARRIED**

**8.2 Motion to Move out of In-Camera Session**

It was moved by John Wilkinson, seconded by Gary Austin:

**THAT the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance move out of the in-camera session at 8:33 p.m.**

**CARRIED**

**8.3 Report from In-Camera Session**

During the In-Camera Session, the Board received Committee reports, annual attestations and an update regarding the Clinton Emergency Department.

**9. Directors Comments/Roundtable**

- Jack Alblas recognized staff for the care and support he received during his recent hospital visit, contributing to his positive patient experience.
- Administration, staff and physicians were commended for their hard work and efforts to address the ongoing Emergency Department staffing challenges.
- Priority and importance of being advocates for healthcare and our communities to bring people to our area to meet the high demands was highlighted along with a suggestion of engaging Perth and Huron Economic Development groups into these discussions.

**10. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, September 9, 2021.

**11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned on a MOTION by Steve Hearn at 8:45 p.m.