

"Improved health through quality health information"

CEO Stephen Clark on the Centre's Strategic Plan



The Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information (NLCHI) has become a national leader in digital health and I am delighted that we are nearing the launch of our new three year Strategic Plan. This plan will provide the direction for digital health in our province. At NLCHI, we are focused on serving public health care and have connections with retail pharmacies as well as privately owned physician offices. We are also moving into home care services, followed by enabling the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) to engage with the health system digitally. This new three year plan will lay out how all of these services will connect to better enable patient chart information sharing across all clinical settings in NL. The digital aspect of health care has never been more exciting, with endless demand and innovation. NLCHI's three year plan will layout our focus areas for the future including: digital health solutions; data and information services; digitally enabled patients; and exceptional workspace; exceptional service.

eDOCSNL - NL's Electronic Medical Record

NLCHI is leading the implementation of Newfoundland and Labrador's Electronic Medical Record (EMR) Program (eDOCSNL). eDOCSNL is jointly governed by NLCHI, the Department of Health and Community Services and the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association (NLMA) and impacts all aspects of health care including primary care, primary health care and community specialists.

Demand for the EMR program remains high, which highlights the broader health care movement to enable primary health care. eDOCSNL began in 2016 with a target of 300 fee-for-service users and initial Regional Health Authority (RHA) primary health care clinics. Since that time, the program has exceeded this goal by 50% with over 425 clinicians and 36 RHA primary healthcare clinics in all regions now using the EMR.

eDOCSNL is laying the electronic foundation for the vision of primary health care in our province. In the year ahead, the eDOCSNL team will continue to enhance the clinical value for current users and add clinics from all four RHAs as well as independent fee-for-service clinics. NLCHI has worked with Department of Health and Community Services and the RHAs to enable their primary healthcare strategies as well as with the NLMA and fee-for-service clinics.

IT & IM Projects Across the Health Care System

As NLCHI establishes its new mandate, the first functional area to be implemented is the provincial project process. NLCHI has worked with all four of the RHAs and we now have a complete provincial view of digital health projects. We are working to find smart ways to implement all of the required projects. As of January 2020, there were 119 projects in the IT & IM project inventory. Of those, 39 are active and approved; 20 are being evaluated to determine status; 18 are paused; and 42 are new. NLCHI is committed to delivering these projects to our stakeholders as we enhance the health care system via digital health.

Digital Health Solutions in Action

The Pharmacy Network is one of NLCHI's first digital health solutions. It links all community pharmacies with essential patient medication information and is continuing to connect care across the province. Today, there are 614,879 medication profiles in the Pharmacy Network. The Pharmacy Network is having a real impact on patients who arrive at the Emergency Room after hours, when pharmacies aren't open. Without the Pharmacy Network, health care providers would not have access to vital information necessary to provide proper care. The Pharmacy Network is also benefiting family physicians, who are now able to see medications that are added to their patient's regimen by a specialist.