

Board of Directors Meeting (Open Session)

MINUTES OF MEETING

February 3, 2026

Marotta Family Hospital

	Oct 7/2025	Dec 2/2025	Feb 3/2026			
Simon Akinsulie (ex-officio)	✓	✓	✓			
Ray Archer	✓	✓	✓			
Kevin Chan (ex-officio)	✓	✓	✓			
Richard Ellis	✓	R	✓			
Susanne Flett	✓	✓	✓			
Jennifer Frendo (ex-officio)	-	✓	✓			
Lynn Guerriero (ex-officio)	✓	✓	✓			
Jennifer Li	✓	✓	✓			
Mary Maida	✓	✓	R			
Chris McGrath	✓	R	✓			
John McKinley	✓	✓	✓			
Marylee O'Neill, Chair	✓	✓	✓			
Charlie Rate	✓	✓	✓			
Anthony Reitboeck	✓	R	✓			
Carmen Rossiter	✓	✓	✓			
Shelley Tapp	✓	✓	✓			
Janice Thomson	✓	✓	R			
Staff and Guests in Attendance:						
Harpreet Bassi	✓	✓	✓			
Linda Boich	✓	✓	✓			
Anthony DiCaita	✓	✓	✓			
Sonali Kohli	✓	✓	✓			
Heather Paterson	✓	✓	✓			
Fiona Peacefull	✓	✓	✓			

Guests:

- Andrea Scott
- Rachel Stuchberry
- Amanda Westwood-Smith

1. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Marylee O'Neill welcomed fellow Directors, staff and guests and called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1.1 Land Acknowledgement

Jennifer Li led the Board in a Land Acknowledgement, including a personal reflection.

1.2 Quorum

There was quorum and the meeting was properly constituted for the transaction of business.

1.3 Approval of the Agenda

MOTION B26-01:

It was MOVED by J. Li and SECONDED by J. McKinley that the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the Open Session Agenda for the February 3, 2026 Meeting as presented. CARRIED.

1.4 Declaration of Conflicts

There were no conflicts declared with the subject matter contained within the agenda.

1.5 Chair's Comments

The Chair reminded the Board of the upcoming Foundation event on February 28th and encouraged Directors to complete the Four Seasons of Reconciliation training module. The Board acknowledged the tremendous progress that has been achieved as demonstrated through scorecard metrics.

1.6 Patient Story

The patient story was deferred.

2. EDUCATION

2.1 Ontario Health atHome

Amanda Westwood-Smith, Ontario Health atHome Vice President, Patient Services, attended this portion of the meeting to provide the Board with an overview of the role of Ontario Health atHome, as well as provincial hospital system performance data. The partnership ensures that there is early involvement in discharge planning with a streamlined process. This intersection is particularly critical to support not only patient care transitions but also the patient experience. In addition it is an important factor in avoiding admission and reducing readmission to hospital.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION B26-02:

It was MOVED by J. Li and SECONDED by C. Rossiter that the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the Consent Agenda for the February 3, 2026 Open Session meeting as presented, including the motions listed below:

- **That the Minutes of the previous Open Session Meeting be approved as presented.**
- **That, on the recommendation of the Governance and People Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the Board Evaluation Policy amendments and the Board evaluation process timeline and instruments as presented.**
- **That, on the recommendation of the Governance and People Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the following policies as amended:
Niagara Health Naming Policy, In Camera session with the CEO and Forum without Management, Role of the Board-Vice Chair and Role of the Committee Chair.
CARRIED.**

4. LEADERSHIP REPORTS

4.1 Report of the President and CEO

Lynn Guerriero provided highlights from the February 2026 President and CEO report with a focus on the following:

- Support is being provided to the Kashechewan First Nation's evacuees. Funding has been secured for additional nursing and Indigenous Health and Reconciliation resources.
- The impact on hospital activity as a result of the recent code silver in the Welland community was discussed. A debrief is planned to discuss the response and identify any lessons learned from the event.

- The final structural concrete pour at the South Niagara Hospital was completed on time and the final beam is expected to be installed at the end of February. The project remains on schedule.
- An overview was provided of several new donor room name assignments at the Marotta Family and South Niagara Hospitals.

4.2 **Report of the Chief of Staff and Chair of MAC**

Dr. Kevin Chan provided highlights from the February 2026 Chief of Staff and Medical Advisory Committee (MAC) report with a focus on flu season activity and response, successes in recruitment efforts to address professional staff health human resource gaps and the initiatives being implemented on two units at the Marotta Family Hospital to improve patient flow.

4.2.1 **Heads of Service – Medicine and Nephrology**

Following a Call of Interest and interview process, Dr. Vernon Clifton has been selected for the Marotta Family Hospital Head of Service role. The Medical Advisory Committee approved this appointment on January 7, 2026.

MOTION B26-03:

It was MOVED by S. Tapp and SECONDED by S. Flett that on the recommendation of the Medical Advisory Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the appointment of Dr. Vernon Clifton as the Head of Service for Medicine at the Marotta Family Hospital effective February 4, 2026. CARRIED.

The Chief of Medicine has recommended an extension to the current term for the Head of Service of Nephrology to allow for succession planning with members of the Nephrology Service. The Medical Advisory Committee approved this appointment extension on January 7, 2026.

MOTION B26-04:

It was MOVED by R. Ellis and SECONDED by R. Archer that on the recommendation of the Medical Advisory Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves an additional 2 years to the current term of Dr. Danny Lagrotteria as the Head of Service of Nephrology, ending February 1, 2028. CARRIED.

4.3 **Niagara Health Foundation**

Andrea Scott and Rachel Stuchberry provided the Board with an update focused on the upcoming sold out Gala, as well as the Annual Giving Program, Staff Lottery and Welland Elimination Draw. The most recent Foundation Board meeting included presentations from two clinical programs to demonstrate the positive impact of the support provided. It was noted that the Foundation is currently in the process of actively recruiting two additional Board Members.

4. **STANDING ITEMS FOR DECISION/DISCUSSION**

5.1 **SAFE AND QUALITY CARE**

5.1.1 **Report of the Quality and Patient Experience Committee**

i. **2026/27 Quality Improvement Plan Indicators and Targets**

The Excellent Care for All Act, 2010 (ECFAA) requires that all hospitals develop and publicly post a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) by April 1st each year. The Committee reviewed the recommended indicators and targets which will be used to develop the full plan to be presented for review and approval in March. There are five indicators recommended, three of which are carried forward from the 2025/26 Plan. It was confirmed that there are no mandatory indicators required for the 2026/27 submission.

MOTION B26-05:

It was MOVED by J. McKinley and SECONDED by S. Flett that on the recommendation of the Quality and Patient Experience Committee, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the proposed 2026/27 Quality Improvement Plan Indicators and targets as presented. CARRIED.

The Board was provided with highlights of the many innovative initiatives presented by the Medicine, Critical Care and Cardiology programs, including:

- The Niagara Health atHome program which is providing a bundled approach to wrap services around patients who require additional community supports at discharge.
- The SCOPE program which has been successful in providing supports to primary care physicians in the community.
- The Critical Care Response Team that is providing early intervention when clinical deterioration is present.
- The patient experience initiatives such as the ICU Three Wishes Project and Survivorship Series.
- The innovative and less invasive testing available to support early detection of coronary disease.

5.2 GOVERNANCE OVERSIGHT

5.2.1 Report of the Governance and People Committee

i. Chief of Anaesthesia Appointment

The Board previously approved an extension to Dr. Duvall's term as Chief of Anesthesia, expiring on March 31, 2026 or sooner, dependent upon the appointment of a successor. The recruitment process is now complete and the Medical Advisory Committee has approved the Selection Committee's recommended candidate. Dr. Chau has been a member of Niagara Health's Professional Staff since 2014 and has held leadership positions since 2017.

MOTION B26-06:

It was MOVED by A. Reitboeck and SECONDED by C. McGrath that on the recommendation of the Governance and People and Medical Advisory Committees, having considered the information provided in accordance with the processes set out in the Niagara Health System By-Law Number 2, Professional Staff By-Law and the Public Hospitals Act, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the appointment of Dr. Edmond Chau as Chief of Anaesthesia for a five year term, effective February 16, 2026. CARRIED.

ii. Chief of Oncology Interim Appointment

The Board was previously notified that the Chief of Oncology would not be seeking a second term leadership appointment. In January, the Medical Advisory Committee endorsed the recommendation that Dr. Don Duvall be appointed as the interim Chief of Oncology while the recruitment process for a permanent successor unfolds. The Board will have the opportunity to review the Selection Committee membership in March.

MOTION B26-07:

It was MOVED by A. Reitboeck and SECONDED by C. Rossiter that on the recommendation of the Governance and People and Medical Advisory Committees, the Niagara Health System Board of Directors approves the appointment of Dr. Don Duvall as Interim Chief of Oncology effective February 16, 2026. CARRIED.

The Governance and People Committee also had the opportunity to review the Professional Staff Human Resource Plan, including the different categories available for appointment as well as demographic data on the current workforce. A targeted recruitment strategy has been launched aimed specifically at attracting physicians to Niagara Health. A number of new General Internal Medicine (GIM) physicians will be joining the professional staff in the summer of 2026. The onboarding program has been refreshed and strengthened to ensure that new physicians are provided with a robust orientation. It is anticipated that the upcoming planning cycle will include population health considerations.

7. MOTION TO ADJOURN OPEN SESSION

There being no further business, the Open Session adjourned at 5:35p.m.

MOTION B26-08:

It was MOVED by J. McKinley that the Niagara Health System Board of Directors Open Session Meeting of February 3, 2026 be adjourned. CARRIED.

Recording Secretary: D. Dube

Marylee O'Neill, Chair