

Serving Ontario's Hospitals to Build a Better Health System

Strategic Plan
2023–2027



Today the Ontario Hospital Association operates on land that has been the traditional territory of many Indigenous Nations over thousands of years – including the Huron-Wendat, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Mississaugas of the Credit. This land is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.

We also acknowledge that this land – and the land on which hospitals across Ontario operate – is home to diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

We are grateful and humbled to have the opportunity to live, work and come together on these lands.

Our Purpose

Serving Ontario's hospitals to build a better health system.

Our Values

Humility

We listen to and respect the views of others.

Discovery

We explore new ideas and possibilities.

Passion

We bring energy and enthusiasm to what we do.

Our Future

The COVID-19 pandemic will leave a deep mark in the memories of people around the world, and Ontario is no exception.

In the face of extraordinary demands, the dedication and resilience that hospital teams exhibited to anchor Ontario's pandemic response and collaborate with their local partners have been nothing short of inspiring. At the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA), we are very proud to serve our members during the most serious health crisis and civil emergency in our own 100-year history.

Under our previous strategic plan, we made serving the full diversity of Ontario's hospitals our primary purpose. We enhanced the direct support and value we provide to members, responding to their most pressing needs, while also maintaining a system orientation on the questions facing the future of Ontario's health care system. Our work was made possible by timely and prudent efforts to modernize the OHA's organizational capabilities and our commitment to fostering strong, trusting relationships with our members.



PICTURED: William Osler Health System staff and patient. Photo courtesy of William Osler Health System's Annual Report.

We are in a truly remarkable time for our sector and our province.

While the challenges ahead are immense, the pandemic has reinforced that we cannot return to the status quo. We must seek to stabilize our health system and build it back stronger. There is an urgent need to build capacity in hospitals and across the continuum of care and find sustainable, system-wide solutions that address serious health human resources needs. Experience has proven that hospitals must play a key role in building a reliable, high-performing health care system for Ontario, and in shaping public conversations on health care issues. It also demonstrated the collective strength of the entire health system when government, providers, and organizations across civil society – including the OHA – are motivated by a single aim: protecting and improving the wellbeing of Ontarians.

With our new strategic plan, the OHA is focused on effecting positive change for our members, the health system, and our own organization.

It is imperative that we use lessons learned during the pandemic to plan to meet Ontarians’ health service needs, not only over the next four years, but also ten or twenty years from now. To that end, we are fully committed to enhancing key services Ontario’s hospitals have long relied on us for, and to ensuring they have a voice in reshaping the health care system.

The OHA is proud to support and amplify hospitals’ evolution, innovation, and leadership as our system recovers and transforms. On behalf of the OHA Board of Directors, thank you to our members, team, and system partners for their contributions to shaping this strategic plan and the OHA’s aspirations for the future.



Anthony Dale
President and CEO

Dominic Giroux
Board Chair

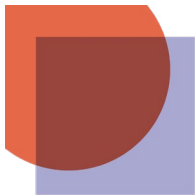
Our Journey

Our strategic plan was created under the careful guidance of our Board of Directors and a Special Committee of the Board for Strategic Planning.

This two-year process included several hundred inputs from system partners, hospital leaders, and our staff team.

System Partners

- Discussions with provincial and national organizations
- Insights from national and international thought leaders and conferences
- Conversations with academic partners



Hospital Leaders

- Facilitated discussions at OHA Board and Special Committee meetings
- Virtual engagement sessions with hospital leaders
- One-on-one hospital CEO outreach
- Analysis of member satisfaction survey feedback (2020-2022)
- Consultations with the OHA’s provincial leadership networks



Staff Team

- Planning and engagement sessions with senior leadership
- Discussions at forums and division meetings
- Facilitated engagement sessions with matrix teams
- Interviews with issue leads



Our strategic planning process began while we supported our members with pandemic response activities. This gave us an opportunity to unpack our learnings and embed them into our long-term view of what we can achieve in the coming years.

This strategic plan represents an evolution of the strategic path the organization has been on for the past few years. Our purpose, values and three core pillars – Member, System and Organization – will continue to provide a framework in which our core mandates of Policy and Advocacy, Data and Analytics, and Labour Relations and Benefits can be best applied to serve our membership. Our new priorities – High-Performing Health Care System, Integrated Health Data, Indigenous Health, and Hospital-Enabled Research and Education – emerged as important opportunities that fit our mandates and capabilities. Holding our entire strategic plan together is our refreshed focus on member engagement and knowledge transfer, critical areas of support for our members.

With this strategic plan to guide us, the OHA is positioned to lead with confidence and humility in support of hospitals building a reliable, high-performing health care system that focuses on the needs of Ontarians.

We would like to thank the OHA Board of Directors for their support throughout the process of creating our new strategic plan, and the members of the Special Committee of the Board for Strategic Planning:

Helen Hayward
Committee Chair
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre

Carol Lambie
Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care

Dominic Giroux
Committee Vice Chair
Health Sciences North

Lynne Innes
Weeneebayko Area Health Authority

Alex Munter
Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario

Sarah Downey
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Melissa Farrell
St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton

Anthony Dale
Ontario Hospital Association

Julia Hanigsberg
Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

Member Engagement and Knowledge Transfer

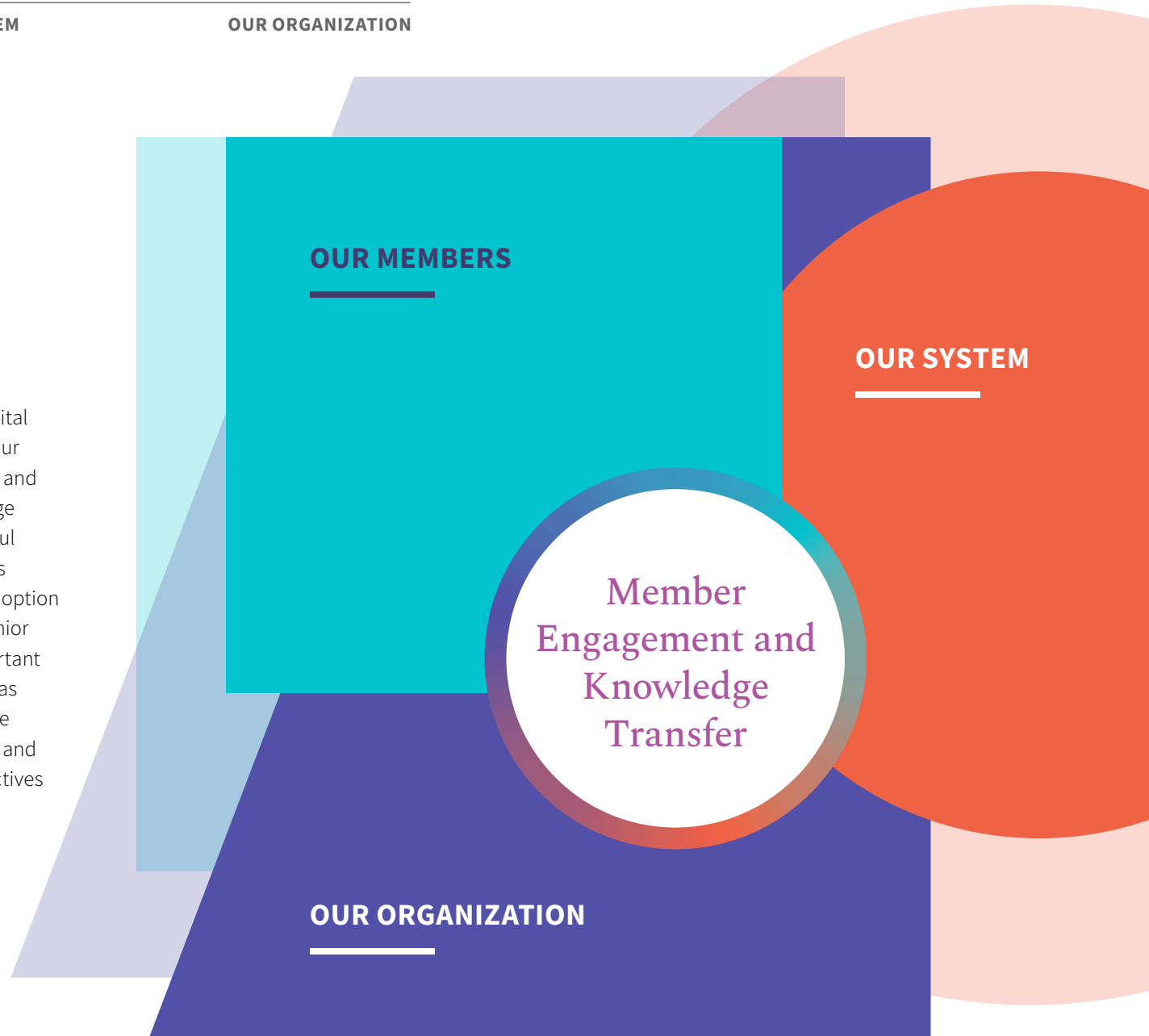
We will modernize the ways in which we convene our members and support them in the application of knowledge to their unique environments.

Our members are at the heart of our work. They inspire us to innovate and create positive change in pursuit of a healthier Ontario.

The OHA’s success is predicated on trust, honesty, and strong ties with our members. We are committed to timely and high-value engagement that helps us understand complex health system issues and facilitate actionable solutions. As our sector experiences pressures and challenges, we aim to empower and embolden hospital leaders across the province to lead, shape and influence health care priorities through a collective voice.

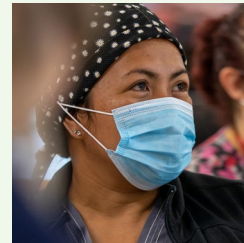
We remain grateful to the many members who volunteer their time and energy to support the OHA despite the pressures they face in their own organizations.

The increasing complexity of the hospital sector demands changes to some of our most fundamental thought processes and patterns of work. Our role in knowledge transfer will focus on making successful leading practices, tools, and resources accessible for local adaptation and adoption by hospital boards, CEOs and their senior teams, and clinical leaders. This important function will closely align with key areas throughout the strategic plan, leverage emerging technologies and practices, and be guided by the insights and perspectives of our members.



Our Pillars

Our member, system and organizational mandates form the strategic pillars of the OHA's plan to serve hospitals to build a better health system for Ontarians.



[OUR MEMBERS >](#)



[OUR SYSTEM >](#)



[OUR ORGANIZATION >](#)

- > Policy and Advocacy
- > Labour Relations and Benefits
- > Data and Analytics

Our Members

Our direct services to members are anchored in enhancing our core mandates of advocacy, labour relations and benefits, and data and analytics.

PICTURED: Staff at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton.



GOAL

The OHA will actively support our diverse membership.

Policy and Advocacy

We will ensure that hospitals have a strong and respected voice in their relationship with the Ontario government, partners, and the public.

Governments today operate in an unpredictable, highly complex environment and this can have a direct influence on how decisions are made. It is the OHA's responsibility to work with our diverse membership to ensure that government has a full perspective on the issues that matter most to hospitals and the health care system.

We will draw on research and evidence to develop targeted policy recommendations that address the challenges of today and proactively anticipate the needs of the future.

Our advocacy on provincial budgets, legislative and regulatory changes, and a range of policy matters will centre on the needs of hospitals while recognizing the critical value of collaboration with partners across the care continuum.

The most pressing issue identified by hospital leaders in recent years is health human resources. We are committed to continuing assertive efforts to address the contributors to health human resources challenges within

hospitals and across the entire health system, which includes calling on the province to develop a funded, multi-stakeholder and evidence-based strategy. On this and other issues, the OHA will represent the strong collective voice of Ontario's hospitals, encouraging action that is in the best interest of patients, caregivers, and the broader health system.



PICTURED: Image from OHA's Here to Care campaign created to remind Ontarians that against adversity and beyond challenges, Ontario's hospitals have and will continue to be there for their communities.

Labour Relations and Benefits

We will deliver sustainable, sector-wide labour relations and benefits solutions that help hospitals support employees and meet their health human resources needs.

Ontario's hospitals are rapidly evolving organizations, with people at the heart of everything they do.

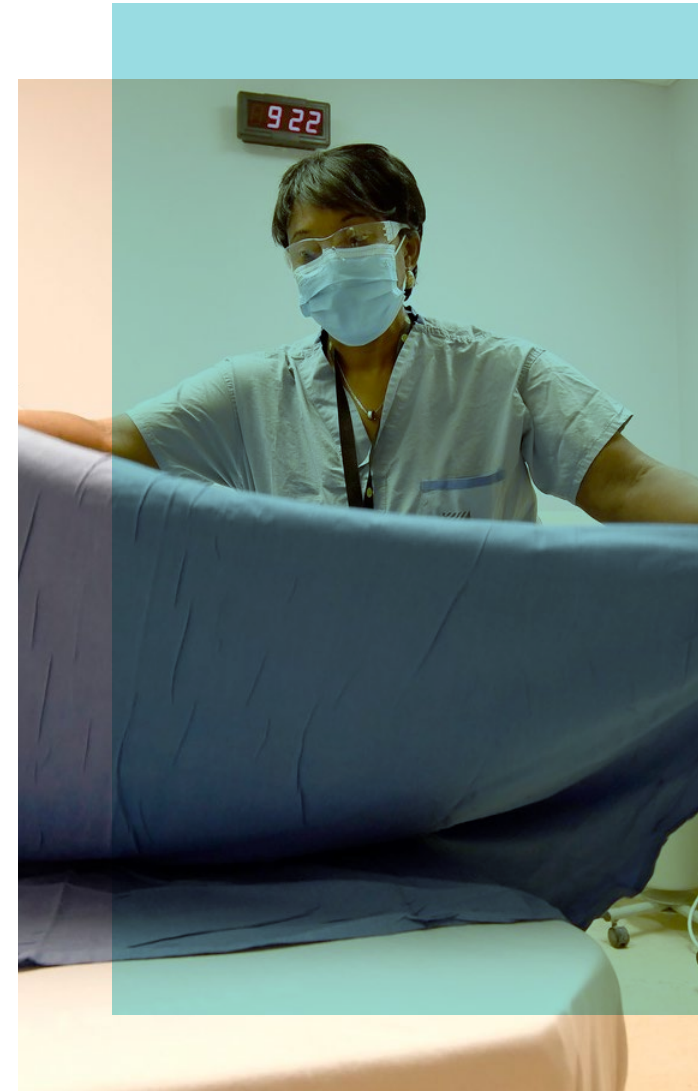
Hospital services rely on a highly skilled and dedicated workforce. Funding realities in Ontario have long necessitated that hospitals be as agile as possible, using hyper-efficient human resource models while maintaining high standards of care. This approach was severely disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in significantly increased staffing and cost pressures and further strain on our health care system.

Labour Relations

Collective bargaining has a significant impact on hospital finances and operations. Our deep understanding of these realities enables us to facilitate innovative and sustainable outcomes while seeking productive relationships with Ontario's health care unions. With the leadership and support of our members, we will address these complex issues through high-impact collective bargaining and sector-wide labour relations solutions.

Benefits

The cost of benefits and ongoing need to support employee health and wellness are critical issues for hospitals. Leveraging our significant experience in building system-wide solutions, and harnessing the power and expertise of the sector, we will seek to cultivate and grow group benefits solutions that address the complex issues of viability and sustainability of current benefits models.



PICTURED: William Osler Health System staff.
Photo courtesy of William Osler Health System's Annual Report.

Data and Analytics

We will support hospitals with accurate, timely and insightful data and tools to enable evidence-informed decision-making.

Ontario's health care system experiences continuous evolution, rapid growth and frequent innovations in data and analytics solutions.

Building on the OHA's foundational data and benchmarking platforms in finance, human resources, patient experience and governance, we will adapt to the evolving needs of hospitals and accelerate the translation of data and analytics into action. Our suite of tools will support members with accurate and insightful data to enable quick analysis by the end user. We will strive to further embrace the power of analytics by enabling innovative solutions paired with strategic insights to support members as they make evidence-informed decisions.

By being responsive to the sector and attuned to the data and analytics needs of our members, we are positioned to contribute to health system advancement and support hospitals as they generate positive change in their communities.



READ ABOUT HOW WE BRING TOGETHER HEALTH DATA FROM PROVIDERS ACROSS ONTARIO ON [PAGE 18](#)



PICTURED: William Osler Health System's Operational Command Centre. Photo courtesy of William Osler Health System's Annual Report.

- > High-Performing Health Care System
- > Indigenous Health
- > Hospital-Enabled Research and Education
- > Integrated Health Data

Our System

Building on the leadership of the hospital sector, the OHA works with our partners to improve the broader health system.

PICTURED: Client and staff member at the Geriatric Assessment and Rehabilitative Care Unit of St. Joseph's Care Group, St. Joseph's Hospital, Thunder Bay.



GOAL

The OHA will be an innovator and catalyst for vital change in Ontario's health system.

High-Performing Health Care System

We will collaborate with our members and partners to build a reliable, high-performing health care system with enough health services capacity to serve all Ontarians.

The COVID-19 pandemic has tested the limits of our health care system, exacerbating its long-standing gaps, especially for marginalized and vulnerable populations. At the same time, it motivated hospitals and other providers to work together across siloes to put the needs of patients and communities first. This collaboration highlights the importance of a new way forward, one that recognizes our system's shortfalls and leverages its strengths, welcoming innovation and purposeful change.

In late 2019, the OHA released our [landmark report](#) showing that the system was already reaching its limits. While investments since then have begun to build capacity, there is much more to do. Ontario's health system does not have sufficient capacity to meet the needs of our population, inside or outside of hospitals.

As thousands wait in hospital beds for more appropriate care elsewhere, and with our population aged 75+ expected to double in the next 20 years, we must urgently plan to meet growing demand.

Only by improving access to primary care, home and community care, and mental health supports, among others – as well as truly addressing the social determinants of health – can we reduce over-reliance on institutionalization and give patients the care they deserve. The OHA will advance a vision in which the hospital sector serves as an anchor and ally to system partners as we pivot away from an exclusive focus on efficiency and toward increasing capacity across the continuum. We are also committed to enhancing our work in hospital and health system governance, funding

and performance, hospital-physician relationships, and other areas where the OHA has specialized knowledge.

Guided by the attributes of a high-performing health care system, we will support the development of a needs-based capacity plan and play a key role in creating a better-connected system for our patients, health workforce, and communities.



PICTURED: Southlake Regional Health Centre staff transports patient.

Indigenous Health

We will work to become a trusted ally of Indigenous communities to address inequities in the health system and foster improved health access and outcomes for Indigenous Peoples.

Implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's calls to action is central to reconciliation in health care. The OHA will respond to the calls to address health disparities and support the wellbeing of Indigenous Peoples. We are committed to confronting biases and barriers experienced by Indigenous Peoples. With urgency and compassion, we will invite other organizations across our health system to also do their part toward reconciliation.

We will listen, learn, and reflect as we work to establish respectful relationships with Indigenous communities and leaders.

Through collaboration, the OHA is ready to act, holding ourselves accountable in support of concrete efforts to recognize Indigenous sovereignty over health care and opportunities to improve access, delivery, and outcomes.

We are also committed to building the capacity of our own team, enriching their knowledge and awareness, while encouraging thoughtful engagement in Indigenous health matters. For our members, we will leverage our core services to foster collaboration and learning among hospitals as they pursue their own journeys in Indigenous Health.



PICTURED: Smudging ceremony for staff and attendees during a National Indigenous Peoples Day celebration at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre.

Hospital-Enabled Research and Education

We will elevate Ontario's health system by more deeply integrating hospital-enabled research and education.

Hospital-enabled research and education positively impact health outcomes and health system improvement. Hospitals undertake research that will enable new, life-changing innovations in patient care and prepare us for the future by training and cultivating the next generation of health care professionals.

In 2020, the OHA embedded a focus on academic matters into its core functions to support members in a new way – sector-wide collaboration in health research and education. Over the next few years, this important work will be grounded in forward-thinking, actionable visions:

Research

A fully integrated health research and care delivery system across Ontario that drives sustainable and transformational science, clinical excellence, health equity, and an agile, diverse workforce of scientists and innovators.

Education

Collaborate inside and outside hospital walls to educate and train health professionals that Ontario needs to deliver exceptional patient care and build a high-performing health care system.

Well-integrated and networked research and learning environments across Ontario's hospitals will support the development of globally influential science and transformative health outcomes. They will also help future health care professionals acquire the knowledge, skills and experiences required to work within new models of care.



PICTURED: Post-doctoral research fellow in a Princess Margaret Cancer Research Tower lab at University Health Network.

Integrated Health Data

We will optimize the ways in which health data is shared and used by the health provider community to enable collaboration in support of integrated care solutions for patients.

Building a healthier Ontario requires that health care providers have access to reliable, timely health data across the care continuum. Integrated Decision Support (IDS) is Ontario's leading collaborative solution for sharing integrated health partner data. Governed by its user community, this highly responsive platform enables informed, system-level collaboration and shared-care analytics in pursuit of improving patient care journeys.

Enabling providers to proactively share data, collaborate, and plan for local community health needs moves us another step closer to building a high-performing, integrated health care system for Ontarians. We will optimize efficiencies for users, channeling our efforts into service delivery and maximizing value by building impactful solutions once, for many.



READ ABOUT OUR OTHER DATA AND ANALYTICS SERVICES AND SUPPORTS TO HOSPITALS ON [PAGE 13](#)



IDS is uniquely positioned to provide curated analysis and insights by collecting and linking standardized data sets in settings such as:

- Hospitals
- Home and Community Care
- Primary Care
- Community Health Centres
- Community Mental Health
- Long-Term Care
- Emergency Management Services

oha.com/IDS



PICTURED: Staff and student collaboration. Photo courtesy of Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital.

- > People
- > Practices
- > Relationships

Our Organization

Embedding equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism into our core organizational strengths equips the OHA to deliver on our mandates most effectively.

PICTURED: Ontario Hospital Association staff celebrating the launch of their 2023-2027 strategic plan in December 2022.



GOAL

The OHA will ensure that our organization and culture remain inclusive, modern and relevant.

People

We will strengthen our highly engaged culture with a strong commitment to care for our people while fostering a positive employee experience.

The OHA is comprised of passionate, highly dedicated professionals focused on serving our members and improving Ontario's health system. We invest in our people, provide growth opportunities, and enable innovations in emerging talent management strategies.

As an organization, we are committed to fostering an environment where our people can explore new ideas and find strength in different ways of working together.

Our culture will adapt and grow to ensure that we are able to redefine long-standing cultural norms, remove barriers that limit inclusion, and recognize value in our unique perspectives. We will strive to eliminate all forms of racism in our workplace through dialogue and reflection, safe and progressive practices, and holding each other accountable.

The OHA remains steadfast in our commitment to actively listen to our people and respond to their needs with compassion and an enhanced focus on health and wellbeing.



Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism

During the pandemic, the OHA struck an internal Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism (EDI & AR) Committee charged with creating a uniquely positive work environment that embraces equity, diversity, and inclusion as strengths to foster through dialogue, reflection, and growth. Going forward, this committee will help guide where and how we embed EDI & AR in support of our team, as well as our member- and system-level priorities.

PICTURED: Ontario Hospital Association staff.



Practices

We will be responsive to the evolving work environment as we continue our relentless pursuit of business-planning excellence.

Building upon our foundation of excellence in core business-planning, we remain committed to providing value to members by delivering on our core strategic mandates through progressive and efficient methods. We will continue to be conscious of the social impacts of our decisions and therefore hold ourselves to high standards of responsible resource management.

The pandemic has transformed the ways we work and interact with one another, and we expect this evolution to continue in the years ahead. This change presents opportunities to encourage innovative ways of working within and across our teams, and to reach members with greater efficacy.

We will enhance our use of technology to mobilize collaborative opportunities, pursue highly inclusive approaches to complex projects and matrix programs, and better leverage our office space to strengthen our culture of teamwork.



PICTURED: Ontario Hospital Association staff in a hybrid meeting.

Relationships

We will continue to cultivate and nurture healthy relationships with our related entities and strategic partners.

For 100 years, the OHA has established and grown relationships across the health care system and beyond, building strong ties with government, other provider associations, and leaders across different policy spheres. Our success is built on a foundation of trust and shared visions for improving Ontario's health care system for the people it serves.

Throughout our history, the OHA has launched successful independent and related entities in support of building a better health system.

Today, we remain committed to fostering healthy, mutually respectful, and constructive relationships with three related organizations – Healthcare of Ontario Pension Plan (HOOPP), Proximity Institute, and the OHA Legacy Fund. The OHA and our Board of Directors are committed to exercising our duties and obligations to ensure these very important organizations thrive into the future.

PR::XIMITY

Proximity Institute

Proximity Institute is an independent charitable organization founded by the OHA. Dedicated to enabling effective leadership at the most senior level in Ontario hospitals, Proximity works in partnership with CEOs and their leadership teams on the priorities that matter most. Its long-term ambition is to work collaboratively with hospitals to identify, develop and ready a quality pipeline of emerging CEO talent.

proximityinstitute.com

PICTURED: Ontario Hospital Association and Proximity Institute staff working together.



For more information about the OHA's strategic plan visit oha.com/strategicplan.

200 Front Street West, Suite 2800
Toronto, Ontario M5V 3L1
oha.com

