



Experience
Access
Retention
Flow

Report to Our Communities

PROGRESS ON HORIZON'S CRITICAL ACTION PLAN

Quarterly Report

December 2024

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Our Strategic Priorities



ADVANCING PATIENT-FOCUSED, TRANSFORMATIVE CARE

Message from Horizon's President and CEO

Innovative solutions to the most pressing challenges in health care has been our focus over the last year, and by working together we've made remarkable progress on our Critical Action Priorities: Access to Services, Recruitment and Retention, Patient Flow and Patient Experience.

A transformative approach to Horizon's primary care strategy is well underway, focusing on team-based collaborative care models and close collaboration with our partners and communities.

To do this we are strengthening our existing community health centres and co-creating Family Health Teams, which are collaborative models that can connect New Brunswickers with a team of health professionals like doctors, nurse practitioners, dieticians, social workers, and other team members who will work together to provide you with high-quality, comprehensive, and exceptional patient-centred care.

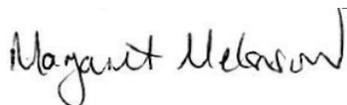
Horizon remains deeply committed to working with provincial partners to address the acute and long-term care crisis. We recently introduced over 80 new inpatient beds at hospitals in Saint John, Fredericton, and Miramichi – with more planned for Moncton in 2025 – and we continue to improve and achieve important milestones, most notably reporting zero temporary emergency department closures in 2024.

We're confident we can build on this momentum as evidenced by the proactive steps we took in December to help us effectively respond to patients during the busy holiday season. The addition of acute care beds, repurposing spaces to create more inpatient capacity, enhancing access to primary care and addiction and mental health services in our communities, and communicating alternatives to our emergency department for appropriate treatments demonstrates how working together can effect positive change within our system.

Technology and innovation are also improving access to health care for our province. More than 9,000 appointments are being booked monthly through online platforms for specimen collection and X-rays while our surgical teams have increased the number of completed surgeries by 14 per cent thanks to our capacity expansion initiatives.

Continuing to work together, with a shared focus toward improving and optimizing health care in our province is vitally important, as is continued collaboration with our patients, community, and government partners to thoughtfully plan and implement health services, process improvements, and, efficiencies to improve access to primary health care.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to Horizon's mission and willingness to embrace innovation and technology, which are integral to advancing health research and improving care delivery for New Brunswickers. I encourage you to explore this quarterly report for a deeper understanding of the progress we've made and to see where we're going. Together, we're building a healthier future for our province.



Margaret Melanson

President and CEO



ADVANCING PATIENT-FOCUSED, TRANSFORMATIVE CARE

Message from Horizon's Board Chair

Health care systems across Canada face increasingly complex challenges — New Brunswick included — but over the past year Horizon has addressed many of these challenges through innovation, partnerships, optimization, and efficiencies.

We are seeing an increase in the number of surgeries completed, thanks to private clinic partnerships, cutting-edge practices, and various patient quality and efficiency projects. Our self-serve tools for booking X-ray and bloodwork appointments are enhancing the patient experience by reducing missed appointments, shortening wait lists, and improving access to essential services. And our bold primary care strategy will see more community clinics serve patients closer to home.

New Brunswick's long-term care crisis continues to be one of Horizon's biggest challenges. Our acute care hospitals, where we all go when we need emergency services, surgeries or other forms of acute care are over one-third filled with patients who should be getting care in their own homes, with support, or in facilities better suited to meet their needs. This focus overextends our hospital resources, significantly increases the demand on our health care system, and is not an optimal setting for our aging patients who need social activities, various types of non-hospital based therapeutic services, and other supports. It also acutely affects our ability to ensure timely and equitable access for all patients, of all ages.

Long-term care is not under the umbrella of Horizon, but it is our health care workers who manage this complex issue daily. Our Board and leadership teams continue to liaise with the government to work toward additional community placements for our aging patients who do not need acute medical care.

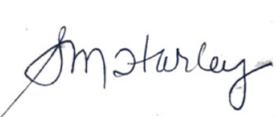
We have developed a comprehensive plan to address the needs of our aging seniors and have introduced an assessment pilot with the Department of Social Development to help streamline the placement process. The pilot has yielded encouraging results, reporting a decrease in waitlist times for long-term care from 53 to 24 days, and it is vital that we continue to work together, across different government departments, to ensure even more successful outcomes in the future.

To address this ever-growing demand for long term care, Horizon also introduced over 80 new inpatient beds at hospitals in Saint John, Fredericton, and Miramichi—with more planned for Moncton in 2025. This is a short-term fix, and an expensive one, to care for our aging patients without an ongoing acute medical care need.

One of the most important functions of a board is to create a vision for the future. As we update Horizon's five-year strategic plan, we are listening to ensure we have broad and deep input from health care workers, leaders in the community, and other stakeholders to inform our strategy, with patient-centred care at the core of all our plans and decisions.

Horizon continues to focus on the recruitment and retention of physicians, nurses, and other health care workers and we are making positive strides in attracting and keeping the team of health care professionals we need to care for our patients. We are focused on, and excited to introduce upcoming community-based collaborative care clinics to ensure every New Brunswicker can access high quality care.

As always, we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the dedication and perseverance of Horizon's staff, health care professionals, and leaders who care for our patients every day. They persevere despite difficult challenges while striving to provide accessible, high-quality, and timely care for all New Brunswickers.



Susan Harley

Board Chair



ADVANCING PATIENT CARE THROUGH TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Horizon remains committed to our performance, accountability, and transparency in delivering health care services to the communities we serve across New Brunswick. Our public performance dashboard provides a real-time view of progress in key strategic areas, highlighting successes and opportunities for improvement. By sharing this data, Horizon reinforces its accountability to patients, staff, and the public as we continue to enhance care delivery and achieve our performance goals.

While some indicators are a work in progress, the dashboard is an honest snapshot of our commitment to transparently showcasing success and highlighting areas for improvement.



Visit the dashboard on HorizonNB.ca

SPOTLIGHT

Performance Improvement and Accountability

Horizon's new hospital and inpatient unit dashboards

In December, Horizon introduced new dashboards to transparently share data on patient care and experiences across our hospitals. These dashboards serve to inform patients about activities and developments across various Horizon facilities and underscore our commitment to continuous improvement and collaboration with partners. Additionally, the hospital dashboard is displayed on digital screens across Horizon's regional hospitals, providing real-time information. Efforts are underway to enhance processes for sharing survey results and ensuring consistent adoption across all areas, contributing to improved program management and accountability.



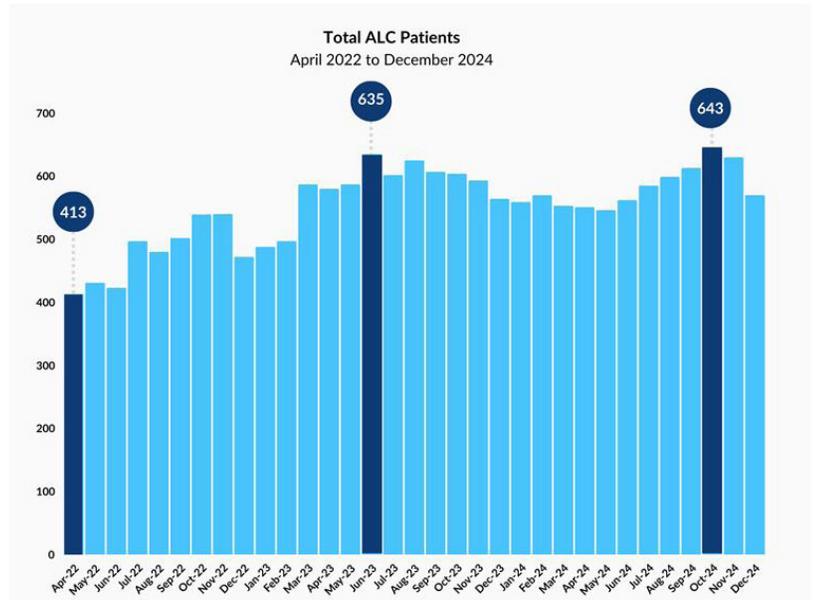
Learn more about the operational and patient experience indicators by visiting the dashboard on HorizonNB.ca.



PATIENT FLOW

Addressing bed capacity challenges through collaboration

Inpatient capacity at Horizon facilities is under significant strain due to a persistent shortage of long-term care beds in New Brunswick communities. As of December 31, **570 beds** were utilized by patients who no longer require acute care services and whose care is most appropriately provided in nursing homes, at home with increased services, or another type of setting outside of hospital. With 33% of acute care hospital beds occupied by these patients, many hospitals are operating at or near full capacity, with some exceeding their limits. Horizon is calling on provincial health care partners to work collaboratively to address this urgent crisis in acute and long-term care, aiming to drive meaningful improvements in health care across the province.



Collaborating for solutions: Enhancing health care access

Horizon is committed to working alongside provincial health care partners to address the challenges in acute and long-term care, ensuring improved access to health care services across the province. A comprehensive and forward-thinking plan has been developed to meet the evolving needs of our aging population. This plan outlines strategies for projecting the required volume of in-home care, community services, and senior care homes, emphasizing the importance of joint ownership by the Department of Health and the Department of Social Development.

A unified approach, with clearly defined goals and measurable outcomes, is essential to reducing strain on emergency and surgical services while ensuring timely access to care. By leveraging over 200 currently available but unutilized beds, we have a significant opportunity to make a meaningful impact.

Later this year, Horizon is **opening 30 new beds** for alternate level of care (ALC) patients and those seeking nursing home placements at the Mount St. Joseph Nursing Home in Miramichi, providing additional capacity at Miramichi Regional Hospital.

Horizon received funding approval to **open an additional 82 acute care beds** at the Saint John Regional Hospital, Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital and Miramichi Regional Hospital, with additional beds in Moncton planned for later in 2025. We look forward to sharing more about this soon!





PATIENT FLOW

Patients receiving timelier long-term care assessments thanks to a pilot project

In July, Horizon introduced a pilot project to improve hospital-based long-term care (LTC) assessments by equipping Horizon Discharge Planning Nurses and patient flow staff to conduct assessments for hospitalized patients. Early results indicate that this initiative has positively impacted assessment cycle times, reduced overall length of stay, and improved integration.

Since the shift to Horizon-led long-term care assessments, the percentage of Alternate Level of Care (ALC) patients in hospital awaiting an assessment **dropped from 42% in May 2024 to 18% by October 2024** —

a 57%

improvement in five months

An average of 3.3 clients were discharged per week with interim support hours, resulting in an

11 day

reduction in average length of stay

Improved access to community-based resources: Emergency Department (ED) Patient Flow Navigator

Horizon introduced the ED Patient Flow Navigator role at Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital (DECRH) to enhance patient flow, reduce avoidable admissions, and support timely discharges with appropriate community resources. Operating Monday to Friday, patient flow navigators actively review admitted patients during rounds, prioritizing patients who are candidates for social admissions. Patient Flow Navigators leverage tools and software that assess patient histories, collaborating with Social Development to confirm eligibility for long-term care placements.

+40%
PATIENTS

Since launching in May, more than 40% of patients that were seen by the ED Patient Flow navigator were successfully diverted from hospital admission, freeing up critical ED and inpatient capacity.

+50
PATIENTS

More than 50 patients presenting at DECRH have been successfully diverted from the ED through homemaker services, emergency beds, or available special care home placements.





PATIENT FLOW

Horizon's Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital taking action to improve flow

The **Patient Flow Command Centre** has supported inpatient units and the Emergency Department (ED), helping hundreds of patients daily by ensuring they're receiving the right level of care at the right time. Operated by a dedicated team of discharge planners, patient flow coordinators, care coordinators, and partner liaisons, the Command Centre monitors inpatient capacity and bed occupancy, coordinates discharge plans, and facilitates patients' transitions back to the community.

↑ **344**
HOURS

As of December, the Patient Discharge Lounge has welcomed 200 patients awaiting final discharge, and freed up more than **344 hours** of inpatient bed capacity, helping to reduce congestion and improve patient flow.

↑ **200**
PATIENTS

A pilot project aimed at improving access to occupational therapy (OT) and physiotherapy in the Emergency Department (ED) is supporting nearly **200 patients** per month. Through an enhanced triage process, patients identified as needing OT or physiotherapy are promptly connected with on-site professionals, reducing wait times and alleviating pressure on ED capacity.

New Emergency Department patient care area

Renovations are underway at the Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital (DECRH) to transform space in the former ambulance bay into an additional patient care area adjacent to the Emergency Department (ED). This new space will accommodate stable, admitted patients awaiting bed assignments in acute care units, freeing up critical space in the ED for patient assessments and improving overall capacity and flow.



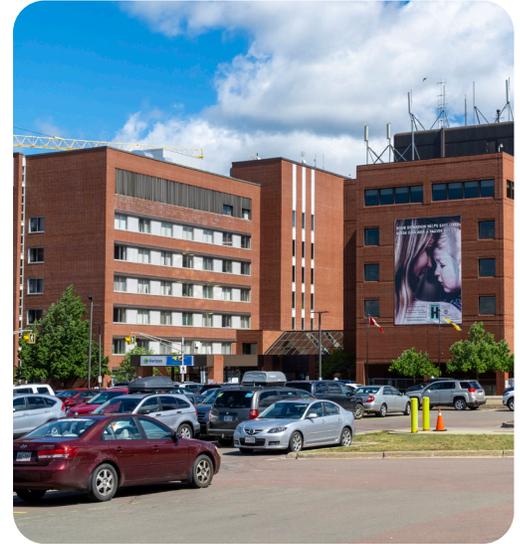


PATIENT FLOW

Patient flow initiative at Horizon's The Moncton Hospital making a significant impact

Originally launched as a pilot in Nursing Unit 3400 at Horizon's The Moncton Hospital, a new enhanced discharge process has become a transformative initiative now adopted across multiple nursing units. This innovative approach has significantly improved patient flow, alleviated congestion, and reduced high-occupancy pressures, delivering measurable improvements in capacity management and patient care outcomes since its introduction in April 2024.

Building on this success, the initiative has recently progressed to a new phase, with work underway to expand its implementation to all units at The Moncton Hospital.



Improved access for Medical Day Clinic patients thanks to new space at Horizon's Oromocto Public Hospital

With a goal of improving patient access and care delivery, services at the Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital's (DECRH) Medical Day Clinic were successfully relocated from the DECRH to the Oromocto Public Hospital (OPH), improving patient access and care delivery. The new location at the OPH offers a bright, spacious environment with free parking and is centrally located for added convenience. This change supports increased inpatient capacity at the DECRH, enabling enhanced care for acute patients.



Patients will continue to receive high-quality, compassionate care from the same dedicated team of clinicians, ensuring familiarity and continuity throughout this transition. The process for accessing services at the Medical Day Clinic remains unchanged, as patients will continue to require a referral from a physician or primary care provider.



IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

PRIMARY CARE

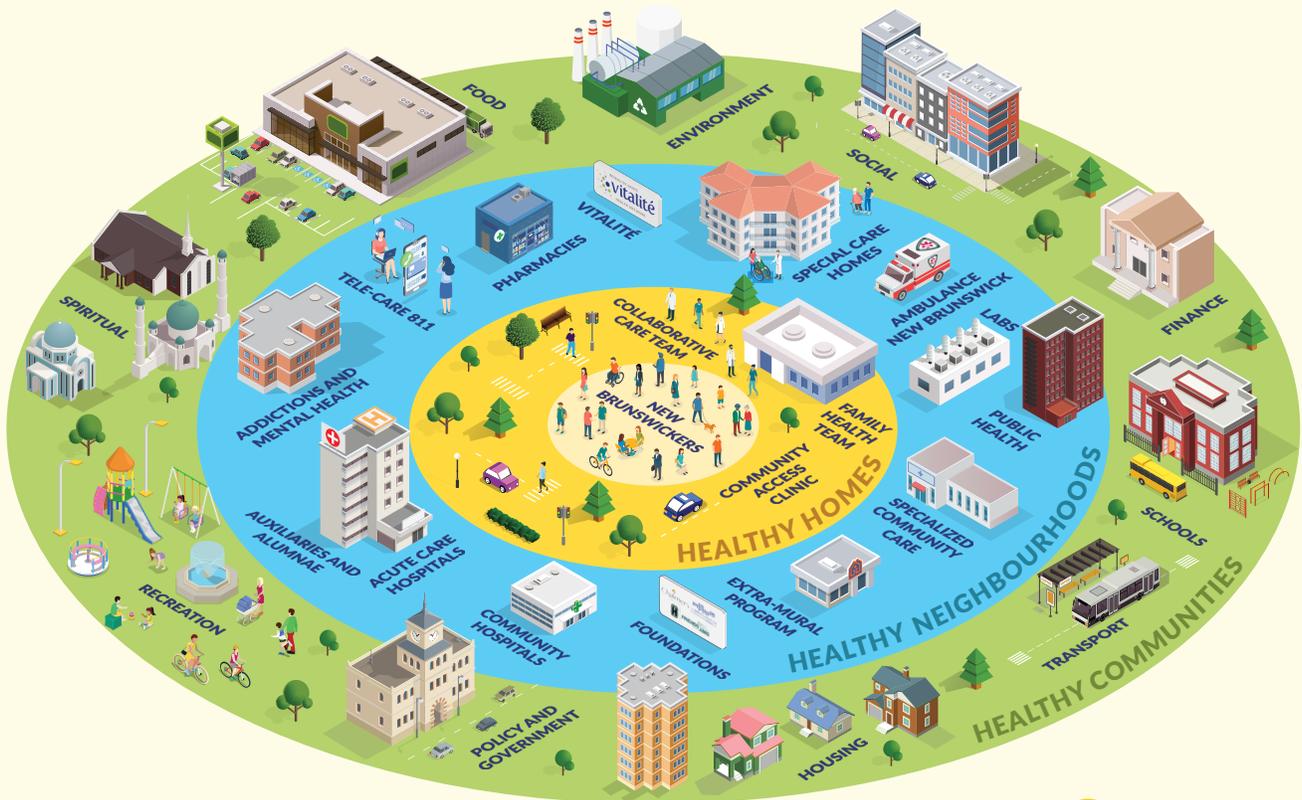
The Model

Horizon is establishing Family Health Teams for New Brunswickers, aligned to the Patient Medical Home Model, which has been proven to improve patient access, quality of care and provider well-being. This model will enable New Brunswickers to access primary care within their geographic area, connecting patients with the right provider at the right time.

Each Family Health Team will include different health care professionals who bring a variety of competencies, skills and experiences to address the needs of the patients they serve. Family Health Teams are designed to meet the unique needs of each community and ensure all New Brunswickers have equitable access to high-quality primary care. This model provides comprehensive, accessible and longitudinal primary care throughout a patient's life.

This collaborative model of care, is also integrated within the larger primary health care ecosystem, working collaboratively with health care partners, and community organizations, to ensure it meets the patient's biopsychosocial needs, within their neighbourhood, or a specific geographic location.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE ECOSYSTEM





IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

PRIMARY CARE

The Strategy

Horizon’s Primary Health Care strategy is bold – and we are committed to providing accessibly primary health care to all New Brunswickers.

Spring 2025

→ We will prevent the increase in number of unattached patients, with the transition of primary care providers, towards a team-based practice model – the Family Health Team.

2029

→ All New Brunswickers are attached to a Family Health Team.

2035

→ All New Brunswickers are attached to a Family Health Team with a Most Responsible Provider (MRP).

To achieve this, we are currently:



Co-creating Family Health Teams through partnerships with community-based primary care providers.



Strengthening our existing 46 primary health care teams, towards the Patient Medical Home Model.

Progress achieved

To achieve this vision, system-wide transformation is required to improve the working conditions for primary health care staff and providers, along with a transition towards team-based primary care.

Horizon has conducted preliminary engagement with over 90% of primary care providers across its region to hear about what is needed for the future of primary health care in New Brunswick, and to foster collaboration. Horizon is currently co-creating family health teams in partnership with community-based primary care providers, with 17 new teams now in progress.



We will continue to engage with primary care providers as we build this model, as well as community stakeholders, partners and patients.

Enhancements are also currently underway in our existing Horizon Primary Health Care sites, to improve patient access in our communities. Extensive **planning and training have been completed in all 46 sites** to establish a strong foundation, to support this transition towards team-based care.



IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

EMERGENCY CARE

Enhancing efficiency and patient care through AI-Powered documentation

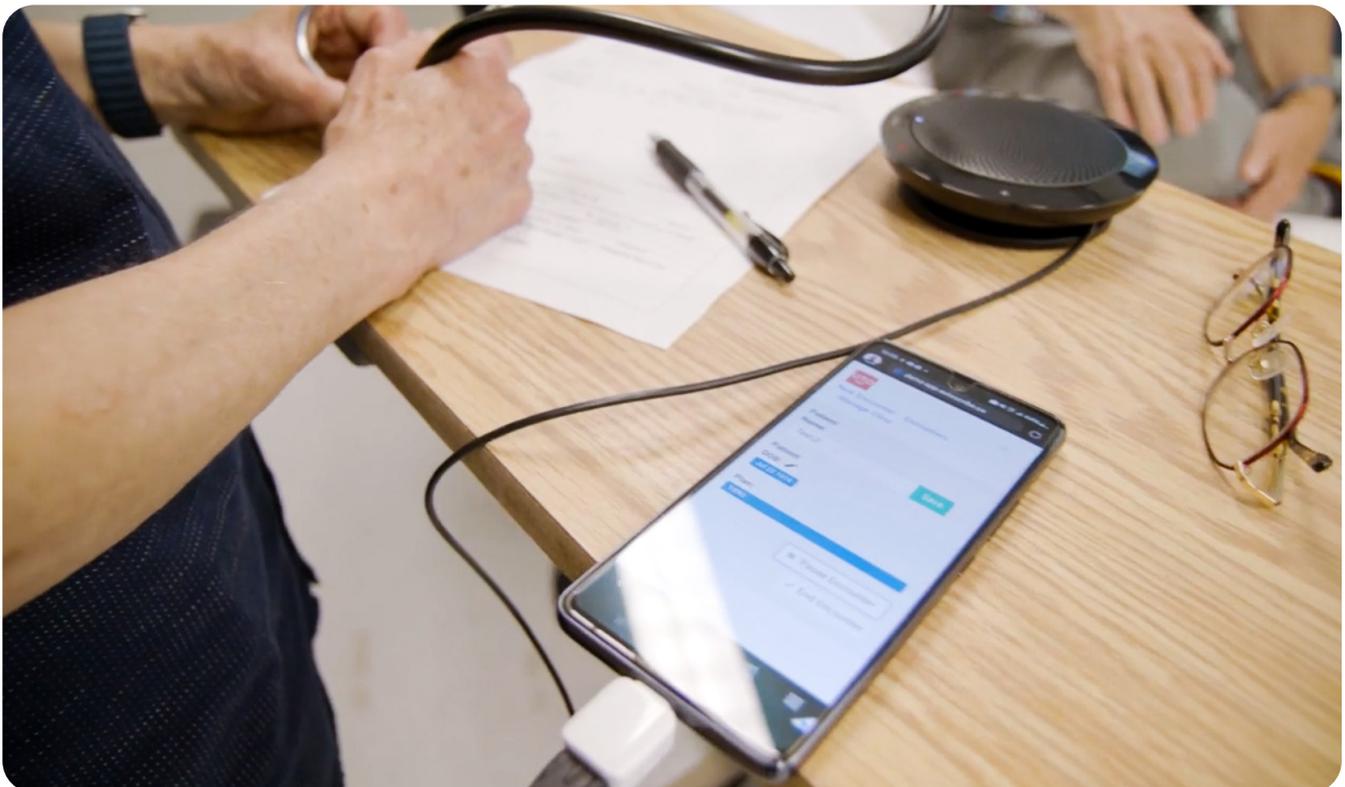
AutoScribe, an AI-powered digital assistant, is revolutionizing clinical documentation, by transcribing clinician-patient interactions and automatically generating medical notes. Following a successful pilot in the Patient Flow Centre at the Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital (DECRH), AutoScribe underwent extensive testing and real-world simulations, demonstrating exceptional performance and reliability. A phased rollout is planned for 2025, starting with Horizon's Fredericton Urgent Treatment Centre, the Oromocto Public Hospital Emergency Department (ED), and eventually expanding to the main ED at DECRH and other emergency and urgent care settings across Horizon.

This AI solution can save up to 50% on charting time, translating into time for more patient appointments, contributing to shorter wait times and an overall improved care experience.

Before AI Scribe, I needed to work overtime daily, and on the weekends. In my first 2 weeks, I have not needed to do either! I will use this product indefinitely if possible!"

DANIEL CAMERON

Nurse Practitioner





IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

EMERGENCY CARE

Innovative virtual urgent care initiative offers choice, improved access for patients

Horizon, in partnership with Teladoc Health Canada, launched a new virtual care initiative to enhance patient access and streamline emergency care for urgent, non-life-threatening medical concerns in Emergency Departments (EDs) at Horizon’s Sussex Health Centre and Charlotte County Hospital. Upon arrival at the ED, patients are assessed by a triage nurse and registered as usual. Patients eligible for virtual care are given the option to consult with a physician remotely through Teladoc’s state-of-the-art technology. In-person care remains fully available for all conditions for patients requiring further examination or treatment by the on-site team.

The introduction of virtual care at the Sussex Health Centre is an investment in this hospital and community. This tool is designed to strengthen the way we deliver care, providing patients with more options and improving access to timely care when and where they need it most.”



GREG DOIRON

Horizon’s VP Clinical Operations

Since launching in November, more than 270 patients have received virtual care.

Some examples of health concerns that may be treated virtually include:



Prescription refills



Sinus congestion, coughs, and sore throat



Urinary tract infections



Skin concerns (bites, stings, or rashes)



Mild to moderate aches and pains



Other conditions as assessed by the triage nurse





IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

EMERGENCY CARE

Nurse Practitioner added to Emergency Department team at Hotel-Dieu of St. Joseph

Horizon is improving access to care at Hotel-Dieu of St. Joseph (HDSJ) in Perth-Andover by introducing a Nurse Practitioner (NP) to the Emergency Department (ED) team on Fridays. Through this pilot project, the NP will focus on patients with less acute medical needs, triaged as Level 4 (less-urgent) or Level 5 (non-urgent) based on the Canadian Triage and Acuity Scale (CTAS). The NP can treat patients with respiratory complaints, prescription refills, urinary tract infections, sore throats, and other minor complaints.



MACK PERRY
Nurse Practitioner

↑ 13% INCREASE Since adding the NP in October, the HDSJ has seen a 13% increase in patient visits compared to the same months in 2023!

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHT FEATURE

Horizon's proactive approach for holiday health care needs

During the holiday season, Horizon implemented proactive measures to ensure uninterrupted, high-quality care for patients and clients, even amidst rising demands and respiratory illnesses. Building on past experiences, Horizon's clinical, community, and human resources teams worked collaboratively to maintain exceptional service across the province.

Optimized Emergency Department flow

- Expanded hours and staffing in community services ensured Emergency Departments (EDs) were reserved for urgent needs. At Horizon's DECRH, fewer patients were boarded in the ED, and more patients were seen promptly.

Primary care collaboration

- The collaboration between primary health care and EDs at The Moncton Hospital and the Urgent Care Centre (UCC) in Saint John was a particularly notable success this holiday season. With the addition of community resources and hours of service, primary health care was enabled to support CTAS Level 4 and 5 patients for both facilities, reducing wait times and providing first-rate options for patients.

Approximately 50% of the UCC patient volume received services from the Primary Care team!

- To support the holiday demand, the Primary Care Centre at St. Joseph's Hospital offered expanded clinic hours and collaborated with the UCC. Approximately half of patients who attended the UCC received services from the primary care team. Staff feedback on the experience was positive.

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHT FEATURE

Horizon's proactive approach for holiday health care needs

Enhanced access in Fredericton

- The Fredericton Downtown Community Health Centre opened on December 26, and the Urgent Treatment Centre extended hours on December 27, significantly improving patient flow and reducing wait times.

Ensuring continuity of care and access to services over the holiday period

- Addiction and mental health teams across Horizon supported patients throughout the holiday season by maintaining service levels at urgent care and treatment centres, community health centres, and addictions and mental health services. Efforts focused on providing timely access to essential programs such as one-at-a-time single-session mental health therapy, mobile crisis response, and Forensic Nurse Examiner/Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (FNE/SANE) care. These measures ensured continuity of care and immediate support for those in need.

Heart of Horizon: Caring for the communities we serve

This past holiday season, Horizon celebrated the compassion and generosity of our staff and physicians through the second annual **Heart of Horizon** initiative. This program celebrates the exceptional efforts and generosity of our staff, including community support initiatives, festive activities, and acts of goodwill that went above and beyond in serving patients and communities. Weekly highlights throughout December featured inspiring submissions such as food drives, fundraisers, and holiday celebrations, fostering organizational pride and inspiring others across Horizon.



32 Heart of Horizon stories were submitted over the 2024 holiday period!





IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

SURGICAL SERVICES

Surgical waitlists decreased by 12% between March and December

Horizon is making significant progress in addressing surgical wait times and access to care. Since April, surgical teams across Horizon have decreased wait times, increased completed surgeries, and improved overall access to surgical services. Our surgical teams achieved a **14% increase in completed surgeries**, and increased surgical capacity in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John. Completed surgeries increased for all surgical services (except plastics) by 19%, **with hip and knee completed surgeries increasing by 77% compared to last year.**



New partnerships significantly increasing access to cataract surgeries

New partnerships with private clinics in Miramichi and Fredericton have significantly increased surgical capacity, with completed surgeries rising by 36% in Fredericton and 64% in Miramichi. As a result, the Miramichi Regional Hospital increased elective surgeries by 44%, showcasing how improved access to one type of surgery can create additional capacity across the health care system.



 **175%**
INCREASE

2,234 cataract surgeries were completed in 2024, an increase of 175%!



IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

SURGICAL SERVICES

Streamlining stroke care with improved response times

Horizon's Door to CT Stroke Process Improvement Project at the Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital (DECRH) continues to see significant results, reducing stroke patient imaging times dramatically.

By applying Lean Six Sigma methodologies, the team effectively identified root causes of delays and introduced the "Team Stroke" pre-alert system to enhance communication and readiness among Emergency Medical Services (EMS), the Emergency Department (ED), and Medical Imaging (MI) staff. **These improvements have successfully reduced the median Door to CT time to consistently meet the national benchmark of 15 minutes, significantly enhancing patient outcomes through quicker diagnosis and treatment.**

Building on its success, the initiative is being expanded to additional hospitals across Horizon Health Network, starting with The Moncton Hospital and followed by Miramichi Regional Hospital in 2025. This phased roll-out highlights the project's effectiveness, scalability, and alignment with Horizon's commitment to delivering high-quality, timely stroke care.

67
MINUTES
↓
15
MINUTES

As a result of new process improvements, the median Door to CT time has been reduced from 67 minutes to a level that consistently approaches or meets the national benchmark of 15 minutes.





IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

SURGICAL SERVICES

Innovative product lighting the way for Horizon neurosurgeons and brain tumour patients

Horizon neurosurgeons are achieving remarkable results with a cutting-edge imaging agent that enhances the detection of malignant brain tumors. Since 2020, over **200 procedures** at The Moncton Hospital (TMH) and Saint John Regional Hospital (SJRH) have utilized 5-aminolevulinic acid (5-ALA), known as Gleolan. This innovative liquid causes cancerous cells to glow pink under blue light, enabling more precise tumor removal.



The product allows us to better identify the most abnormal part of the tumor, allowing us to be more complete in our resection and have a safer removal, helping improve life expectancy in our patients with malignant tumors.”

DR. DHANY CHAREST

Chief of Neurosurgery at The Moncton Hospital



Dr. Charest, one of only three physicians in Canada authorized to train others in its use, is helping prepare future neurosurgeons at The Moncton Hospital and the Saint John Regional Hospital to lead advancements in this field.

Horizon continues to monitor outcomes, with plans to expand the use of 5-ALA and set a new standard of care for glioma surgeries nationwide. Through ongoing collaboration and advocacy, Horizon is dedicated to advancing neurosurgical practices and improving patient outcomes across Canada.



IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

ADDICTIONS AND MENTAL HEALTH

Expanded access for critical support services in Saint John

Horizon will expand access to critical support services by introducing recreation therapy to our Saint John residential addiction program. This evidence-based approach, often called therapeutic recreation, is a cornerstone of comprehensive addictions treatment. By incorporating engaging and structured activities, recreation therapy equips individuals with the skills and tools necessary for sustained recovery.

Recreation therapy not only complements traditional methods like counseling and group therapy but also offers a holistic framework that addresses the mental, emotional, physical, and social dimensions of addiction.

This expansion underscores Horizon's commitment to enhancing recovery outcomes, promoting healthier lifestyles, and fostering long-term social integration for those on the path to wellness."

NATASHA LEMIEUX

Horizon's VP, Community



SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF RECREATIONAL THERAPY IN THIS CONTEXT INCLUDE:



Improved social skills



Long-term relapse prevention



Increased physical health



Enhanced coping skills

SPOTLIGHT

Welcome, Dr. Bhalla!

Executive Clinical Academic Head, Co-Leader,
Addictions and Mental Health Services

Dr. Dinesh Bhalla received his Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons certification in 1999 after completing his psychiatry training in the United Kingdom. He also completed two clinical fellowships in Ontario and was the Chief of Psychiatric Services at The Moncton Hospital from 2009 to 2018 where he has since continued his busy practice and research pursuits. Dr. Bhalla is also an associate professor at the Dalhousie School of Medicine.

Dr. Bhalla will work with Kathleen Buchanan, the Executive Regional Director of Addictions and Mental Health Services to set the clinical direction for addictions and mental health services at Horizon.

Our goal is to deliver innovative, patient-centered care that enhances access, strengthens support systems, and achieves meaningful outcomes for individuals and families in our communities. By building on Horizon's strong foundation, we will develop a clinical direction that is evidence-based, responsive, and aligned with the evolving needs of those we serve."

DR. BHALLA



Successful Horizon and YouTube partnership continues with mental health and addiction videos



Horizon is strengthening its partnership with YouTube Health to enhance access to credible health information and combat misinformation in Canada and beyond. Building on the success of its initial video series, which was launched in October 2023 and has reached over 281,000 viewers across YouTube and social media, this partnership has now been extended to include an additional 34 videos focused on Addictions and Mental Health. This new series will provide valuable resources for patients, families, and the public, addressing pressing issues such as the opioid crisis and supporting individuals navigating mental health and addiction challenges.

21 videos have already been published including Opioid Use Disorder, ADHD in Children, and Specific Phobias. Subscribe to our YouTube and social media channels to ensure you don't miss upcoming topics!



All videos, including content on 27 previously covered topics, are available on Horizon's YouTube channel.



RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

RECRUITMENT

Horizon successfully recruited 1,690 new employees, plus 164 physicians from April to December.

Horizon has made significant progress in workforce recruitment this fiscal year, successfully achieving over **70% of its targets** for nursing, physician, and allied health professional positions.

This achievement reflects the focused efforts and strategic approach of our talent acquisition teams, whose work has been instrumental in addressing critical staffing needs.



total employee recruitment target



total physician recruitment target



total RN recruitment target



Visit the Horizon Nurse Recruitment **dashboard**. The numbers are updated daily and show progress toward our nurse recruitment targets.

Nursing Talent Community Update

467
REGISTERED NURSES
(Net gain of 204)

243
CAT LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES
(Net gain of 118)

426
PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS
(Net gain of 294)
including nursing students and internationally educated nurses.

Horizon at home and abroad: Engaging with top talent

Horizon's Talent Acquisition team continues to actively engage with top talent in and outside of New Brunswick!

52

National events

51

Domestic events

4

International

15

Conferences

4

Virtual events





RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

RETENTION



Horizon is committed to continuously enhancing the employee and physician experience, creating an engaging and supportive workplace where teams can thrive and deliver high-quality care for all New Brunswickers. The Culture and Engagement team concluded the year with remarkable achievements, implementing 35 Our Promise initiatives and onboarding more than **300 Our Promise** Ambassadors.

This dedication to fostering and maintaining a positive organizational culture is reflected in Horizon's exceptional retention rate.

According to the *Mercer Report*, the national average employee turnover rate stands at 15.5%. Horizon's latest result of **8.2% is nearly half the national average**, underscoring the success of our targeted strategies and ongoing focus on workplace satisfaction and engagement.

National average employee turnover rate

15.5%

Horizon's turnover rate

8.2%





RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

RETENTION

Mix and Mingles: Welcoming new talent at Horizon

In October, Horizon hosted its second annual New Hire and Manager Mix & Mingle events and introduced an additional afternoon session specifically for managers. Employees and managers who joined Horizon between September 1, 2023, and August 31, 2024, were invited to engage with various teams within the Human Resources portfolio. These sessions provided valuable insights into key projects, programs, initiatives, and support systems available to foster success in their new career endeavours with Horizon.



More than 250 employees and managers attended Mix and Mingles in Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John, and Miramichi!

Having been in the workforce for some time, it's incredibly inspiring to see the diversity of cultures in our new group. I enjoyed the event and had the chance to connect with colleagues from different departments!"

This event was wonderful! I had the opportunity to circulate and gather valuable information from many different departments. As a first event, it was amazing—the flow was perfect, the booth information was up-to-date, and it was so nice to finally put faces to the emails we receive."

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Introducing Horizon's Welcome Team Program

Horizon officially launched a Welcome Team Program in October 2024, a dedicated initiative designed to support the seamless settlement and integration of our new international hires. This program reflects our commitment to fostering a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environment as we continue to grow our workforce.

Over the past several months, teams have developed a comprehensive settlement framework to equip new hires with the resources, guidance, and support needed to succeed from day one. This initiative marks an important step in ensuring international recruits feel valued, supported, and empowered to thrive as part of the Horizon team.





RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

RETENTION

Intercultural Competency Training



**Diversity,
Equity +
Inclusion**

“Equality is leaving the door open for anyone who has the means to approach it; equity is ensuring there is a pathway to that door for those who need it.”

– Caroline Belden (writer, ‘The Inclusion Solution’)



Intercultural competency training

This past fall, Horizon launched its inaugural Intercultural Competency Training (ICT) series across Saint John, Miramichi, and Moncton. This groundbreaking initiative underscores Horizon’s commitment to fostering a workplace culture centered on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The training sessions aimed to enhance cultural awareness, empathy, and communication skills, equipping participants with practical tools to navigate cultural nuances and promote inclusivity in the workplace. Each session was tailored to meet the unique needs of participants while maintaining a consistent focus on Horizon’s broader Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) objectives.

Approximately 200 managers and employees have completed the program, reporting its significant impact on sparking meaningful conversations and providing actionable strategies to support DEI goals.



RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

RETENTION

UNB and Horizon Launch Innovative Work-Integrated Learning Program, transforming health care workforce engagement and retention

Horizon Health Network and the University of New Brunswick launched an innovative work-integrated learning (WIL) program in September to address employee engagement and retention challenges in health care. More than 120 UNB business students have collaborated with Horizon to analyze survey data, generate insights, and develop strategies to strengthen workplace culture. This initiative supports Horizon's commitment to building a positive, engaged workforce and improving retention across New Brunswick and beyond. Funded by the Government of Canada's Innovative WIL Initiative and CEWIL Canada's iHUB, the project highlights Horizon's leadership in driving innovative, data-informed workforce solutions.

In the fall of 2024, 120 students joined the HR team at Horizon to support analyzing specific survey data related to organizational culture. By working alongside the Culture and Engagement team, these insights will inform and identify tangible, and evidence-based recommendations to help support retention efforts across Horizon.



Collaborating with UNB is an exciting opportunity for us to gain multiple perspectives and recommendations on the actions required to build a foundation for a strong, positive culture. We strive for an atmosphere where staff and physicians feel recognized and appreciated with leaders who are engaged and accountable for improvement."

MARGARET MELANSON

Horizon's President and CEO



PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Now available at all hospitals: Online appointment booking for X-rays, bloodwork, and specimen collection

After several successful pilots across Horizon, online booking is now available across all Horizon hospitals for bloodwork, specimen collection, X-rays, and select primary care appointments. This convenient tool enhances the patient experience by reducing missed appointments, shortening wait lists, and improving access to essential services. Patients with a requisition can easily book appointments online, ensuring timely access to diagnostic care that fits their schedules. For those without access to an online device, appointments can still be booked by phone, maintaining flexibility and accessibility for all patients.

More than 9,000 appointments are booked online per month across X-ray, bloodwork, and specimen collection across 31 active Horizon sites, improving wait times and overall patient experience.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION

X-RAY

Self Booking platform is amazing. Quick and easy. Great for Deaf community."

I loved that I could book my appointment online and got in on the day I needed!"

This was my first time using self-serve booking and it was great!"

This was a great experience. Very impressed. Wish more medical tests could be arranged online. Well done."

Average rating: 4.79



Average rating: 4.83



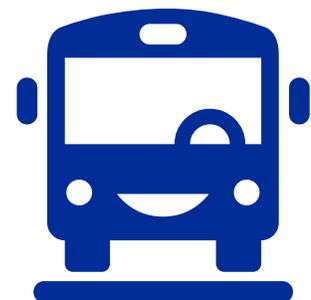
Horizon is expanding its online booking options to include more services later in 2025, including ECG, breast screening, and bone densitometry.



Visit Horizon's website, to learn more about how to book appointments **online**.

Enhancing staff parking accessibility at The Moncton Hospital

Horizon is enhancing parking accessibility for staff at The Moncton Hospital with the introduction of a new shuttle bus service. Operating every 15 to 20 minutes, the shuttle improves convenience for staff using off-site parking, alleviates parking pressures, and ensures greater access for patients and visitors. These improvements reflect Horizon's commitment to patient-centered care by increasing public parking availability around the hospital, making it easier for patients to access care quickly and efficiently.





PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Innovative pilot project at Horizon’s Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital will keep public washrooms cleaner, quicker

Horizon has introduced an innovative washroom cleanliness pilot project, leveraging QR code technology, enhancing the hospital experience for patients and visitors. This pilot project initiative enables real-time feedback on washroom cleanliness and immediate alerts for restocking supplies. In partnership with Janitorial Manager, high-traffic public washrooms in four Horizon hospitals feature QR codes on the back of washroom doors. This modern solution empowers staff to respond promptly to cleaning needs between scheduled maintenance, reinforcing Horizon’s commitment to providing a clean, safe, and welcoming environment.



We take cleanliness seriously!

Does this washroom need to be cleaned or restocked?

Scan the QR code to notify our staff.



Nous prenons la propreté au sérieux!

Ces toilettes ont-elles besoin d’être nettoyées? Manque-t-il quelque chose?

Scannez le code QR pour en informer notre personnel.



The project was launched at Horizon’s DECRH in Fredericton in late October. It has since rolled out at the Saint John Regional Hospital and The Moncton Hospital, with Miramichi Regional Hospital set to launch later in 2025!



Horizon is reducing paper waste by approximately

8,000

sheets of paper annually

by transitioning from traditional paper checklists to digital technology in 11 washrooms SJRH!

More patients receiving outpatient care closer to home at Horizon’s Sackville Memorial Hospital

Over the past year, the Ambulatory Care Clinic at Sackville Memorial Hospital expanded its services to include minor procedures and treatments so more local area residents can continue to receive care closer to home. This enhancement, made possible through a collaborative effort led by dedicated physicians and health care professionals **serves approximately 300 patients** each month, almost doubling the amount seen the year before.



As of December 2024, more than 4,000 visits were made to the clinic – an increase of more than 30% compared to the previous year!



A full list of the clinic’s services can be found on HorizonNB.ca’s website



PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Infrastructure developments in Moncton

Obstetrics and Newborn Care Unit

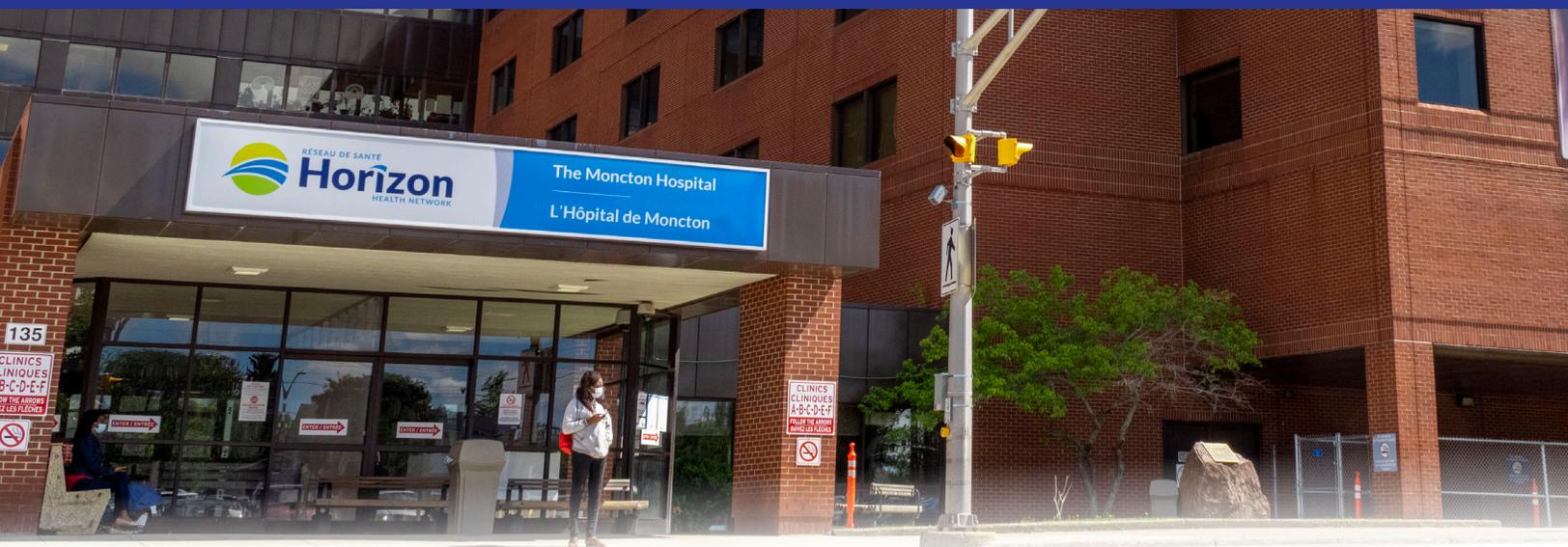
As part of the Women & Children's Health Program, Obstetrics and Newborn Care will encompass a comprehensive range of services, including the Neonatal ICU, Labour & Birth, integrated antepartum and postpartum care, and all related clinics. This scope of care also includes Maternal Fetal Medicine, Breastfeeding support, and Postpartum Discharge clinics. This strategic initiative will redefine care delivery, equipping patients, families, staff, and physicians with advanced technology in a modern, purpose-built facility designed to uphold the highest standards of safety, quality, and patient-centered care.



Coronary Care Unit

Significant progress is being made on the new \$56 million Coronary Care Unit (CCU) at Horizon's The Moncton Hospital. Construction is advancing as planned, with completion expected in the summer of 2027. The state-of-the-art facility will feature eight coronary care beds and a 30-bed cardiac/medical unit, enhancing access to specialized care for New Brunswickers with various heart conditions.

A transformative project is underway at Horizon's The Moncton Hospital to reimagine the main lobby into a modern, welcoming space that enhances the patient and visitor experience. This exciting initiative addresses the need for improved amenities, including new food service options.



SPOTLIGHT

Strengthening Emergency Preparedness Through Synergy Challenge 2024

Horizon, in collaboration with local, provincial, federal, and international partners, participated in Synergy Challenge 2024, a triennial emergency simulation at the Point Lepreau Nuclear Generating Station in Saint John. This large-scale exercise tested Horizon’s emergency response plans, involving multiple departments and activating the hospital’s Emergency Coordination Centre, decontamination tent, and personal protective equipment (PPE) protocols. The simulation highlights Horizon’s commitment to safety, preparedness, and seamless coordination during emergencies.



Horizon’s Patient Experience Survey

Patients who have visited an Emergency Department, Urgent Care Centre, or been discharged following an overnight hospital stay, including at Horizon’s Stan Cassidy Centre for Rehabilitation, will receive a Patient Experience Survey invitation to share their feedback. The survey focuses on key aspects of care—such as communication, respect, safety, and coordination—that are closely associated with the overall patient experience. If you’ve received an invitation, please take a few minutes to complete the survey. We value your voice and want to hear about your experience

Since launching, over 1,000 total responses have already been collected across all Horizon facilities. Visit our website for a current dashboard of the survey results.



STAY CONNECTED

Join our vibrant social media community of over 72,600 followers!



HorizonNB



horizonhealthnb



horizon-health-network



HorizonHealthNB



Horizon Health Network

Did you know?

Our community grew by more than 10,000 followers, and more than 23 million users have been reached through our social media channels throughout 2024!

Horizon's social media channels serve as a valuable resource for accessing important health care information, discovering services available across New Brunswick, and engaging with meaningful content!

Visit Horizon's website for the latest updates and information.



HorizonNB.ca



Horizon's partnership with YouTube:



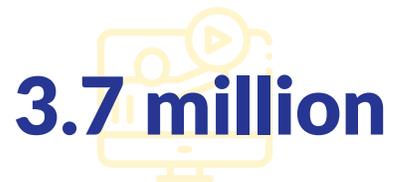
108

videos on
common health
conditions



22

videos on
addictions and
mental health



3.7 million

views in
2024

Visit **Let's Talk** Horizon's dedicated community engagement hub that provides staff, physicians, and the public an opportunity to be involved and participate in important health care decisions.

Horizon is committed to involving people affected by the decisions we make. Whether you are a staff member, physician or volunteer, or a patient, client or family member, or member of the public – **we want to hear from you in a way that is meaningful to YOU.**