



**NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR  
COUNCIL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS**

**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**JULY 2017 TO JUNE 2019**

## **MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON**

I am pleased to report NLCHP has adopted its second strategic plan for the period of 2017 to June 2019. It builds upon the experience of our first strategic plan which has helped shape our maturity as an organization. I am especially pleased that the very strong collegiality and unwavering commitment to public safety among our Council members and staff has further grown: we are united in to our commitment to plan prudently and to implement our strategic plan.

Our Council honoured the following as we developed out strategic plan:

- Our strategic plan should focus on ‘make or break’ issues. These are issues or conditions that must be addressed for us to remain relevant and responsive. Our responses to these ‘make or break’ issues are referred to as *strategic directions*.
- Our ‘make or break’ issues resulted from our analysis of the opportunities and challenges facing us. A synopsis of our situational analysis is included in this plan.
- Our strategic directions come to life when they are accompanied by goals and time frames which articulate accountability for implementation. While we have articulated goals and timelines in this plan, on an annual basis we will also be developing an operational plan that further details how we will achieve our strategic directions and goals.

### **Our strategic directions are:**

1. Further optimize systems and processes to support the current and future roles and functions of NLCHP and Colleges.
2. Harmonize all aspects of registration and credentialing in a way that best supports the Colleges.
3. Enhance and expand the existing Quality Assurance program at the Council, College and Registrant level.
4. Build upon and strengthen NLCHP’s communications plan to ensure full understanding of the NLCHP and College roles and mandates.

I am confident we have chosen the right areas of focus for us. I am also confident that the Council will now take these strategic directions and will move forward to achieve success in our plan. Indeed, Council agrees that achieving success in our strategic plan is our most important role as a governing body. At each of our Council meetings, we have agreed to review our progress and on an annual basis we will assess new internal and external conditions to ensure our strategic plan remains meaningful and relevant. As well, as a component of our annual reporting process, we will formally report on progress achieved in our strategic plan.

Strategy is about establishing direction, passion, and momentum. We are on the right road and well equipped to travel forward together.

**Colin Power BSc, MLT**

## WHO WE ARE

The Newfoundland and Labrador Council for Health Professionals (NLCHP) is an independent body established in legislation under the *Health Professions Act (2010)*. It is responsible for governing the regulation of eight health professional groups consisting of:

- Acupuncturists
- Audiologists
- Dental Hygienists
- Medical Laboratory Technologists
- Medical Radiation Technologists
- Midwives
- Respiratory Therapists
- Speech-Language Pathologists

To fulfill our mandate, we:

- Support the quality and safety of health services
- Enhance public protection
- Improve patient safety
- Strengthen the regulatory system
- Facilitate patient-centred, inter-professional collaboration and care

## OUR MISSION

We ensure that our registered health care professionals are competent to provide safe and ethical care and service to the people of the province.

## OUR VISION

We work as partners with our stakeholder community to achieve excellence in professional regulation through an unwavering commitment to accountability, transparency and sustainability.

## OUR VALUES

**Sustainability:** We work to ensure organizational sustainability as a means of strengthening the regulatory system.

**Integrity:** We are honest and ethical in all our interactions.

**Commitment:** We are united in our commitment to innovation, rigor and pragmatism for evidence-based decision-making and sound governance practices.

**Respect:** We engage others with genuine care and respect, openness and trust in pursuit of a common purpose.

**Accountability and Transparency:** In fulfilling our legislated mandate, we embrace our obligations to stakeholders to uphold the highest standards of accountability and transparency.

**Consensus:** We work collaboratively to achieve consensus, ensuring all views are considered in making decisions that are in the best interest of public protection.

## SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Our health care system is under constant fiscal pressure with a growing imperative to demonstrate greater efficiency and effectiveness. Health care professionals will continue to work in collaborative environments where changing scopes of practice must be supported.

Currently, the Department of Health and Community Services (DHCS) is in the process of a regulatory review of health professions. We anticipate this review may focus on expanded scopes of practice and may also result in additional professions, such as paramedicine becoming regulated through NLCHP. As a result of the regulatory review process, NLCHP expects to play a significant role in shaping excellence in professional regulation. Indeed, the NLCHP model is recognized by government as being a successful model that can be further enhanced.

**Labour Mobility:** Although many occupations enjoy a high degree of consistency in the requirements for a specific position, some professionals have encountered barriers when they move from one jurisdiction to another because of differences in certification and licensure requirements. As a component of The Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT), full labour mobility throughout Canada is expected. For regulated professions, this is more challenging as some provinces and territories within Canada have different standards for certification of licensed professionals. NLCHP will work with other jurisdictions to harmonize licensure requirements for our Colleges. This includes streamlined approaches for competency assessment of internationally educated graduates.

**Transparency and Accessibility:** A key challenge for NLCHP and its Colleges is to ensure the public is aware of the mandate of NLCHP, especially in its defined roles to ensure public protection and to support the quality and safety of health services in the province.

**Quality Assurance:** NLCHP and its Colleges have worked hard to implement a quality assurance program. We are now ready to pursue a more robust program that goes beyond verification of continuing education credits. This work will entail considerable research into best practices for quality assurance within regulatory authorities as well as the active participation of our Colleges. A robust suite of policies and processes is required to support a best practice environment for NLCHP.

**In-house Technology Capacity:** Today, the in-house technology capacity of NLCHP to track the registration, continuing education and other data is limited to a series of in-house spreadsheets that have become challenging to maintain. More robust technology is required to maintain and enhance current operational activities and to support the potential inclusion of other professions.

**Research Capacity:** NLCHP requires enhanced capacity for both systems and best practice research that enables Council and its Colleges to pursue new initiatives that are grounded in evidence-based analysis.

**Support to Colleges:** Our Colleges are often reliant upon key individuals who carry a significant commitment to the effective regulation of their professions. With the volume of work that is required of these individuals, Colleges will require support from NLCHP to enhance their capacity. The ways and means of supporting Colleges, especially with respect to the suite of requirements that assure fully

competent health professionals must be determined. This may require additional staff and/or contracted services.

**STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS (SWOT) SUMMARY**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strong leadership and knowledge within NLCHP and its Council members</li> <li>▪ Diversity of Colleges supports shared learning and innovation</li> <li>▪ Diversity among Council members brings required expertise to deliberations and decision-making</li> <li>▪ Progressive and enabling legislation supports role of NLCHP</li> <li>▪ Supportive and experienced NLCHP staff; ability to support the Council committees and Colleges</li> <li>▪ Clearly defined committee mandates that support effectiveness and efficiency</li> <li>▪ Sound governance process that enable a focus on strategy versus operations</li> <li>▪ Genuine good will among Council members</li> <li>▪ Credibility of NLCHP, both provincially and nationally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The diversity among Colleges means that one approach will not meet the needs of all Colleges</li> <li>▪ Effective succession planning within NLCHP is not sufficiently robust</li> <li>▪ Current high turnover among College representatives results in a steep learning curve for new Council members and a period of adjustment for all</li> <li>▪ Internal technology capacity is very weak</li> <li>▪ Demand on Council members to also chair committees may become overly burdensome</li> <li>▪ Professionals within the Colleges may not be aware of the role of the Council</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Potential for growth is real, especially with respect to paramedics</li> <li>▪ Increase level of support to the Colleges in the areas of continuing education and communicating role of protecting the public</li> <li>▪ NLCHP must play a key role in promoting its role</li> <li>▪ Networking mechanism with other regulatory bodies enriches understanding of best practices</li> <li>▪ Federal funding may be available to support credentialing for internationally educated graduates</li> <li>▪ Potential for much greater efficiency in registration and quality assurance processes exists with adoption of more robust technology</li> <li>▪ Additional policy could safeguard NLCHP and its Colleges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NLCHP must ensure it is in a constant “ready state” should there be a complaint against a registrant</li> <li>▪ High Council member turn-over is a continuing challenge</li> <li>▪ How will NLCHP respond to professions’ autonomy in an environment where collaborative practice and increased scope of practice is anticipated? How should NLCHP respond where one profession is impacted more than another?</li> <li>▪ Regulatory changes are difficult and time-consuming to realize</li> <li>▪ Without prudent planning, growth in professions may outstrip NLCHP current capacity for effective operations management</li> <li>▪ Fairness Commissions may add a new level of complexity for NLCHP</li> </ul>

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION # 1**

***Further optimize systems and processes to support the current and future roles and functions of NLCHP and Colleges.***

Currently, NLCHP is anticipating growth in the number of professions which may become part of our mandate. Combined with scope of practice changes and the imperative to serve our member Colleges well, current systems and processes must become much more robust. The focus of this strategic direction is to ensure NLCHP is operationally well-equipped to support anticipated growth at both the Council and College levels.

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>
1. Complete a technology plan to support current and anticipated process	April 30, 2018
2. Conduct an operational review to assess effectiveness of internal systems and processes	December 31, 2017
3. Ensure NLCHP has the capacity to address potential changes in professionals’ scope of practice that government may propose	Ongoing
4. Enhance and expand on comprehensive policies at all levels that fulfill our mandate (governance and operational)	Commence now

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION # 2**

***Harmonize all aspects of registration and credentialing in a way that best supports the Colleges.***

NLCHP wants to provide easy and up-to-date access to Colleges and their registrants about registrant professional qualifications and registration status. This helps ensure transparency and facilitates ongoing monitoring for registrants, NLCHP and the Colleges.

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>
1. Obtain technological support for an integrated web portal	December 2017
2. Maintain communication and engagement with national counterparts for credentialing and accreditation	Start July 2017 - ongoing
3. Actively engage with other regulators regarding benchmarks and best practices	Start July 2017 – ongoing
4. Assist Colleges to develop appropriate criteria to meet accreditation and registration standards	January 2017

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION # 3**

***Enhance and expand the existing Quality Assurance Program at the Council, College and Registrant level.***

NLCHP has implemented a quality assurance program and is now ready to expand and enhance it based upon best practices. We will assess learnings from our current program and critically assess options such as peer review and self-reflection. This will also require us to assess protection of personal privacy and confidentiality; to develop indicators of effective monitoring of the program. Ultimately, we aim to be a leader in quality assurance and in demonstrating how such a system protects our public.

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>
1. Develop and implement peer review for registrants	Develop by June 2018 for implementation in 2019
2. Evaluate current quality assurance process for effectiveness	April 2018
3. Implement within Colleges the privacy and confidentiality self-assessment module and the infection control module	Complete in 2018 as per registration cycle of Colleges
4. Explore the means and methods to provide an external review of Council’s overall effectiveness as a regulator	Commence mid-2018

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION # 4**

***Build upon and strengthen NLCHP’s communications plan to ensure full understanding of the NLCHP and College roles and mandates.***

Though NLCHP and its Colleges have promoted their roles and mandates with their registrants, there is a continuing concern that many registrants still do not fully understand this. Indeed, some may not understand how their registration fees serve to regulate their profession, enhance their practice and protect the public. While some professions, such as medicine and nursing generally enjoy public understanding of the role of regulators and of the complaint process, this may be less so for professionals regulated through NLCHP. Thus, NLCHP and its Colleges must do more to ensure the public understands their roles and mandates.

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>
1. Implement more creative and proven means to disseminate information to registrants (e.g., Twitter, Facebook)	December 2017
2. Explore incentives to entice registrant engagement (e.g., contests and continuing education credits)	Commence now
3. Ensure each individual profession has input or representation on a rotational basis in the NLCHP newsletter	Commence next issue September 2017
4. Utilize creative and current ways to reach our publics through clear and concise messages about the NLCHP role and mandate (e.g., radio, TV, Twitter, Facebook, separate webpage for the public)	March 2018

## **OPERATIONALIZING OUR PLAN**

NLCHP commits to monitor its plan through the regular review of progress for each of the four strategic directions. This will be facilitated through annual operational plans prepared by staff that identify desired outcomes and related indicators. Monitoring of the plan's progress will be conducted through CEO and committee reports to the Council.

Staff and committees will identify the resources required to achieve the goals established in the strategic plan. The Council, through its yearly budget development process must ensure that it allocates resources based upon the mandate of the Council and the priority directions adopted by the Council.

As we travel our implementation path, we will annually assess success and make prudent mid-course corrections as new opportunities and challenges arise. These measures will help sustain the momentum we collectively aim to harness.