

Sault Area Hospital

Board of Directors, Chair's Report

Updates and News from the SAH Board Meeting



From: **Brent Rankin**, Board Chair
Sault Area Hospital

September 2022 Board of Directors' Meeting

The Board of Directors holds its regular meetings each month from September through June. Each month the Board of Directors, through the Board Chair, will share an update on key governance updates and Board decisions impacting the hospital. The Board held its regularly scheduled meeting on September 26, 2022.

At the Board of Directors meeting, board members, senior leadership team, guests, and members of the media heard reports from several of the Board of Directors Committee Chairs. Below are highlights from the committee reports, President & CEO Leadership Report, and Chief of Staff Leadership Report.

Quality Committee Update – Meeting Date: June 15, 2022

Performance Report: Enhancing Patient Safety

Patient Rate of Positive Experience – The target for this fiscal year is 64%, and the rate for April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022, is 63.5%. A number of actions are underway to improve patient experience.

Ambulance Offload Times (AOT)

Emergency Department (ED) Wait Time for Low Acuity Patients

ED Wait Time for High Acuity Patients

ED Wait time for Inpatient Bed (90th Percentile)

ED Time to Physician Initial Assessment

ED wait times are reported to be lengthening, which can be attributed to increased volumes and patient complexity in the department. The ED continues to work with pandemic restrictions in place. Trends at SAH are the same as Emergency Departments across the province and country.

Two (2) projects are underway with respect to AOT aimed at getting ambulances back on the road as soon as possible.

There has been excellent inter-departmental collaboration to improve wait times for ED LOS for low- and high acuity patients and time to an inpatient bed. Improvements have been achieved in getting patients home safely from the units as soon as possible, which results in quicker movement of ED patients to the units. There has also been a tremendous improvement in DI turnaround times for ED patients.

The following improvement initiatives are underway:

- Ambulatory Care is setting up measures to contain background noise within the registration area.
- Medical Units are working on measures to improve medication management and documentation.

The following improvement initiatives have been completed:

- A new process has been developed in Meditech for addressing outpatient referrals from ED.
- A Workplace Violence work group reviewed and revised the Code Silver protocol with supporting education.
- A blanket warmer was procured for the 1C unit as a result of a concern that a parent of an admitted patient raised.
- Arrangements have been made to have healthy snacks and a light meal available in the ED in response to multiple complaints about ED admissions not receiving anything to eat while waiting in ED.

Finance, Audit & Risk Committee Update – Meeting Date: September 8, 2022

July 2022 Financial Statements:

April 1, 2022 - July 31, 2022, SAH reported a surplus from hospital operations of \$1.3M. This was better than expected, as the budget had expected a deficit of 0.1M for that period. Therefore, SAH had a \$1.4M favourable variance as compared to the budget.

- As a reminder, SAH has budgeted for a balanced budget for the year.
- The favourable YTD variance of \$1.4M is primarily driven by:
 - An unexpected favourable adjustment in the compensation line due to a post-year-end adjustment, and
 - Pandemic-related funding in excess of budget

The favourable variance is not expected to hold for the year as pressures continue on compensation expenses. Overtime and sick time continue to be pressure points where April and May drove up COVID-related sick time. SAH management continues to focus on ensuring quality patient care.

Hospital Operations Update

President and CEO Ila Watson provided a Hospital Operations Update to the Board of Directors, highlighting:

- **Fragility of Health System:** Provide observations on the fragility of the health system, its impact on the local environment and SAH, specifically with consideration for the organization's focus on safe, quality care for patients.
- **COVID-19 Impacts:** Review the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on SAH resources.
- **Health Human Resources:** Discuss Health Human Resources (HHR) instability and solutions aimed at preserving our community's access to acute health care.

Click here to review the full [Hospital Operations Update briefing note](#).

Chief of Staff Leadership Report

The [Chief of Staff Leadership Report](#) to the Board provides updates on activities at SAH. The following are highlights from the report:

- As reported previously, the environmental scan for our district confirms we have an older population to serve, with our patients presenting with many serious conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.
- Despite our overall net positive recruitment over the past ten (10) years, with the aging of our population, we still have many gaps in essential care providers, such as family physicians and specialist physicians we need to address within our hospital and our community. Our directors and chiefs have met and reviewed our HHR for the physicians, and our MAC will be ready this upcoming cycle to update and revise our ongoing HHR needs for our hospital.
- Our Board continued its work to recruit our next Chief of Staff this summer, and MAC assisted in this process as required and upon request.

President & CEO Leadership Report

The [President & CEO Leadership Report](#) to the Board provides updates on activities at SAH for May. The following are highlights from the report:

- SAH was recognized by the Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN) for year-end results. SAH achieved a 78% conversion rate (target is 63%) and an eligible approach rate of 98% (target is 90%).
- The Innovation Team led the successful integration of SeamlessMD with the Meditech Electronic Health Record (EHR). This integration is the first of this type in North America. Healthcare providers can now easily view patient data collected via SeamlessMD when logged into the Meditech EHR. The improved connectivity enables the care team to understand patient/client concerns more quickly and provide personalized interventions sooner to produce better patient outcomes.

- The Emergency Department (ED) is piloting the addition of Personal Support Workers to our care team. The goal is to improve the patient experience and to support nursing staff in providing care. The pilot began in June, and there has been very positive feedback about this addition to the care provider team in that department.
- Over the summer, two “mock” Emergency Code exercises took place, testing the Code Silver-Weapons Threat/Active Killer and the Code Amber- Missing Infant or Child Emergency Measures Protocols. The exercises were well received by staff, patients, and participating community partners. Learnings will be incorporated into future revisions of the protocols.
- The Renal Dialysis program has received the new B. Braun dialysis machines from Germany and all staff have been trained. The machines are “smart machines” and are expected to improve the patient experience with dialysis by automatically adjusting run rates to help avoid the development of adverse symptoms for the patients.
- The Cardiac Catheterization lab has received final approval from the Ministry of Health to move forward with the second Cath lab build. Construction contracts are being awarded imminently.
- The Operating Room Integration System is fully functional—surgeons are now able to upload photos during surgery to the patient’s Electronic Medical Record.

SAH Board of Directors Update

Board Policies

Approved Policies: The following Board Policies have been updated and approved by the Board of Directors at this month’s meeting. These policies will be finalized and posted to the SAH website:

- Patient Letters policy [new]
- SAH Board Budget Policy [revised]
- Recognition Letters policy [new]

Next Board Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Board will be held on **October 24, 2022**.

If you have any questions or comments, please don’t hesitate to contact me through Jennifer Doyle, Executive Assistant SAH Board of Directors, at doylej@sah.on.ca.

Brent Rankin