



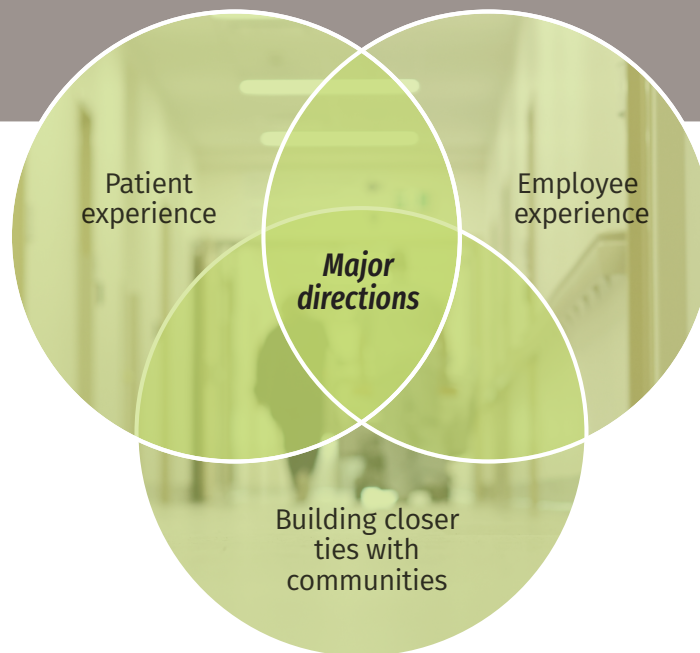
# Vitalité, moving toward the future

Quarterly Report to the Community  
JUNE 2023



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# Vitalité, moving toward the future

## *Message from the President and CEO and the Trustee*

Under the theme “Vitalité, moving toward the future,” this report presents the progress made over the last quarter and some initiatives carried out at Vitalité Health Network to support our three major directions: **employee experience**, **patient experience** and **building closer ties with communities**.

The theme reminds us of the importance of these major directions in a context of transformation where we need to review our practices, improve our processes and make decisions that will shape the future. Because we are “moving toward the future.”

The release of this report coincides with the release of our 2022–2023 annual report, which is also available on our website. While the annual report showcases the overall profile of the organization and the highlights of the year, this report focuses on organizational performance. It reports on quarterly results of ongoing projects from a continuous improvement and organizational change perspective.

The 27 projects underway, which address a variety of issues, including recruitment and hiring as well as patient flow and waiting list management, have been prioritized by the organization taking into account the identified needs, the urgency of action and the anticipated impact. They also align with our strategic priorities, which are improving access to primary health care and improving patient flow and hospital performance.

It is also important to stress that 14 projects carried out over the past few months have now moved into the monitoring phase, which means that the improvements have been implemented and will be measured on an ongoing basis. In addition, some are being deployed on a larger scale.

We would like to congratulate the teams involved in these improvement projects as well as all our health care workers for their ongoing efforts, their rigour and their tenacity.

Vitalité Health Network relies on collaboration within its teams, but also with partners, communities, families and patients. We thank them for their precious support and invite them to take a look at the quarterly results that are being shared with them today in a spirit of collaboration and transparency.



# Improvement initiatives and projects

## PATIENT EXPERIENCE

### *Putting patients and families first, a responsive health care system*

#### Patient flow in 4C at the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont University Hospital Centre

An improvement project was conducted in Unit 4C of the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont University Hospital Centre (UHC) to reduce the length of stay, particularly the time between signing the discharge and the patient's departure.

The presence of two hospitalist physicians, from Monday to Friday, and daily meetings now make it possible to develop a clear treatment plan and speed up patient management. Specific discharge criteria and an anticipated discharge date are determined upon admission.

Among the improvements, the organization of beds has been optimized to ensure better management of resources; also, the ordering of medical supplies and discharge reporting have been automated.

Reduced length of stay results in shorter wait times at the Emergency Department, fewer complications and better service for our populations.

#### Key results



#### Patient discharge...

- The average time between notification of discharge and the patient's departure fell from **112 minutes** (average between May 2022 and July 2022) to **25 minutes** (average in May 2023).
- The proportion of discharges completed before noon rose from **19% to 23%** between November 2022 and May 2023.

-78%

+4%

*"It was with deep sadness that we had to accompany both our parents through the end-of-life process in a short amount of time. We were all surrounded by members of your staff who demonstrated tremendous professionalism and admirable compassion.*

*We want to recognize the merits of the staff in the various sectors where our parents have received services. The very busy medical teams were so friendly and caring. Thank you to these people who provided such great care to our parents right up to the final moments of their lives."*

- Luc Belliveau, Dieppe

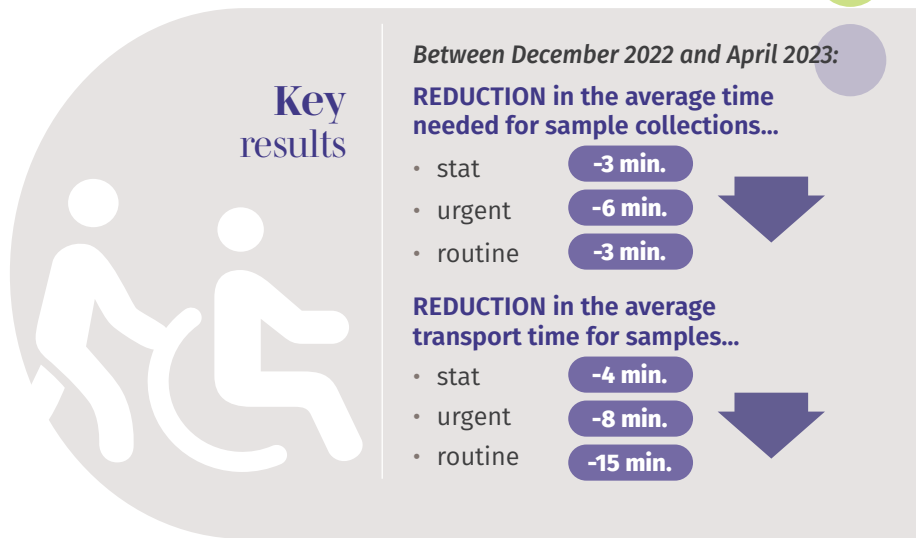


## Phlebotomy: shorter delays at the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont UHC

On average, 476 blood samples are collected each day by phlebotomists at the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont UHC. Significant work has been done to enable them to respond more effectively to the facility's numerous requests and to speed up the delivery of results.

Analysis of each stage, from sorting to analysis, including sample collection and transport, has led to an optimization of processes.

The reduction of delays achieved because of these efforts means that patients can avoid delays in their treatment plan or discharge.



## Improvement project at the Emergency Department of the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont UHC

Faced with overcrowding in emergency departments, an improvement project was conducted at the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont UHC to reduce patient wait times and ambulance handover delays.

### Here are some of the improvements:

- Patient flow coordinators were hired to improve patient management and reduce overcrowding;
- Care attendants were added to the team to monitor the health condition of patients in the waiting room;
- The material and space were reorganized and visual management tools were added to improve efficiency;
- A new resuscitation room was set up.

As a result, we are seeing increased job satisfaction among teams.



## Digital pathology

In response to the critical shortage of pathologists in several of its zones, the Network has accelerated the implementation of a digital telepathology system.

This state-of-the-art technology enables images of lab samples to be shared and viewed remotely. It also makes it possible for samples taken during cancer surgery to be viewed remotely and in real time, from any site, to guide the surgeon during the procedure. The use of this technology ensures that results are obtained within the recommended timeframe.

First introduced in zones 4 and 6, telepathology was recently expanded to Zone 5.

### Key results

Current percentage of slides scanned:

ZONE 4 100%

ZONE 6 75% +

## Medication reconciliation

Medication reconciliation (MedRec) is a formal process in which health professionals work with patients, their families and other health care providers to minimize medication errors when transfers or changes to care occur; patients and their families as well as the various professionals involved all benefit.

This method involves compiling a list of a patient's medications, prescribing the medications that the patient is actually taking, and informing the patient about changes during their hospital stay or when they are discharged so they receive optimal medication therapy at all times.

An improvement project has already served to implement MedRec at admission across all the Network's facilities. Phase 2 of the project will implement this model for ambulatory care teams and patient transfers.



## Patients needing an ALC at the Restigouche Hospital Centre

Too many Restigouche Hospital Centre patients are needing an ALC (alternate level of care) and remaining in the facility for long periods.

A series of initiatives have been undertaken to ensure that patients who no longer need tertiary care services are streamed to programs better meeting their needs.

A review of our care protocols and communication processes has been undertaken to make it easier for families to participate when their patient is in hospital and then being managed in the community, and to ensure that a greater number of patients benefit from having interdisciplinary care plans that are revised weekly.



## Mental health intervention initiatives in Emergency

- A suicide risk screening tool is now being used at triage in the Emergency Department of Zone 6. This standardized questionnaire helps identify and refer affected patients quickly.
- Training on this new tool has also been provided to employees in Zone 4, where it is now being used. The use of this tool will be expanded across the Network.
- Staff in Zone 1B is also being trained on the suicide risk screening tool.
- A satisfaction survey of target clients has been developed and will be rolled out soon.
- Training on psychological trauma-informed care has been provided to employees in our emergency departments and mental health and addiction services. To date, almost 98% of emergency department staff has been trained across the Network.

## Other projects underway:

- Flow of vulnerable patients
- Improvement project in the Emergency Department of the Campbellton Regional Hospital
- Optimization of the Surgical Suite of the Edmundston Regional Hospital
- Inclusion of patients and families as care partners at the Tracadie Hospital
- Deployment of the collaborative care model in nursing
- Implementation of integrated mental health and addiction services in the Emergency Department of the Edmundston Regional Hospital
- Optimization of the Nephrology Program of the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont UHC
- Patient flow – management of facility occupancy rates
- Development of the “Choosing Wisely” process in the Network’s hospitals (program to reduce non-essential exams and treatments)
- Mental health care continuum – Forensic Psychiatry



# EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

*An enriching employee experience makes for a high-performance organization*

## Recruitment and retention (nursing)

The talent acquisition team is meeting daily to accelerate new hires. These meetings set recruitment priorities and ensure that efforts are constantly aligned with the organization's needs.

### Our recruitment and hiring initiatives include:

- Following up on known potential candidates quickly;
- Helping staff to relocate and integrate into the community;
- Providing financial incentives;
- Improving the experience of student employees;
- Improving access to recruitment information and data;
- Improving recruitment event planning.



## International recruitment

Our international recruitment efforts are ongoing. So far, our overseas missions have identified over 500 potential candidates, and over 400 job offers have now been accepted.

In April 2023, Vitalité Health Network representatives participated in job fairs in France and Belgium. Our team also recently visited Marseille, Paris and Lyon to spread the word on employment opportunities with the Network.

These intensive efforts are bearing fruit. Many people will be joining us in the coming weeks and months, including New Brunswick graduates, health care workers from other provinces, and international recruits.

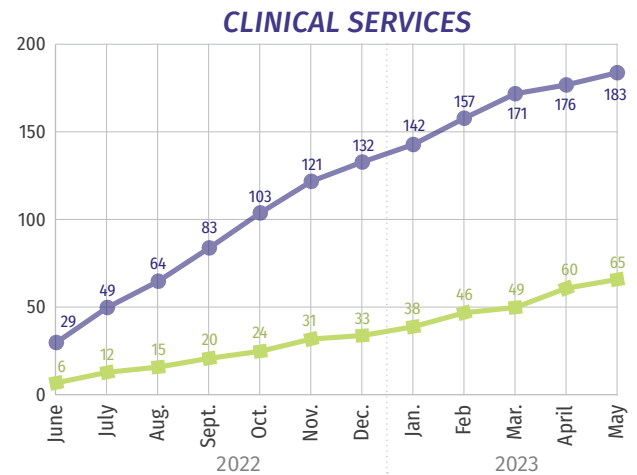
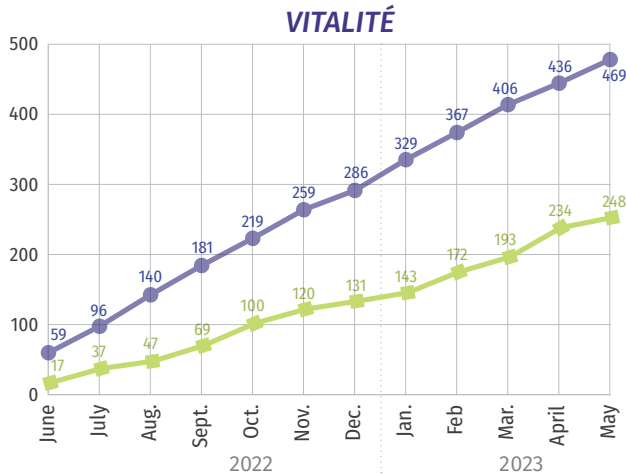
Key results	Number of graduates hired (accepted offers)	Number of international hires (accepted offers)	International offers for which a response is pending	Other hires (accepted offers)
Registered nurses	96	26	1	30
Licensed practical nurses	56			28
Patient care attendants	53	350	63	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>94</b>



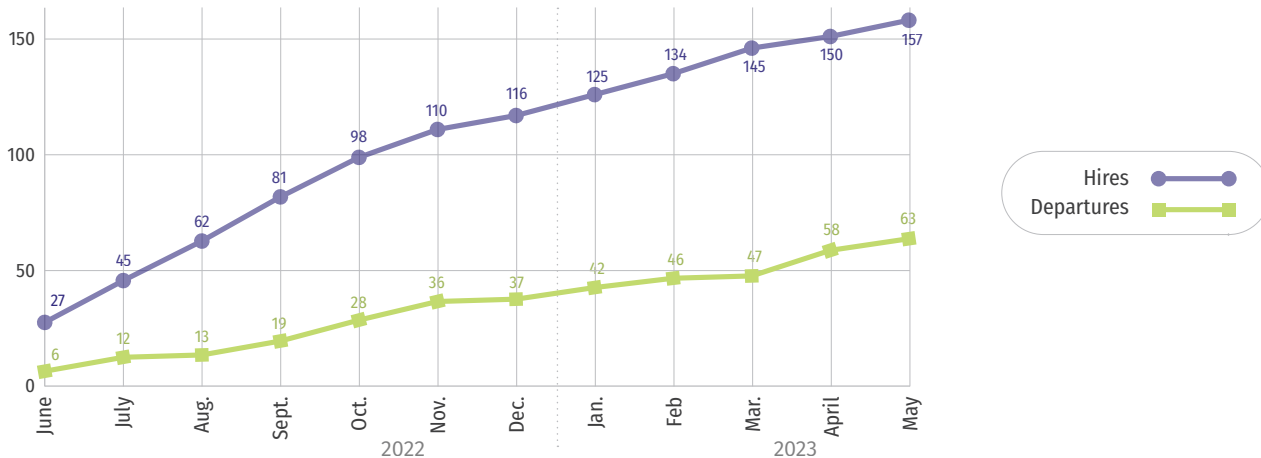
## Retention

To promote retention, exit interviews are being conducted with all nursing employees who leave their positions. The trend toward more hires and fewer departures continues.

## Key results



### VITALITÉ (registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, patient care attendants)



## Other projects underway

- New safe patient transfer techniques program launched
- Wellness centres launched in our medical libraries and wellness image introduced in all our internal communications
- New interview process developed to retain employees
- Process developed to welcome and integrate new employees
- Accommodation for newcomers
- Single entry point for internships
- Review of recruitment initiatives

## “I choose Vitalité!”

To support our efforts to recruit health care workers and build their loyalty, the Network has adopted a new “I choose Vitalité!” image. With employee experience being one of the Network’s priorities, this slogan supports initiatives around staff and volunteer appreciation. Video segments highlighting Network champions have been posted on social media in recent months.



*“We are grateful to work within an extraordinary team where camaraderie, respect and a willingness to help each other are present every day. Our role also involves being leaders and mentors for newcomers to nursing.”*

*- Line Bérubé, Resource Nurse at the Intensive Care Unit (left) and Brenda Couturier, Nurse Manager at the Intensive Care Unit, Edmundston Regional Hospital.*



## BUILDING CLOSER TIES WITH COMMUNITIES

### *Engaged communities become healthy communities*

Vitalité Health Network is continuing to build closer ties with communities, in order to keep the lines of communication open and jointly develop initiatives promoting health and improving access to care.

Over the past quarter, meetings have been held with representatives of the regional service commissions as well as mayors in the Chaleur, Kent and Northwest regions. Meetings have also been held with representatives of the cities of Caraquet and Dieppe as well as the Madawaska Maliseet First Nation.

### **Community health needs assessments and learning communities**

The results of the community health needs assessment in Kent have been released. The learning community in this region has met three times in the past months to set priority objectives.

Learning communities are made up of various stakeholders from the community and public sectors who come together to improve the health of their population and help strengthen the health system.

Vitalité Health Network is supporting this learning community's efforts to advance initiatives related to its priority objectives, such as the recruitment and retention of health care workers in this region, which is related to access to health services.



*“The Kent Regional Service Commission is thrilled to work closely with Vitalité Health Network on creating its learning community. This partnership will not only bring Vitalité Health Network and the Kent region closer together, but will also facilitate the implementation of a number of initiatives to improve the health of the region’s residents and ensure better access to services. Moreover, we are making sure that we work together on recruiting health professionals in the region to maintain the services we need. It is together that we will be able to continue improving the quality of life of the residents of the Kent region.”*

- Paul Lang, Chief Executive Officer, Kent Regional Service Commission

The city of Caraquet will also undertake its prioritization exercise soon and community members will be invited to review the results of their latest community health needs assessment. This review will help identify some of the priorities that they will focus on over the next year.

In the Dalhousie region, steps are underway to create the community advisory committee that will facilitate collaboration with Vitalité Health Network as part of the health needs assessment in this region. This ad hoc committee will support the assessment efforts by reflecting the specific characteristics of the community and the impact of these on the health of its residents.

## Public health promotion program

An improvement project was carried out to strengthen the effectiveness of the Network's public health promotion program. The objective was to make the teams more flexible and agile to accelerate community interventions since promoting public health involves ongoing collaboration with our partners and our communities.

### Priority areas for action

- Promoting a healthy and active lifestyle
- Preventing communicable diseases
- Reducing substance use and harm reduction
- Promoting mental health
- Reducing health inequities

## Health care workers and volunteers, the driving force behind the Network



*For Vitalité Health Network, recognizing health care workers and volunteers is part and parcel of its values. In addition to being well deserved, recognition contributes to engaging and valuing the people at the heart of professional and volunteer activities.*

### Health Care Worker Appreciation Week from June 5 to 9, 2023

Suspended in the last few years due to the pandemic, recognition activities returned this year as part of Health Care Worker Appreciation Week, from June 5 to 9, 2023.

Lunches were provided to staff in the facilities and recognition dinners were held for the 1,175 health care workers who have accumulated 30 years of service or more.

As a token of its appreciation, the Network also provided a gift bearing its new "I choose Vitalité!" slogan to every member of the organization.

Vitalité Health Network's  
Health Care Worker  
Appreciation Week

June 5 to 9, 2023

2023  
EDITION

### Volunteering Weaves Us Together: National Volunteer Week 2023

National Volunteer Week was celebrated across Vitalité Health Network from April 16 to 22, 2023, under the theme "Volunteering weaves us together."



*"I volunteer at the hospital in my area, because it is important to me to help my community."*

- Jacqueline Rivard, volunteer  
at Hôtel-Dieu Saint-Joseph  
de Saint-Quentin

On this occasion, many activities were held to recognize the dedication and invaluable contribution of Vitalité Health Network's some 800 volunteers.

It goes without saying that volunteers form special bonds with patients and their families by providing comfort and support, but they also do so with the health care workers with whom they work closely.

## Call for solidarity: New International Employee Hosting and Accommodation Program

Vitalité Health Network launched a call for solidarity by asking health care workers to host and provide accommodations for new international employees and their families during the first few months after their arrival in Canada.

International recruiting efforts have intensified in the last few months to fill staff shortages. These efforts have yielded results, so much so that hundreds of new international employees will settle in New Brunswick over the next few months to work at Vitalité Health Network.

The housing shortage is posing a major challenge for newcomers who already have to cope with adjusting to a new job, new community and discovering a new culture.

This initiative will help newcomers have a smoother transition and build their loyalty to Vitalité Health Network.



## Vitalité stands out as a research centre

Vitalité Health Network continues to stand out in research, earning a spot on the prestigious list of the top 40 research hospitals in Canada for the second year in a row. This recognition attests to the work of the teams at the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont University Hospital Centre and its research partners, namely the Université de Moncton and its researchers based at the New Brunswick Centre for Precision Medicine, the Atlantic Cancer Research Institute, and the Centre de formation médicale du Nouveau-Brunswick.

Vitalité Health Network is currently participating in forming a clinical trial network for the Atlantic provinces, which will serve as a single entry point for partners, clinicians and patients. This interprovincial collaboration will help facilitate access to therapeutic clinical trials for patients. In total, 12 new clinical trials are already scheduled in the Network for the 2023–2024 period. For example, Dr. Marcel Mallet, respirologist, is studying a new lung cancer detection tool, and Dr. Ludivine Witkowski, neurologist, is conducting a study on Alzheimer's disease.

Through a partnership with the Centre de formation médicale du Nouveau-Brunswick and the New Brunswick Health Research Foundation, \$150,000 in grants was awarded for six research projects to which several of the Network's professionals are contributing.

Congratulations to the researchers who are contributing to expanding the Network's research.



## Openness and transparency, to serve you better

### Follow our progress

#### See the [Performance Report](#)

- The report is published on Vitalité Health Network’s website and updated on a quarterly basis.

#### For each key indicator, the report provides the:

- Benchmark (national or international figure for the same indicators);
- Vitalité Health Network’s target for the current quarter;
- Results for the current quarter;
- Trend over recent quarters.

#### The colour code shows the progress made:

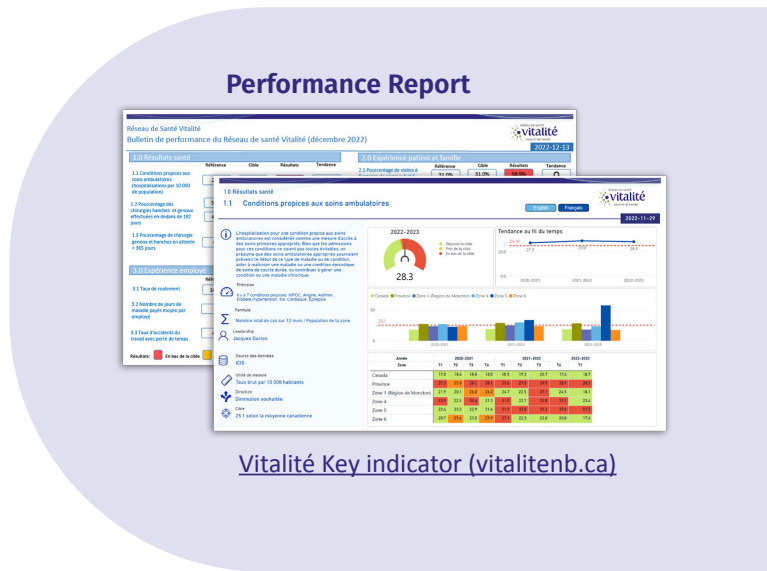
- ■ Green – exceeds target
- ■ Yellow – meets target (+/- 5%)
- ■ Red – below target

The items measured are chosen based on the improvements to be made. It is normal to see yellow and red, which indicates a gap between current performance and desired performance.

### Take part in the virtual public meeting

Join us for the meeting on June 22, 2023, at 6:30 p.m., when Dr. France Desrosiers, President and CEO, accompanied by members of the Leadership Team, will answer questions from the public on Vitalité Health Network’s quarterly report and annual report.

The hyperlink to participate in this virtual meeting will be published on social media



Performance Report

[Vitalité Key indicator \(vitalitenb.ca\)](https://vitalitenb.ca)

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