

# MRHA 2026-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN



MRHA

Mississippi River  
Health Alliance

The Mississippi River Health Alliance Strategic Plan to strengthen local care, support our people, and build a healthier future for our growing communities



## Table of Contents

<b>Letter from the Chair of our Allied Boards of Directors.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Letter from our CEO.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Who We Are.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Our Environment and System.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Our Strategic Planning Steering Committee.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>What We Heard.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Our Purpose .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Our Values.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Our Strategic Ambition.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Our Strategic Directions and Priorities.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Thank You.....</b>	<b>20</b>

# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF OUR ALLIED BOARDS OF DIRECTORS



On behalf of the Allied Boards of Directors, I am pleased to share the Mississippi River Health Alliance's new Strategic Plan. It reflects the progress we've made together and a clear direction for the years ahead. In a time of growing demand and constant change, our organization has become stronger, more connected, and more focused on what matters most: people.

This Plan is practical and values-led. It commits us to care close to home, to supporting our people and medical staff, to modernizing the systems and spaces that enable safe care, and to stewarding resources wisely so services are protected and improved over time. The work is ambitious and grounded in reality.

On behalf of the Allied Boards, I want to extend sincere thanks to everyone who contributed – staff, medical staff, residents, and families, volunteers, partners, and community members. Your experience and ideas shaped this Plan.

We are proud to serve our communities through Almonte General Hospital, Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital, Fairview Manor, and Lanark County Paramedic Service. We will keep showing that high-quality care is available locally—and getting better. We will report on our progress and follow up with those who contributed as we bring this Plan to life.

Michel Vermette  
Chair, Allied Boards of Directors  
Mississippi River Health Alliance





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# LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND CEO

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Today we share a Plan built from lived experience – what patients, residents, families, staff, medical staff, paramedics, and partners told us they need from the MRHA now and next. It is a roadmap for delivering care close to home with clarity, compassion, and accountability.

The last few years have tested healthcare. What endured here was not luck; it was people: skilled clinicians, dedicated support staff, engaged leaders, and community partners showing up for one another. Their professionalism and kindness set the standard we aim to meet every day.

Looking ahead, our focus is clear:

- Provide access to quality care in our growing communities.
- Make the MRHA a great place to work and practice, where people feel supported and valued.
- Modernize processes, technology, and infrastructure so care is safe, seamless, and efficient.
- Secure fiscal and operational sustainability to protect and improve services over the long term.

Our values guide how we do this: Care with Heart. Welcome Everyone. Commit to Our Best. Rise to the Challenge. Create Impact Together. These are not slogans; they are behaviours and expectations. Leaders will model these behaviours and support teams to live them in daily decisions.

This Plan is also a signal to current and future colleagues: MRHA is a place to build a career and feel supported. With the collective strength of Almonte General Hospital, Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital, Fairview Manor, and Lanark County Paramedic Service, we will put this Plan to work and report openly on our progress.

Brad Harrington  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
Mississippi River Health Alliance





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# WHO WE ARE



The Mississippi River Health Alliance (MRHA) brings together Almonte General Hospital, Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital, Fairview Manor, and Lanark County Paramedic Service to deliver care close to home.

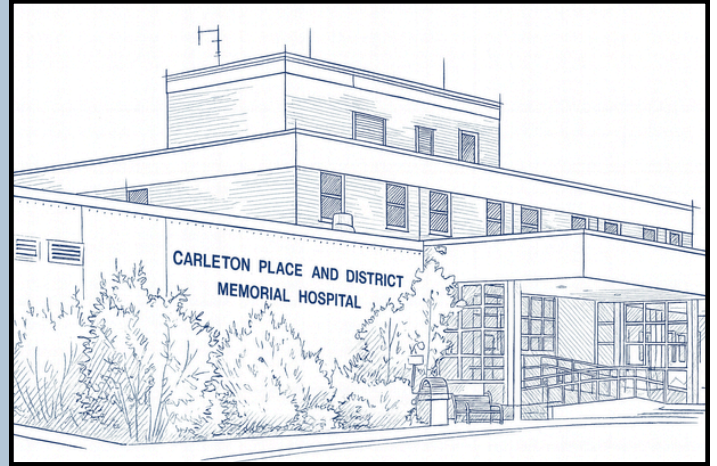
We were formed to improve coordination across the region and to honour a long tradition of community-based care. Each organization retains its local identity and deep ties with the people it serves, while working as one Alliance to enhance experiences and outcomes. We work as one so people can move easily between hospital care, long-term care, paramedic services, and community supports.

Across the MRHA, care spans emergency and acute services, diagnostics, surgical and obstetrical care, long-term and community-based supports—helping residents at every stage of life. We collaborate with primary care, community agencies, public health, and neighbouring hospitals so people can get the right care in the right place. With the support of our Foundations and community partners, we invest in tools, spaces, and programs that strengthen local care.

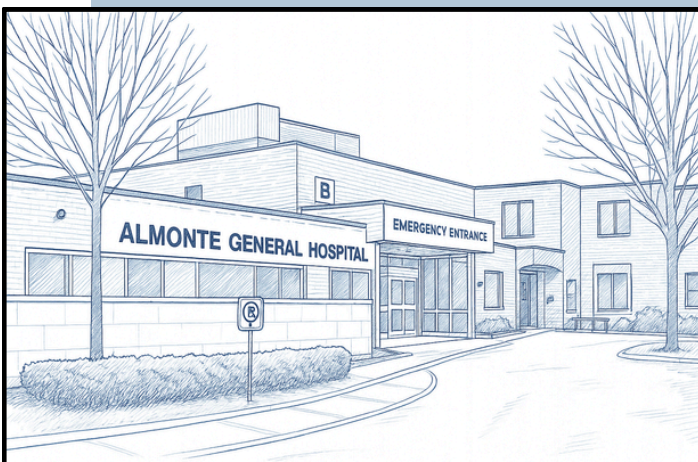
At our core is a simple promise: people first. The dedication of our staff, medical staff, paramedics, and volunteers makes excellent care possible, and our communities' trust makes it meaningful. Together, we're building a stronger, more connected system of care—close to home.

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# WHO WE ARE



The Mississippi River Health Alliance (MRHA) brings together Almonte General Hospital, Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital, Fairview Manor, and Lanark County Paramedic Service to provide coordinated, high-quality care close to home. Each organization keeps its local identity and deep community ties while working as one Alliance to improve experiences and outcomes across the region. We partner with primary care, community health, long-term care, public health, and other providers to connect people to the right care at the right time.





# OUR ENVIRONMENT AND SYSTEM

Our communities are growing faster than almost anywhere else in Eastern Ontario. Mississippi Mills is expected to grow by 71%, Almonte by 122%, and Carleton Place by 97% over the next two decades. At the same time, our population is aging quickly; Lanark County residents aged 65+ are expected to increase by 72% by 2046. Demand for care is rising while resources are constrained.

As we move forward, we are operating in an increasingly complex and demanding environment:

## **Access to primary care remains limited:**

Many residents do not have a family doctor or nurse practitioner, which pushes non-urgent needs to emergency departments. Hospitals are being asked to fill gaps and coordinate care that would otherwise occur elsewhere.

## **People & teams:**

Staffing shortages persist across roles—nurses, physicians, allied health, and support staff. Recruitment and retention are ongoing priorities as workload pressures and workforce strain remain high across the system.

## **Aging infrastructure and funding pressures:**

Facilities and equipment need renewal while the cost of care continues to rise. As part of this Plan, we will enable our teams through improved processes, technology, and infrastructure so care is safe, efficient, and sustainable.





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# OUR ENVIRONMENT AND SYSTEM



## **Patient needs are becoming more complex:**

An aging population, higher rates of chronic disease, and greater demand for mental-health and addictions services increase the complexity of care. Waits for Long-Term Care Home placements also affect patient flow in hospitals.

## **Technology and innovation are reshaping how care is delivered and accessed.**

Digital and Electronic Health Record (EHR) modernization are largely unfunded. We will pursue partnerships, prudent investments, and grants to modernize our tools and improve patient experience and operational efficiency.

## **Our response:**

To meet evolving needs, we are working toward more coordinated, accessible, and specialized care across the Mississippi River Health Alliance. That includes strengthening partnerships, investing in our people, and spaces, and stewarding resources wisely so high-quality, patient-centred care remains available close to home. When a service is not available locally, we will connect people quickly and seamlessly to the right provider.

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# PROUDLY PROVIDING YOUR HEALTHCARE CLOSE TO HOME

## PURPOSE

**Providing quality healthcare in our growing communities by empowering our team and improving our systems and infrastructure**

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS



Provide our communities access to quality healthcare



Foster a collaborative working environment where people feel supported, valued, and appreciated



Enable our team through improved processes, technology, and infrastructure



Secure our fiscal and operational sustainability

Foster an integrated system of care through the continued implementation of our Clinical Services Plan

Collaborate with partners to improve access to healthcare

Support primary care reform and access in our communities

Embed our values in our systems and processes

Ensure long-term stability of our team through succession planning

Support staff psychological health & safety in the workplace through the development and implementation of a multi-year plan

Bolster retention strategies and opportunities for staff recognition

Strengthen cross-functional collaboration and connection across our team

Update and improve our IT and EHR systems

Advance our redevelopment priorities

Innovate and optimize use of our current spaces

Evaluate and implement processes to increase organizational efficiency and collaboration

Evaluate the benefits and risks of further integration between AGH and CPDMH

Enhance our focus on opportunities to diversify and maximize our revenue, while being fiscally appropriate

Strengthen regional collaboration and leadership to support sustainability

Implement a comprehensive recruitment strategy to continue attracting top talent

Engage our communities for future success of our organization

## VALUES



Commit to Our Best



Create Impact Together



Care with Heart



Welcome Everyone



Rise to the Challenge



# OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE

The creation of our new Strategic Plan would not be possible without the hard work and continued engagement of our Steering Committee consisting of the following MRHA staff and Directors of the Allied Boards:



- **Erica Ray** – Superintendent of Operations, Lanark County Paramedic Service
- **Linda Bolton** – Registered Nurse Team Lead, Fairview Manor
- **Dr. Allyson Champagne** – Chief of Staff, Carleton Place District & Memorial Hospital
- **Dr. Melanie Fortune** – Chief of Staff, Almonte General Hospital
- **Brad Harrington** – President & CEO, Mississippi River Health Alliance
- **Sarah Cousineau** – Vice President Human Resources, Occupational Health & Safety and Diagnostic Services, Mississippi River Health Alliance
- **Lianne Learmonth** – Vice President, Patient & Resident Services and Chief Nursing Executive, Mississippi River Health Alliance
- **Bruce Young** – Allied Boards Director and Chair of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee
- **Michel Vermette** – Allied Boards Chair
- **John Fournier** – Allied Boards Vice Chair
- **Lyman Gardiner** – Allied Boards Past Chair



"This Plan reflects the voices of our communities and the dedication of our people. It gives us clear priorities, and the values to guide how we deliver care close to home."

– Bruce Young

Chair of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee



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# WHAT WE HEARD

**How we listened:** We engaged patients, families, staff, medical staff, partners, and community members through 15 focus groups/interviews, a staff survey, and a community survey with a strong response rate. We asked what makes MRHA strong, where we can improve, and what matters most for the years ahead.

## Emerging Themes:

### Providing Access to Care Close to Home

- People value being able to receive high-quality care locally. Staff were consistently described as professional, compassionate, and dedicated; community members expressed deep appreciation for the care they receive and the convenience of nearby services.

**What we'll do:** Provide access, improve navigation, and use digital tools and innovation to make care timelier and more seamless.

### A Pillar in the Community

- The MRHA is viewed as a trusted anchor for community health. We also heard a desire for clearer understanding of the Alliance—what it means, how it supports coordinated care, and how it benefits local services.

**What we'll do:** Communicate simply and often about the Alliance and deepen collaboration with community partners to address unmet needs.



# WHAT WE HEARD

**How we listened:** We engaged patients, families, staff, medical staff, partners, and community members through 15 focus groups/interviews, a staff survey, and a community survey with a strong response rate. We asked what makes MRHA strong, where we can improve, and what matters most for the years ahead. **Emerging Themes:**

## **Supporting Our People and Cultivating Our Culture**

- Providing excellent healthcare is deeply personal to our people, who expressed pride in serving their communities. We heard the need for strong communication, cross-site collaboration, and psychological health and safety so teams feel supported and equipped for success.

**What we'll do:** Invest in recruitment and retention, leadership and recognition, and a multi-year psychological health & safety plan.

## **A Community That Cares Deeply**

- Residents feel a strong sense of ownership and pride in local care, showing support through volunteering, philanthropy, and advocacy. As our region grows, we must keep both long-standing and new residents connected to MRHA's work.

**What we'll do:** Strengthen engagement, celebrate community contributions, and invite ongoing input as we implement the Plan.





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# OUR PURPOSE

## Proudly providing your healthcare close to home.

It defines why we exist and do the work we do.

Speaking to our purpose, our team is proud of the role we play in contributing to the health of our communities. It is a privilege to serve our fellow community members. We are committed to providing person-centred services to meet the individual needs of those we serve close to home.





# OUR VALUES

**Our values define how we strive to carry out our work, embodying the ways we act and interact.**



## Care with Heart

We lead with empathy, compassion, and kindness because healthcare is most powerful when it's centred on each person and their care circle.



## Welcome Everyone

We treat every person with warmth to build connection, understanding, and a sense of belonging for all.



## Commit to Our Best

We proudly embrace continuous improvement and learning, aiming high and holding ourselves accountable.



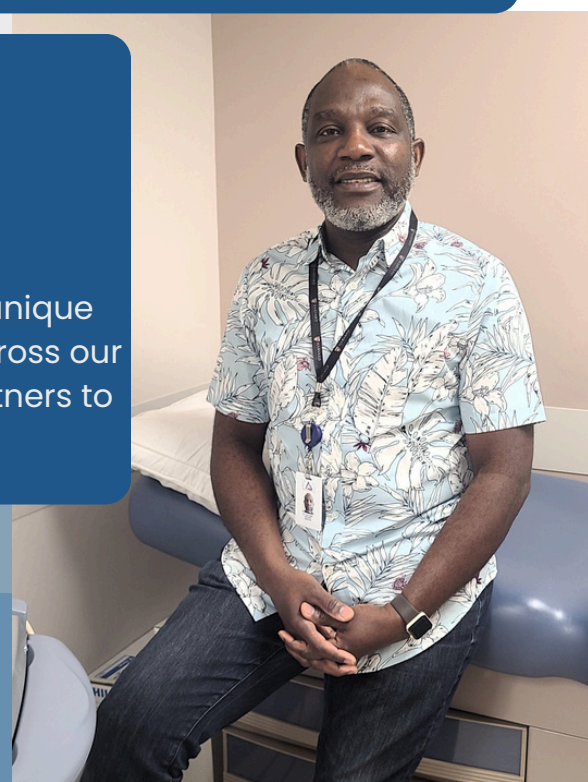
## Rise to the Challenge

We find solutions for the best path forward through resilience, adaptability, and resourcefulness.



## Create Impact Together

We listen to each other, value our unique strengths, and build relationships across our organization, communities, and partners to achieve stronger outcomes.



# OUR STRATEGIC AMBITION

**Providing quality healthcare in our growing communities by empowering our team, and improving our systems and infrastructure.**

It represents where we aim to be and what we strive to achieve by the end of our Strategic Plan.

Moving forward, we will continue to focus on providing trusted healthcare locally, for anyone who requires our services. We will achieve this by ensuring our team is at their best through optimal systems and infrastructure.





# OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES

**Our Strategic Directions and Priorities represent our strategic goals and areas of focus for the next five years. Strategic Direction 1 of 4:**



## PROVIDE OUR COMMUNITIES ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTHCARE

**Foster an integrated system of care through the continued implementation of our Clinical Services Plan, including**

- Enhancing services for seniors/frail elderly
- Improving inpatient, outpatient, and specialty care
- Implementing improvements in digital health, clinical integration, staffing models and care spaces
- Eliminating program closures

**Collaborate with partners to improve access to healthcare**

- Ottawa Valley Family Health Team/Family Health Organizations
- Ontario Health Teams Leeds Lanark Grenville (LLG) & Ottawa West Four Rivers (OWFR)
- Public Health
- Home Hospice
- Community Mental Health
- Other area hospitals

**Support primary care reform and access in our communities**





# OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES

**Our Strategic Directions and Priorities represent our strategic goals and areas of focus for the next five years. Strategic Direction 2 of 4:**



## **FOSTER A COLLABORATIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT WHERE PEOPLE FEEL SUPPORTED, VALUED, AND APPRECIATED**

- Embed our values in our systems and processes
- Ensure long-term stability of our team through succession planning
- Support staff psychological health and safety in the workplace through the development and implementation of a multi-year plan
- Bolster retention strategies and opportunities for staff recognition
- Strengthen cross-functional collaboration and connection across our team



# OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES

**Our Strategic Directions and Priorities represent our strategic goals and areas of focus for the next five years. Strategic Direction 3 of 4:**



## **ENABLE OUR TEAM THROUGH IMPROVED PROCESSES, TECHNOLOGY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Update and improve our IT and Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems**

- Implement our three-year IT Strategic Roadmap

**Advance our redevelopment priorities, including:**

- Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital Development
- Almonte General Hospital/Former Long Term Care (LTC) Building
- Lanark County Paramedic Service Bases
- Fairview Manor infrastructure improvements

**Innovate and optimize use of our current spaces**

**Evaluate and implement processes to increase organizational efficiency and collaboration**





# OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES

**Our Strategic Directions and Priorities represent our strategic goals and areas of focus for the next five years. Strategic Direction 4 of 4:**



## SECURE OUR FISCAL AND OPERATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Evaluate the benefits and risks of further integration between Almonte General Hospital and Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital
- Enhance our focus on opportunities to diversify and maximize our revenue, while being fiscally appropriate
- Strengthen regional collaboration and leadership to support sustainability
- Implement a comprehensive recruitment strategy to continue attracting top talent
- Engage our communities for future success of our organization





# THANK YOU

**Together, we are building a stronger future  
for care in our communities.**

We sincerely thank everyone who contributed to this Plan and who supports our organization. We look forward to the opportunities the future holds for us, and appreciate your ongoing dedication and support. We will share updates on our progress each year.



**Almonte General Hospital**

75 Spring Street Almonte, ON K0A 1A0



**Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital**

211 Lake Ave East Carleton Place, ON K7C 1J4



**Fairview Manor**

75 Spring Street Almonte, ON K0A 1A0



**Lanark County Paramedic Service**

84 Lorne Street Smiths Falls, ON K7A 3K8



**[www.mrha.ca](http://www.mrha.ca)**