

Minutes of The Hospital for Sick Children Board of Trustees' Meeting held on November 28, 2022, at 3:45 p.m. by video conference due to COVID-19 physical distancing recommendations.

**Present:**

Kathleen Taylor, Chair  
Dr. Ronald Cohn  
Frank Vettese  
Sonia Baxendale  
Beth Wilson  
Andrew Sheiner  
Janet Davidson  
Clara Angotti  
Lisa Lisson  
Sharon Younker, Corp. Sec.

**Present:**

Donald Guloien  
Judy Van Clieaf  
Irwin Rotenberg  
Yongah Kim  
Meric Gertler  
Bharat Masrani  
Joseph Natale  
Saad Rafi  
Deland Kamanga

**Regrets:**

John Sullivan  
Jessica Chutter  
Dr. Trey Coffey  
Dr. Suzanne Laughlin

**By Invitation:**

Laurie Harrison  
Dr. Lennox Huang  
Jeff Mainland  
Karen Kinnear  
Susan O'Dowd  
Dr. Meredith Irwin

**By Invitation:**

Tina Garnett  
Ted Garrard  
Peter Goldthorpe  
Dr. Stephen Scherer  
Dr. James Drake

**Regrets:**

Megan Evans  
Sarah Muttitt

*All members attended via video conference*

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Ms. Sharon Younker, Corporate Secretary, confirmed that notice of the Regular Board Meeting had been duly sent to all Trustees and that a quorum was present by both in-person and video conference or phone, all in accordance with the Hospital's by-laws. Accordingly, Ms. Kathleen (Katie) Taylor, Chair of the Board, declared that the meeting was properly constituted and called the meeting to order. Ms. Taylor confirmed conflicts of interest that have been declared by Trustees.

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Ms. Taylor acknowledged the land on which SickKids operates.

For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River.

Today, Toronto is home to Indigenous Peoples from across Turtle Island.

SickKids is committed to working toward new relationships that include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, and are grateful for the opportunity to share this land in caring for children and their families.

**CHAIR'S REMARKS**

Ms. Taylor welcomed Trustees and leadership attendees to the meeting. She highlighted the new Board Agenda format that has been developed around the feedback received in the 2022 Board Engagement Survey. The agenda

focuses on strategy, risks, talent and governance.

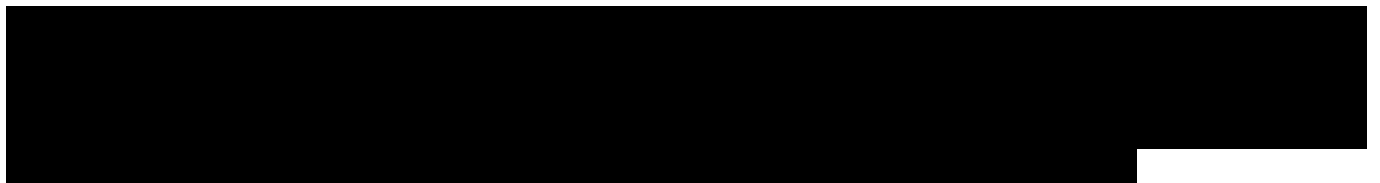
Ms. Taylor reported that the hospital is under unprecedented pressure due to the number of viral illnesses, which has had a significant impact on the operations of the organization. She reported that leadership will provide Trustees with an update on these challenges and all the work that is going into creating solutions to ensure that children are getting the care they need.

## EXECUTIVE REPORT

Dr. Cohn provided an update on what is being described as a crisis in the paediatric hospital system in the province. He reported that because of an early and high acuity respiratory illness season, the province is experiencing an increasing strain on pediatric health services. The triple effect of COVID, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) and influenza virus has resulted in high volumes of sick children in emergency departments and critical care units at paediatric hospitals and community hospitals across the province. As a result, the healthcare system is under incredible pressure, which required the development of a systems approach to ensure that children needing tertiary and quaternary treatment are being cared for at SickKids, and children who are able to be treated in the community are being cared for there. A Toronto/Greater Toronto Area Regional Paediatric Surge Plan has been created with SickKids' leadership playing a major role in organizing and implementing the plan. SickKids' staff are also providing paediatric education and upskilling community hospital healthcare professionals caring for paediatric patients through its Connected Care program.

On November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, SickKids made the difficult decision to reduce non-urgent surgical activity to preserve critical care capacity. This action enabled the organization to prioritize urgent, emergency and the most time-sensitive surgeries. Prioritization of endoscopy services and image-guided therapy for urgent and inpatient cases was also implemented. As a result of these actions, SickKids has been able to redeploy staff to care for patients in the high-demand areas like critical care, where a team-based approach to care has been implemented.

## Government Relations



Dr. Cohn provided an update on his meeting with the Minister of Health, Sylvia Jones in November. He reported that their discussion focused on the current crisis in the paediatric healthcare system, the chronic wait-list challenges for children waiting for surgery, and SickKids' structural deficit.

Dr. Cohn also reported that he had a meeting with the Federal Minister of Health, The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, in November, focusing on the need for additional funding for paediatric healthcare across the country. The Minister updated Dr. Cohn on the status of procurement of medication for children.

He highlighted the work being done at the Foundation and provided details of a donation to support Precision Child Health here and at Ste. Justine, our partners on this strategy.

Dr. Cohn concluded his remarks reporting that even with the incredible pressure at SickKids, staff are providing safe patient care and continue to carry out lifesaving treatments, such as performing a double lung transplant just this

week. He acknowledged and thanked the leadership and staff for continuing to find ways of ensuring that our patients are cared for here at SickKids and in the system.

It was recommended that Dr. Cohn highlight for government the positive impact the additional funding they provided for the rapid assessment clinic in the emergency department (ED) has had on patient flow. Also, SickKids should share with government the utilization data from the ED virtual care initiative which prevented 85% of these calls coming to SickKids' ED.

## **STRATEGY, OPERATIONS & RISK**

### **Research Institute Draft Strategic Plan**

Dr. Stephen Scherer, Chief of Research presented the draft Research Institute (RI) Strategic Plan. Dr. Scherer reported that in 2021, following a five-year review, and the mid-year recruitment of a new Chief of Research, the RI undertook a strategic planning process to assess strengths and identify opportunities to advance our research to best address the health care needs of children. The process of developing the strategic plan led to some gaps being identified where straightforward decisions could lead to gains of efficiencies in RI operations and governance.

The RI Strategic Research Plan will integrate into all aspects of the impressive SickKids 2025 Strategy a recommendation to add "Perform world-leading discovery research and translation" into the #6 strategic direction – which would lead to a full integration of the "top-down" derived hospital enterprise-wide strategic plan and the "bottom-up" built RI strategic research plan.

Dr. Scherer presented seven new actions developed in the strategy that will create superior value in the Research Institute in the long-term.

Discussion ensued regarding the recommendations of the Research Committee which included: enhancement of global collaboration; focused publications in high impact areas of research and commercialization; and, ensuring that translation, collaboration, and aggregation drive the RI Strategic Plan.

### **Research Committee Report (RC)**

Ms. Yongah Kim, Chair of the RC reported on the meeting that took place in November. She reported that Dr. Scherer provided his Chief of Research update which included the participation of over 800 RI faculty and staff at the 2022 Research Institute (RI) Retreat held in October.

Ms. Kim provided highlights of the Committee's discussion that ensued on the Research Institute Strategic Plan. She noted that the RC was impressed with the RI Strategic Plan and the number of stakeholder interactions by Dr. Scherer which has ensured that the strategy was built from the bottom up. The RC discussed the key performance indicators that will be developed to measure the success of the RI strategy and the risks that would impact the ability of the RI to implement the strategy.

Ms. Kim reported that there was also a presentation by Dr. Padmaja Subbarao on the Pathway to Connect (PTC) framework which is an institution-wide registry of de-identified patient and family data which will allow for screening of de-identified data to assess research study feasibility and enable the organization's Precision Child Health (PCH) strategy.

### **Clinical Pressures & Risk**

#### **Surge Capacity Planning**

Dr. Cohn introduced Ms. Judy Van Cleef and Dr. Julia Orkin who presented the Paediatric Surge Strategy and commended them on their outstanding work and support of the children of this province. Ms. Van Cleef and Dr.

Orkin reported that Paediatric Hospitals are experiencing an extraordinary convergence of severe respiratory viruses, fueled primarily by respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), COVID-19 and influenza, which is overwhelming the paediatric health care system. Specifically, this triple threat of viruses is resulting in unusually high paediatric emergency department visits, as well as inpatient and ICU admissions. Therefore, a strengthened system surge strategy is needed, over and above our typical internal strategies, to ensure we can address the unprecedented surge in activity, while safeguarding access to tertiary care and priority provincial programs at SickKids. With support and endorsement from Ontario Health, this strategy includes a mandate that all community hospitals with inpatient *paediatric capacity* activate surge plans to support additional inpatient activity.

The strategy includes internal and system tactics to protect and expand paediatric critical care capacity at SickKids; fully utilize general paediatric inpatient care across the system to support movement of patients no longer requiring tertiary level care; and maintain emergency department capacity. In partnership with Ontario Health, SickKids has enhanced patient access and flow mechanisms across the GTA, including working with Community Hospitals and a Physician Access Coordinator at SickKids to monitor patient flow across the system and provide guidance on escalation of care, when required. Ms. Van Clieaf and Dr. Orkin confirmed that these strategies will remain nimble and adaptive to the evolving situation across the region and province.

Discussion ensued regarding the potential impact of the government reducing funding for virtual care effective December 1, 2022. Dr. Lennox Huang spoke about the stress of physicians and staff in the community dealing with these very sick children and that SickKids is working to support them in numerous ways. It is essential that there is a multiprong approach to ensure that the children who should be at SickKids are here. Dr. Huang also congratulated Dr. Orkin and Ms. Van Clieaf for their outstanding work in implementing this strategy across the system.

#### **Board Quality & Safety Committee (BQSC)**

Ms. Clara Angotti, Chair BQSC, reported on the committee meeting that took place earlier today. She reported that the BQSC was provided an overview of; a quality story and two serious safety events. She noted that members attended the Daily Safety Brief call held by the hospital providing them with insights on how leaders across the entire organization share their situational awareness of both clinical and non-clinical activities and safety risks. The BQSC reviewed the Key Performance Indicators and the Harm Index which indicates that patients are continuing to receive safe care during an unprecedented volume of very sick children in the hospital. There were also operational updates which included activity updates from clinical care, emergency department, surgical wait list and IGT/MRI wait list.

Dr. James Drake outlined several initiatives that are in place to move forward with performing procedures and surgeries that do not require critical care beds or overnight stay in hospitals. He reported that when the surge is over, they will be using a data driven approach to address the wait lists.

#### **Finance and Audit Committee (FAC)**

Ms. Beth Wilson, Chair, FAC reported on the committee meeting that took place earlier today. She provided an update on the outcome of the External Audit Request for Proposal (RFP) noting that the successful proponent was Ernst & Yonge. She highlighted some of the learnings from the process. A motion is being brought forward by the FAC to approve Ernst & Yonge as SickKids' External Auditors to March 31, 2023.

Ms. Wilson provided highlights on several presentations including KPMG's internal audit report, the status of cyber security at SickKids and in healthcare, the E&Y 2022/23 audit plan, [REDACTED]. She also updated Trustees on SickKids 2022/23 financial forecast and the 2023/2024 operating plan. Discussion ensued regarding the financial status of the Hospital.

## **MOTION:**

**NOW THEREFORE, UPON MOTION duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, IT WAS RESOLVED:**

THAT Ernst & Young be re-appointed as external auditors to The Hospital for Sick Children, for the fiscal year to March 31, 2023, as recommended by the Finance & Audit Committee.

### **Facilities & Real Estate Committee (FREC)**

Ms. Beth Wilson on behalf of Mr. John Sullivan, Chair FREC, reported on the committee meeting that took place on November 21, 2022. The FREC was provided an update on the status of the Patient Support Centre which is slightly behind schedule but proceeding as planned. She outlined the risks associated with the impact of construction escalation, supply chain issues, inflation, and currency exchange on the project budget/schedule. An update on the Patient Care Centre (PCC) development options was presented. Ms. Wilson reported that several months ago the Ministry of Health (MoH) Capital Division had requested that management provide an analysis related to potentially phasing the project over a longer timeframe and making use of the Atrium building for an extended period (the "Phased Option"). In October of 2022 management submitted the Phased Option costs to the MoH which are materially higher than the recommended Facilities Development Option (the "Hybrid Option"). Based upon this information and the relative merits of the Hybrid Option, the FREC agreed with management's recommendation that SickKids continue to endorse the Hybrid Option as its preferred plan with government.

### **Investment & Pension Committee Report (IPC)**

Mr. Irwin Rotenberg, Chair IPC reported on the meeting that took place on September 28, 2022. He reported on the valuation of the pension plan as of May 1, 2022, and the implications and options available to the organization. He updated members on the status of the investments, the asset mix/new investment manager, and fixed income strategy.

## **TALENT & SUCCESSION**

### **Recruitment and Retention Strategies**

Ms. O'Dowd presented recruitment and retention strategies to address the Health Human Resource Challenges. She outlined the challenges the organization is facing, the strategies underway and plans to address them.

Ms. O'Dowd presented the actions that have already been implemented to address staffing challenges. These include creation of the Rapid Access of Paediatric Patients clinic which is an express Emergency Department (ED) clinic to reduce the strain on the ED staff; managed access to the Operating Rooms; hired 230 RNs, 55 RN students, and over 400 other positions; worked closely with community partners to help manage patient volumes; and provided overtime enhancements for eligible employees. To address burnout, SickKids has initiated a Staff Health and Wellness Strategy that included enhanced mental health resources, physical well-being programs, mindfulness training, and staff massages on-site.

Ms. O'Dowd outlined the remaining challenges, and the initiatives being developed and implemented with respect to attraction and retention, burnout, and staff's involvement in decisions that affect them.

### **Human Resource Committee (HRC)**

Mr. Joe Natale, Chair HRC reported on the committee meeting that took place on October 24, 2022. He reported on the Staff Engagement Survey results which showed a decline in overall engagement of staff which is indicative of the environment over the past several years. An update on the progress of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) program was presented which included an overview of the comprehensive long-term evidence-based hospital-wide strategy in support of the vision of championing EDI within SickKids and across the healthcare system. The HRC also

reviewed and approved recommendations regarding the administration and governance of the DC pension plan.

### **Governance & Nominating Committee (GNC)**

Mr. Don Guloien, Chair of GNC, reported on the meeting that took place on October 3, 2022. The GNC reviewed the results of the Board Effectiveness Survey and developed action plans to address those results.

The GNC also approved for recommendation to the Board an approach that could be adopted to include the Board more actively in EDI. The approach emphasizes that while the primary responsibility for EDI – strategy, execution, and monitoring – would be the responsibility of operating management, it would also be overseen by the Board and the relevant Committees of the Board. The GNC would oversee the EDI efforts for the Board as a whole. Mr. Guloien reported that the Chair and Governance Chair of the Foundation endorsed this approach as well.

### **MOTION:**

**NOW THEREFORE, UPON MOTION duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, IT WAS RESOLVED:**


THAT the Board of Trustee adopt the Board’s approach for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Governance as circulated

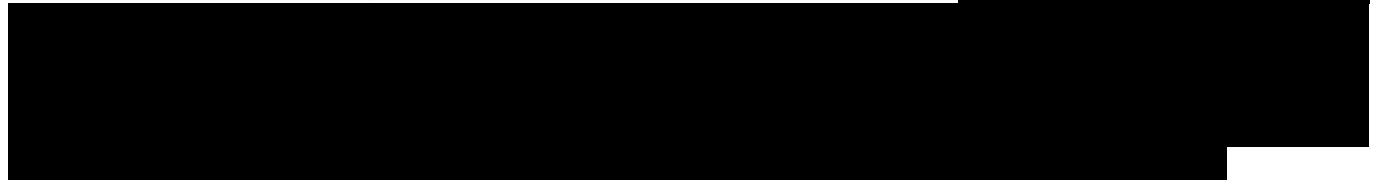
### **MEDICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC) REPORT**

Dr. Lennox Huang on behalf of Dr. Trey Coffey, Co-Chair MAC, reported on the MAC meetings that took place on October 12<sup>th</sup> and November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. He also reported on a special meeting of the MAC on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022 to discuss the reappointment of a physician.

Dr. Huang highlighted that the MAC had an update on the respectful communications work that focused on the current challenges and the work being done to manage professionalism in communications. There was also a presentation on the work underway to respond to learner mistreatment from patients, family members and visitors. A guide was created by TAHSNe and is intended to share with learners so they can create an environment where learners can feel safe and supported when mistreatment occurs. The guide helps faculty/supervisors and learners on how to respond to and debrief incidents of mistreatment. Dr. Huang reported that the MAC approved the credential recommendations and referred Trustees to the credentials report being brought forward under the consent agenda for approval.

### **SICKKIDS FOUNDATION (SKF)**

Mr. Ted Garrard provided an update on the activities of the SickKids Foundation. 



### **CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was brought forward to approve the Consent Agenda.

### **MOTION:**

**NOW THEREFORE, UPON MOTION duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, IT WAS RESOLVED:**

- Approval of Minutes September 12, 2022

- Medical, dental & scientific staff appointments as circulated
- Terms of Reference
  - Human Resource Committee
  - Investment & Pension Committee
  - Research Committee
  - Governance & Nominating Committee
  - Human Resources Committee

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Taylor thanked everyone for their attendance. There being no further business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

The staff left the meeting and the Board of Trustees proceeded with an in-camera session.