



SASKATCHEWAN HEALTH QUALITY COUNCIL

2024 – 2029

STRATEGIC PLAN

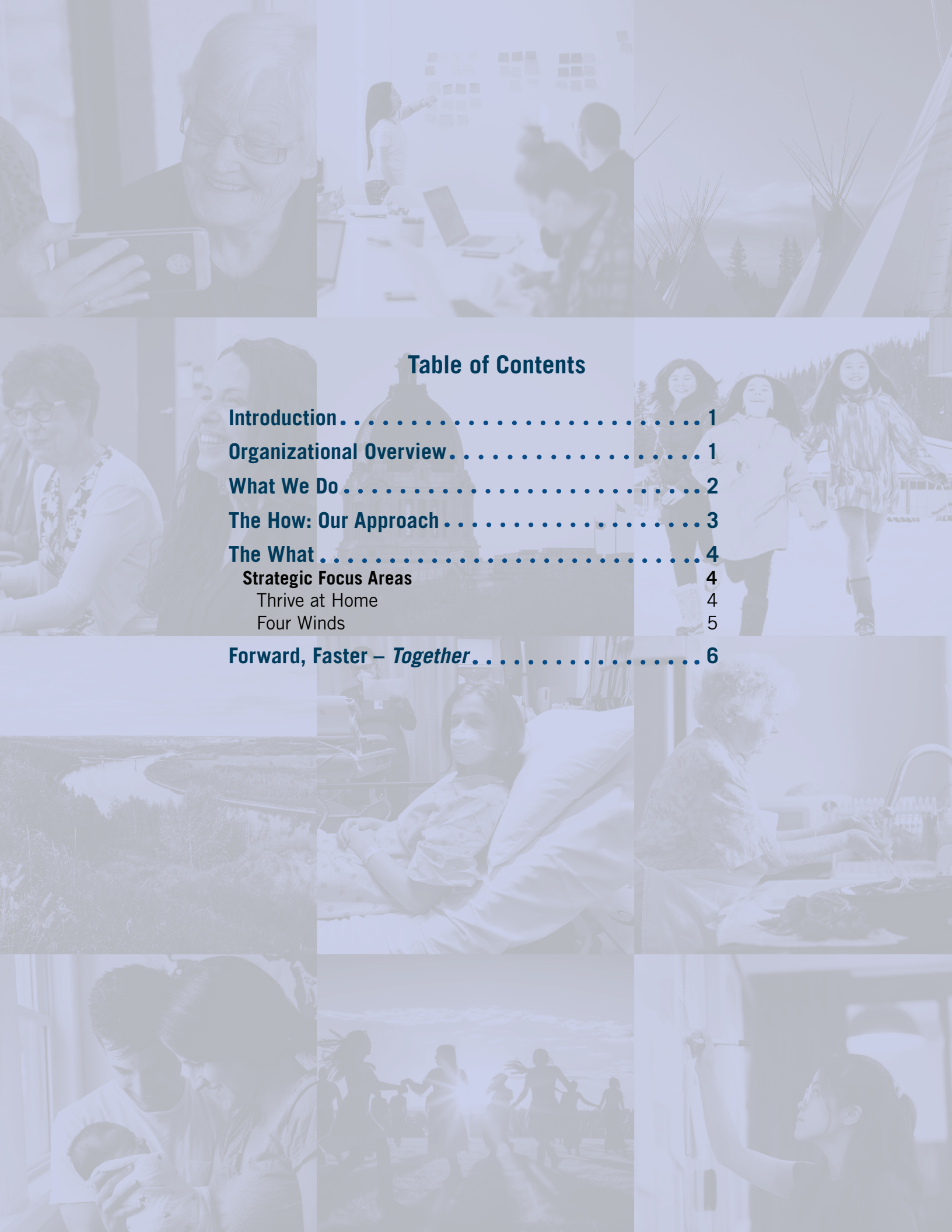


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Introduction

At the Saskatchewan Health Quality Council (HQC), we envision a future where optimal health is accessible to everyone in our province. As a trusted partner and driver of change in the health system, we play a vital role in bringing this vision to life and making a meaningful difference in the lives of those who call Saskatchewan home.

Over the past five years, we focused on accelerating the use of evidence to address the social determinants of health, establishing and growing relationships with First Nations and Métis partners, building quality improvement capacity throughout the province, and equipping our organization with the right tools and people to set us up for long-term success.

This work has been instrumental to our success and will act as the foundation to our next strategic plan.

Over the next five years, HQC will embark on a journey of collaboration. Working with both system and community partners, we'll focus on tackling some of the province's most significant health and health care issues.

Using a tailored approach, we'll identify and illuminate current gaps and opportunities to establish a common goal amongst the various agencies, practitioners, organizations, communities, and other potential collaborators. Together, we will develop, measure, and evaluate the tactics required to determine the best approach, which can be further refined or scaled appropriately throughout Saskatchewan.

The future is bright for Saskatchewan – and with the help of HQC, we're poised to become the best at getting better and achieve optimal health and health care for everyone, together.

The following sections will provide an overview of HQC and what we're all about as an organization. Before diving deeper into our strategy, we'll explore an in-depth look at the approach we take to our work and how this approach is a crucial ingredient in understanding our goals over the next five years.

Organizational Overview

At the Saskatchewan Health Quality Council, our mission is clear: **Accelerate Improvement of Health & Health Care Throughout Saskatchewan.**

We do this by collaborating with system and community partners to provide first-hand support for acceleration. By leveraging our expertise, we can achieve system-wide goals and even greater outcomes.

We Believe In Moving Forward, Faster — Together.



Our Mission

Accelerate improvement of health & health care throughout Saskatchewan.



Our Vision

Optimal health & health care for everyone



Our Values

- Create meaningful connections
- Spread our passion for learning
- Work to make a difference

What We Do

We fulfill our mission by providing research and analysis expertise to specific provincial initiatives. These Foundational Components are the true essence of everything we do as an organization. By bridging our skills in quality improvement, research and analytics, collaboration, and skill-building, we're able to partner and provide support to government, health organizations, and community organizations all across Saskatchewan to drive progress towards a future of better health and better care for all.

Measurement & Analytics

By examining and probing difficult subject matter, challenging the status quo, and finding answers for the questions that matter, we're able to provide vital information to the people and organizations who can implement change through policy and the delivery of care.

Collaboration

We create, encourage, and support environments for people to work together on shared outcomes. With our expertise in quality improvement and facilitation, we're able to accelerate change in health and health care.

Skill Building

Working with our partners, we're able to help them identify and develop the skills needed to confidently implement change within their fields, which contributes to growing a culture of continuous quality improvement across Saskatchewan!



The How: Our Approach to Accelerate Improvement

At a high level, our approach comprises four general phases.

Understand The System

We begin by shining a light on gaps within our health system. By carefully analyzing data, conducting extensive research, and engaging with system partners, we identify where revolutionary change can make a significant impact.

Working alongside our partners, we establish measures, explore potential innovations, and help decision-makers build their skills in mapping, evaluation, and using data to improve health and healthcare in Saskatchewan.

Build Shared Commitment

The second phase of our approach is collaborating with leaders and professionals within our communities and healthcare systems to develop a cohesive vision.

Bringing together key partners, we build the case for change, identify key improvement activities, and form an action community to work alongside proof-of-concept sites.

Create Conditions for Mobilization

Here we work alongside our partner organizations to build improvement capacity, implement new methods, and accelerate change at scale. We achieve this by convening networks and events to connect and inspire, providing training to build improvement skills, and offering customized research and evaluation support. Together, we evaluate what's working, share lessons learned, and build momentum for quality improvement.

Organize for Action

In the final phase of our approach, we provide the tools needed to measure success, apply new learnings, and deploy sustainable advancements throughout our health system.

As we guide our partners' quality improvement journey through, we continue to assess progress towards our shared goals and provide additional resources and materials required to accelerate large-scale change.



The What: Strategic Focus Areas

Over the next five years, we will focus on applying our approach to two strategic focus areas informed by our initial consultations, which identified key provincial priorities where HQC could have the most impact.

THRIVE AT HOME: Senior Support

On any given day, there are approximately 334 people in Saskatchewan accessing acute care for non-emergency medical needs – and more than 75% of them are 65 years old and older¹.

Although older adults rely on the healthcare system more than any other demographic, community resources can play a pivotal role in preventing complex care patients from visiting hospital and emergency departments in the first place².

With seniors being the fastest-growing population in Canada, it's more important than ever to ensure older adults have access to the supports they need to age with dignity – and we can do that by enhancing community supports that fill the gap between primary care and acute care³.

At HQC, we recognize the urgency of addressing this complex community need. **Thrive at Home** aims to improve community-based care and social support for community-dwelling seniors with complex needs.

Acting as a conductor of change by strengthening connections between those supporting older adults across multiple sectors, we're creating a community of shared practices, learning, and support.

Through coordinated collective action, we can cultivate real, tangible change in our province.

Timeline

Year 1: Getting Ready — by March 31, 2025

Establish a shared, coordinated approach to strengthen care and support for older adults within our communities. Alongside our health system and community partners, we'll create the conditions needed to promote buy-in and build system-wide support and action for large-scale change.

Year 2: Expansion — by March 31, 2026

Conditions are established to accelerate large-scale change to strengthen care and community support for community-dwelling older adults with complex needs.

Year 3: Fully Operational — by March 31, 2027

Partners are rapidly testing, learning, adapting, and sharing what works in their local contexts to enhance programs and services aimed at supporting older adults living in community.

Project Wrap-up

Seniors with complex needs have access to appropriate and timely community-based care and social supports, allowing them to age where they call home.

¹Saskatchewan Ministry of Health internal report, Alternative Level of Care (ALC) Analysis. July 2023.

²Saskatchewan Health Quality Council, [Connected Care: A Summary of Learnings from the Emergency Department Waits and Patient Flow Initiative](#). September 2018.

³Universities Canada, [Making a Difference for Canada's Aging Population](#). September 2023

⁴National Institute on Ageing. 2021. Pandemic Perspectives on Long-Term Care: Insights from Canadians in Light of COVID-19. Toronto, ON.

97%
of Saskatchewan residents over 65 years of age say they'll do everything they can to avoid moving into a long-term care home.
– National Institute on Ageing⁴



FOUR WINDS: Youth Mental Health & Addictions

Despite representing 17%⁵ per cent of the population, Indigenous people in Saskatchewan experience disproportionately higher rates of suicide and self-harm compared to the rest of the country⁶ and rates among First Nations youth aged 15-24 years old are **five times higher** than non-First Nations people⁷.

Bridging research, data analytics, and quality improvement with First Nations and Métis worldviews, traditions, and ceremony,

Four Winds aims to improve access to mental health and addictions services for children and youth, particularly within First Nations and Métis communities.

In the spirit of “Nothing about us, without us”, we founded the Sharing & Learning Society as a space for connection, relationship building, and knowledge transfer with Indigenous community partners.

Together, we will work alongside each other to illuminate priorities and implement quality improvement tools and techniques to promote life and well-being for children and youth in Saskatchewan.

Timeline

Year 1: Creating Dialogue — by March 31, 2025

An initial environmental scan will be conducted to determine what information is currently available, what research is being conducted, and what gaps exist in the literature. Community Elders and leaders will be brought together to discuss youth mental health and addictions and collaborate on tactics to move this initiative forward.

Year 2: Initiate Action — by March 31, 2026

We will work with communities to develop a shared vision of what we’re going to achieve. With a shared vision in place, we will begin gathering, analyzing, and sharing insights with our partners to identify what work needs to be done and plan our approach.

Year 3: Work Collectively — by March 31, 2027

We’ll convene working groups to start implementing the approach within their communities. A measurement framework will be used to evaluate progress towards the shared goal, and results will be used to continuously improve the approach.

Year 4: Knowledge to Action — by March 31, 2028

Our findings and stories will be shared with communities and organizations to help spread learnings of what’s working and what future steps need to be taken to improve access to mental health and addictions services for the children and youth of Saskatchewan.

Project Wrap-up

Awareness and access to services and resources aimed at protecting the mental health of children and youth have significantly improved.

⁵ Statistics Canada. Statistics on Indigenous peoples. [Internet]. [Cited 2024 Mar 14]. Available from: https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/subjects-start/indigenous_peoples

^{6,7} Saskatchewan Health Quality Council, [Self-Harm and Suicide in First Nations Communities in Saskatchewan: Full Report](#). October 2022

Forward, Faster – *Together*

We're on a transformative journey, accelerating improvement in Saskatchewan for a healthier and happier future.

Our 2024-2029 strategic plan reflects our commitment to collaboration and innovation in addressing our province's critical health and health care challenges. By harnessing our strategic approach of illuminating gaps, building a shared commitment, creating conditions for improvement, and advancing system implementation, we are poised to accelerate improvement effectively and efficiently.

Through our work with **Thrive at Home**, older adults in Saskatchewan can look forward to having more choice and opportunity to live the lives they want to live, where they want to live.

The First Nations and Métis communities within our province will shape, create, and improve accessible, culturally responsive services and supports for their children and youth through our work together on **Four Winds**.

Following this methodology, the future is bright for Saskatchewan and those who call our province home. Cultivating a healthcare system that is equitable and just for all, where the diverse and vibrant cultures of First Nations and Métis peoples are amplified and celebrated, won't happen overnight. However, step by step, inch by inch, we can move the needle and create real change in our province.

As we embark on this new journey, we're enthusiastic and optimistic about what lies ahead. Through partnerships, shared commitment, and our strategic approach, we look forward to achieving tangible and lasting improvements in health and health care for the benefit of everyone in Saskatchewan.



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