



Northern Ontario
School of Medicine
École de médecine
du Nord de l'Ontario
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THE NOSM CHALLENGE

Strategic Plan 2021-2025



“This plan, will strengthen our capacity to meet today’s challenges and establish a platform for excellence and innovation for the future.”

Dr. Sarita Verma
Dean, President and CEO

Looking Forward...

The NOSM Challenge 2025 is the third strategic plan in the School’s fifteen-year history. Our plan is grounded in input from nearly 2,000 stakeholders including learners, staff, faculty, partner organizations, and community members from across Northern Ontario. Input was gathered through a mix of interviews, community visits, town halls, focus groups with learners, staff, faculty, Indigenous and Francophone leaders, in-person advice from two Social Accountability Advisory Groups, an external environmental scan of best practices and an online survey. This input provided essential insights and commentary that informed a draft of the plan that was presented to the Strategic Plan Steering Committee, and ultimately, the NOSM Board of Directors. We hope that this level of engagement at NOSM represents the reality that everyone’s voice is valued and you have a role and a stake in NOSM’s success.

Strategic questions were asked and explored at the engagement sessions held across Northern Ontario, including:

- How do we fully enable NOSM to have a meaningful, positive impact on rural communities, Francophone and Indigenous health in Northern Ontario?
- How should NOSM evolve and continue to lead over the next decade, adapting to the ever-more complex world and equip our graduates to effect, lead and transform health care in the North?
- How should resources be focused and priorities set to recruit and retain a flourishing physician workforce in Northern Ontario?

NOSM’s strengths were confirmed throughout these consultations.



Northern Ontario

NOSM is known for educating physicians and health-care professionals to work in underserved communities; cultivating interdisciplinary research and learning; assembling an unprecedented network of cohesive academic and clinical sites in more than 90 communities and across 800,000 km²; and, for its social accountability mandate to address the priority health concerns of the peoples and communities of Northern Ontario.

Consultations also revealed an increased desire for connectivity, transparency and better collaboration. Recommendations for collaboration ranged from interdisciplinary research and interprofessional learning, to NOSM's ability to connect diverse clinical sites through a network of communities. Integrating equity, inclusion and diversity in all aspects of our work was another theme raised during consultations. This means

bringing people together across different disciplines and professions, and also ensuring stakeholders within NOSM across Northern Ontario reflect diversity. Finally, we heard the need for NOSM to innovate models of education in Northern, Indigenous, Francophone, rural and remote medicine that lead to skilled health-care professionals who stay in the communities of the North.

A key element of this plan is renewing our commitment to the School's social accountability mandate and its relevance to NOSM's partnerships with community. We explicitly recognize that NOSM is accountable to the peoples of Northern Ontario. Geography, culture and socio-economic realities create a complex tapestry of health service inequities in Northern Ontario. NOSM commits to working with our partners to influence practices and advocate for

equity, access and understanding at the interface of research, education and care.

Recognizing the health needs of Northern Ontarians, NOSM must support the creation of a health workforce that will meet those necessities. We must develop leaders with the skills to make bold changes to systems that are unsustainable and work as full partners with local, national and global stakeholders to build a sustainable future of quality health care especially in addressing the underserved population of rural, Francophone and Indigenous communities. NOSM must provide solutions to health inequities across Northern Ontario. This must be reflected across the whole school from the point of admission to graduation, in education innovation and in our research. This is especially relevant in the post-pandemic world.

Leadership

As with all strategic plans, The NOSM Challenge 2025 will be accompanied by a framework for implementation with methods for measuring the indicators for our success. The purpose of our plan is to magnify the impact NOSM has had in its first fifteen years to sustain its vision well into the future. This magnification will include a blend of NOSM's current strengths, and our ability to reach beyond them to become a catalyst for progress in health education, research and health services for the marginalized and most vulnerable communities.

In all its endeavors, NOSM will actively incentivize and influence integration and innovation to amplify the impact in Northern Ontario.

Finally, a major integrating theme is to bring diversity and wellbeing to a new dimension, recognizing that we will achieve brilliance only through equity, diversity and a healthy learning and working environment. NOSM intends to become a destination school by leading and equipping the next generation of health professionals with the ability to find and implement solutions to the most complex scientific and health questions and thus improve health outcomes for Northern Ontarians.



Whitefish Falls

Executive Group Sponsors have been identified to establish teams to develop the implementation plans (including activities and performance goals and metrics). The Executive Group (EG) will review progress monthly to ensure the plan is being implemented with appropriate institutional resources allocated to accomplish mission-critical priorities.

Program-level expectations will be linked to individual and unit performance metrics. Supported by a new Institutional Intelligence Unit, the Executive Group will review data and metrics related to the plan to ensure outcomes are achieved.

Thank you to all who contributed to the development of this plan. We are committed to working closely with all stakeholders, including the provincial government, our communities, clinical and academic partners, and our faculty, staff and learners whose dedication, knowledge, and contributions account for our collective excellence and success.

Dr. Sarita Verma

NOSM Dean, President and CEO



Ouimet Canyon

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Vision: Innovative Education and Research for a Healthier North.

Mission: To improve the health of Northern Ontarians by being socially accountable in our education and research programs and advocating for health equity.

We will realize this by:

- Embedding social accountability as a core value in graduates. NOSM will be a recognized leader in rural and Northern health knowledge and will influence and advocate for policy advances in health at all levels of government.
- Increasing research capacity and expertise in population-based health to improve advocacy and evidence-based policy in Northern Ontario. NOSM will have a positive research impact on Northern health, be known as the leader in Northern health research and increase grant and other research funding.
- Incorporating advanced technology into curriculum and day-to-day activities of the School. NOSM will be a leader in educational excellence through its curriculum renewal, competency-based training, adaptive technology, and will meet or exceed all accreditation standards.
- Being a strong active partner with communities in need to create a flourishing health workforce to serve the North.
- Securing sustainable financial and human resources to deliver on our vision of innovative education and research. We will be financially sustainable by ensuring access to resources and infrastructure to sustain and grow NOSM through efficiencies and a culture of advancement.
- Creating a sustainable working and learning environment. NOSM will commit to diversity, wellness and respect for faculty, staff and learners.

OUR VALUES

Innovation.

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine encourages ingenuity, creativity, a culture of inquiry and discovery, and the importance of learning from others in every aspect of the School's education, research, social accountability, and corporate mandates. NOSM uses innovative approaches to ensure continuous improvement of our distributed model of education and research.

Social Accountability.

NOSM adheres to the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition of the social accountability of medical schools as "the obligation to direct their education, research and service activities towards addressing the priority health concerns of the community, region and the nation that they have a mandate to serve. The priority health concerns are to be identified jointly by governments, health-care organizations, health professionals and the public." As part of its social accountability mandate, NOSM has the responsibility to engage stakeholders at all levels of its broad community.

Collaboration.

NOSM pursues education and research goals in close partnership with its host universities. Collaboration and partnership are also important to NOSM with its teaching hospitals, community physicians, health professional clinical teachers, health system stakeholders, and communities it serves. NOSM values the insights, contributions, and support of its many partners that work to improve the health of the people and communities of Northern Ontario. NOSM recognizes that collaboration is both a process and outcome that engages different perspectives to better understand complex problems and leads to the development of integrative solutions that could not be accomplished by any single person or organization.

Inclusiveness.

NOSM fosters inclusiveness by supporting an environment that embraces differences in staff, faculty and learners and respectfully creates value from the differences of all members of the NOSM community, in order to leverage talent and foster both individual and organizational excellence.

Respect.

NOSM's faculty, staff, and learners will learn and listen to one another respectfully and communicate openly. NOSM's staff, faculty, and learners treat others and their ideas in a manner that conveys respect as differences are discussed, fosters an open academic debate, and which respects academic freedom.

THE CHALLENGE

The Challenge theme emerged throughout the engagement process and reflects the need to challenge ourselves, our communities, our ideas, and our commitment to social accountability to drive necessary change and improve access to quality health care in Northern Ontario.

NOSM must promote innovation, discovery, and academic and clinical excellence while building a culture of diversity, inclusion, integrity, and empowerment. NOSM is No Ordinary School of Medicine and must renew its commitment to social accountability by having an ongoing, sustainable impact in Northern Ontario. This is the NOSM Challenge.

In this strategic plan, NOSM has identified four strategic directions:

- 1. Transform Health Human Resource Planning**
- 2. Advance Social Accountability**
- 3. Innovate Health Professions Education**
- 4. Strengthen Research Capacity in Northern Ontario**

As well, NOSM will be supported by four strategic enablers:

- 1. Valuing Our People**
- 2. Managing Our Resources**
- 3. Investing in Our Infrastructure**
- 4. Sustaining Our Resilience**



“We must eliminate the gaps in Northern Ontario health human resources in order to achieve equitable and sustainable access to quality health care.”

Dr. Sarah Newbery
Assistant Dean, Physician Workforce Strategy



STRATEGIC DIRECTION # 1

Transform Health Human Resource Planning

Marathon



STRATEGIC DIRECTION # 1

Transform Health Human Resource Planning

GOAL

To link health human resources (HHR) to Northern Ontario's needs (Francophone, Indigenous, rural, and urban) with a focus on specialist and subspecialist physician training.

ASPIRATION

NOSM's transformative approach to the planning and delivery of workforce supply eliminates the gaps in Northern Ontario health human resources.



OUTCOMES

An integrated, customised and evidence-based approach to health human resources (HHR) for Northern Ontario

- ✓ Build a collaborative approach for physician recruitment across Northern Ontario.
- ✓ Ensure consistent data and communications and government relations strategy for Northern Ontario workforce planning.

Integration of rural, remote and community needs into our education programs

- ✓ Northern Ontario is a preferred destination for learners seeking electives and clinical placement opportunities.

Enhanced connectivity and communications for all NOSM communities

- ✓ Support faculty and health-care providers through engagement and active involvement in all aspects of the School.

A system to support clinical faculty in their academic work

- ✓ Increase Academic Funding Plan (AFP) support to NOSM faculty.
- ✓ Support and value the Local Education Groups (LEGs).
- ✓ Support the development of academic careers for clinical faculty.



“As a medical school founded with a social accountability mandate, we must challenge ourselves to make a difference and lead the transformation of our health-system in Northern Ontario.”

Dr. Joseph LeBlanc
Associate Dean, Equity & Inclusion



STRATEGIC DIRECTION # 2

Advance Social Accountability

Bear Island First Nation



STRATEGIC DIRECTION # 2

Advance Social Accountability

GOAL

To embed social accountability throughout NOSM with a focus on measurable, transformative, and sustainable change in health-care systems for Northern Ontario.

ASPIRATION

Social accountability defines NOSM. Through the value of social accountability, NOSM graduates, faculty, learners and staff lead health-system transformation in Northern Ontario.



Lake of the Woods

OUTCOMES

Integrated, customised, evidence-based, holistic health-care service models for Northern Ontario

- ✓ Adopt evidence-based strategies in education, research, health care service delivery and advocacy for patients and communities.
- ✓ Advance relevant, high quality, cost-effective and equitable health-care system transformation at the federal, provincial and territorial levels.
- ✓ Be the crucible for solution focussed conversations that transform the Northern Ontario health-care systems.
- ✓ Lead the development of Northern Ontario centered policies that improve population-based health indicators.

Social Accountability in everything we do

- ✓ Align education programs with societal and community needs.
- ✓ Produce graduates who are leaders that transform health-care systems and improve population health outcomes.
- ✓ Address the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Recognition as a change agent for social accountability

- ✓ Lead advocacy and community engagement that is grounded in the community under a true co-creation model.
- ✓ Enhance and renew relationships, communications and community outreach.
- ✓ Renew the curriculum to embed socially accountable content, research into disease determinants, and advances in models of health-care delivery in Francophone, Indigenous, rural and remote areas.
- ✓ Develop a global health strategy founded in the principles of social accountability.



“Innovation must drive NOSM’s next generation of physicians, registered dietitians, physician assistants, medical physicists, other health professionals and scientists.”

Dr. Catherine Cervin
Vice Dean, Academic



STRATEGIC DIRECTION # 3

Innovate Health Professions Education

Sault Ste. Marie



STRATEGIC DIRECTION # 3

Innovate Health Professions Education

GOAL

To be recognized across Northern Ontario for developing innovative models of education in Northern, Indigenous, Francophone, rural and remote medicine that lead to well-trained health-care practitioners who stay in the communities of the North.

ASPIRATION

Innovation drives the education of NOSM's next generation of physicians, registered dietitians, physician assistants, medical physicists, other health professionals and scientists.



OUTCOMES

Excellence in Health Professions Education

- ✓ Maintain the highest standards of accreditations across all our programs.
- ✓ Prepare our students for certifying and national examinations.

Leading-edge Curricula

In UME, PGME, HS and CEPD programs:

- ✓ Address emerging technology, incorporating virtual care (particularly for remote communities), innovative online curriculum, artificial intelligence, digital health, virtual reality.
- ✓ Develop life-long learning to enhance CEPD, faculty and preceptor development, and outreach patient-education opportunities.

Program Expansion

- ✓ Expand enrolment in the UME and PGME programs.
- ✓ Create Community Networks and regional hubs

New Pathways to health education

- ✓ Establish new pathways to education.
- ✓ Establish defined outreach to Northern Ontario communities and schools at primary, secondary and postsecondary levels.

Admissions program that meets the needs of Northern Ontario communities

- ✓ Ensure that admissions are reflective of Northern Ontario's diversity.
- ✓ Show evidence of admission data that meets the workforce needs of Northern Ontario.

A healthy and safe learning and working environment

- ✓ Explore how curricular structures and wellness/resiliency programming can enable and support the health and wellbeing of learners, faculty and staff.



“Strategic partnerships are key to changing population health outcomes in Northern Ontario. NOSM will collaborate with research entities, institutes, hospitals and Northern Ontario Health Teams to improve health in our region.”

Dr. David Marsh

*Associate Dean, Research, Innovation
and International Relations*



STRATEGIC DIRECTION # 4

Strengthen Research Capacity in Northern Ontario

Temiskaming Shores



STRATEGIC DIRECTION # 4

Strengthen Research Capacity in Northern Ontario

GOAL

To strengthen research capacity in Northern Ontario by aligning with health-research partners to improve performance and measurable outcomes in health services, quality health care, health and biomedical research and knowledge translation.

ASPIRATION

NOSM is the connective tissue between research entities, Northern Ontario Health Teams (OHTs), research institutes and hospitals.



Lake Superior

OUTCOMES

Establish research partnerships, networks and clusters including those with a cultural focus

- ✓ Leverage and strengthen existing or emerging research networks.
- ✓ Improved collaboration with partner institution researchers.
- ✓ Strategically align new and existing domestic and international partnerships around rural and remote health issues and social accountability.
- ✓ Explore a Northern Ontario and pan-Canadian research networks grounded in Indigenous health.
- ✓ Explore a Northern Ontario and pan-Canadian research networks grounded in Francophone health.

Strong capacity in research and analytical processes

- ✓ Create a data warehouse and analytics unit for research and NOSM Continuous Quality Assurance.
- ✓ Develop expertise in managing big data sets across Northern Ontario.
- ✓ Invest in infrastructure to support research productivity.

Develop interdisciplinary centers

- ✓ Establish an interdisciplinary Center for Social Accountability.
- ✓ Support research on population health.

New research opportunities for learners and faculty

- ✓ Identify research priorities and support the recruitment of leading researchers in those priority areas.
- ✓ Explore new degrees such as combined degrees (BA MS, BSC MD, Engineering MD, JD MD).





Strategic Enablers

People. Resources. Infrastructure. Resilience.

NOSM will make strategic investments in our people, resources and infrastructure by living the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion; encouraging creativity; supporting the well-being of the NOSM community; rewarding innovation; and, eliminating bureaucracy. NOSM realizes ongoing growth and sustainability through its investment in its people, resources and infrastructure while investing in cutting edge technology and wellness for all our constituents.

Kakabeka Falls

“NOSM will support the well-being of its employees by living the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion, encouraging creativity, rewarding innovation and eliminating bureaucracy.”

Ray Hunt
Chief Operating Officer



Strategic Enablers #1

Valuing Our People

Advance faculty and staff renewal

- ✓ Advance people and support strengths-based performance improvement by ensuring the right mix and number of people to deliver NOSM's mandate.
- ✓ Build capacity for tenured, tenure-track, Indigenous and Francophone faculty.

Become an employer of choice

- ✓ Be one of Canada's best employers through the advancement of talent management, recruitment and retention, faculty and staff development.
- ✓ Establish ways in which the School can contribute to individual faculty members' professional development by enhancing our Faculty Development Unit.



Build A culture of continuous learning and mentorship

- ✓ Develop programs for professional development across all stages of careers, including fostering life-long learning.
- ✓ Prepare teachers and support faculty and students in academic career progression to become leaders and change agents.

Value work-life balance and wellness across the entire school

- ✓ Build a culture with a focus on wellness and work-life balance and inclusive learning and working environments.
- ✓ Make NOSM a culturally and psychologically safe place to work and learn.
- ✓ Confront racism.

Build school spirit

- ✓ Engage alumni to support NOSM through shared experiences with students, connecting with the alumni network and giving back to our Northern communities.

Manage our talent

- ✓ Create leadership opportunities for staff, faculty and learners.
- ✓ Develop and maintain mechanisms to reward and recognize high achieving CSD faculty, staff and students.



“NOSM has an incredible network of Alumni who are making a tremendous impact in our communities. We will enrich our learner experiences with these valuable connections and create a culture of philanthropy and advancement to further improve the health of Northern Ontarians.”

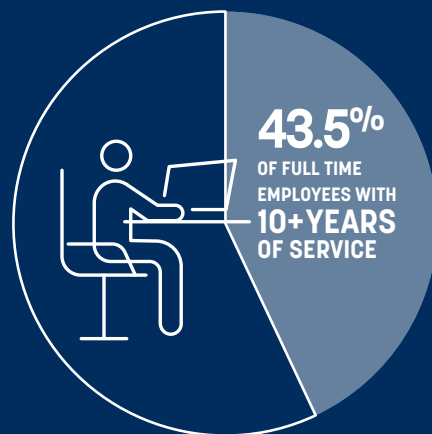
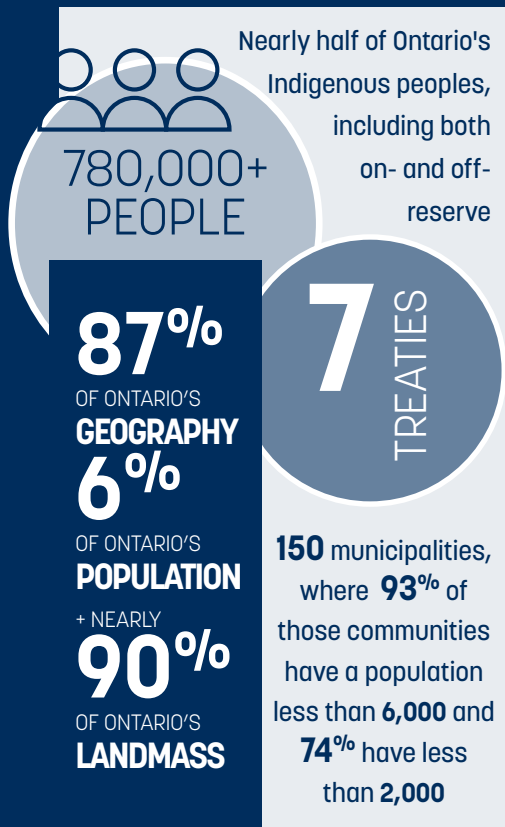
Rahim Dharamsi
Chief Advancement Officer

Strategic Enablers #2

Managing Our Resources

Diversify our sources of revenue

- ✓ Foster a culture of philanthropy and advancement.
- ✓ Maintain continued fiscal diligence with best business practices.
- ✓ Address our structural deficit.
- ✓ Harness the unique strengths of being a not-for-profit corporation to seize new roles and contracts with government, and industry.



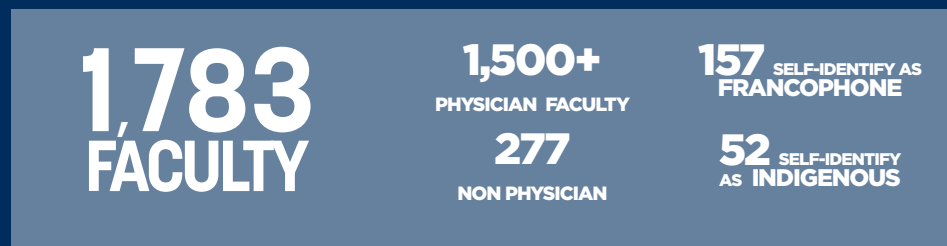
246 16 FULL-TIME FACULTY EMPLOYEES

29 15+ YEARS OF SERVICE

78 10+ YEARS OF SERVICE

44 5+ YEARS OF SERVICE

as of May 1, 2020





“NOSM will invest in new cutting-edge technology that will lead to innovation in our work and our approach to improving the health outcomes of Northern Ontarians.”

Stephen Kelly
Director, Information Technology



Strategic Enablers #3

Investing in Our Infrastructure

Manage space, technology and reduce our carbon footprint

- ✓ Invest in and refresh the technology infrastructure for our education and research programs.
- ✓ Invest in new cutting-edge technology to help us do our work – virtual reality, new web platforms, video interviewing and advanced communication platforms.
- ✓ Develop a space master plan that incorporates expansion and increased needs along with modern HR approaches for shared workspaces, alternate work arrangements and healthy workplace.
- ✓ Become a leader in internal practices that address ‘climate change’ and environmental health.



Invest in data systems

- ✓ Improve our system capacity in health analytics and quality improvement, through effective and responsible use of technology and data.
- ✓ Have the best evidence of our impact on the health ecosystem in Northern Ontario with reliable data and credible leadership.
- ✓ Lead the integration of a comprehensive database/warehouse/stewardship system



“NOSM ‘Respects the Difference’ and is committed to the development of strategies that advance health, wellbeing and resilience throughout the School.”

Dr. Sarita Verma
Dean, President, and CEO

Strategic Enablers #4

Sustaining Our Resilience

Build a culture of wellness, respect and equity

- ✓ Create leadership positions in Equity and Inclusion and Wellness.
- ✓ Develop strategies to advance health, wellbeing and resilience throughout the School.
- ✓ Demonstrate that input from NOSM partners and stakeholders is valued and an integral aspect of our planning and execution.



Respect
the Difference.™

JOIN US IN THE NOSM CHALLENGE

This past year has been a challenging one for the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. Under the leadership of a new Dean, President and CEO, turnover in many decanal positions, and a new fiscal reality with frozen tuition and a cap on funding, there was a sense of trepidation across the School.

Renewal of the commitment to social accountability and a refocus on Northern Ontario were key messages heard during the new Dean's tours and in gathering input through the engagements for the strategic plan. Managing uncertainty at that time

paled under the current reality (as this is being written) of the crisis created by COVID-19. NOSM is experiencing both academic and business disruptions. Our education programs have had to move swiftly to embrace online options, including new ways of doing our work clinically. Some major choices had to be made.

The emergence of technology, artificial intelligence and robotics need to be integrated into the training of our students and residents and lifelong learning for our faculty. This is an unprecedented revolution in health-

professions education and service delivery. What has become clear during this extraordinary time is the remarkable commitment and creativity of our people to advance our mission despite the uncertainties around us.

The future of health in the North of Ontario depends on NOSM playing a key role in the transformation of health education, research and care in the North.

Join us in meeting the Challenge.



Northern Ontario
School of Medicine

École de médecine
du Nord de l'Ontario

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