

Corporate Structure Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is the Supervisor recommending moving to a single corporation?

A single corporation will allow the hospital to function efficiently and ensure it can be responsive to the health care needs of the community. After a detailed review of the previous corporate structure at Chatham-Kent Health Alliance (CKHA) the Supervisor concluded that the old model had been unsuccessful in providing effective governance for the hospital system. This flawed structure led to each board focussing on individual campuses rather than a system of care for all of Chatham-Kent.

The Supervisor reviewed the corporate structures of many other hospital organizations and found that several who had multi-corporations transitioned to a single structure. This evolution never took place at CKHA. In order to move the organization forward, it is in the best interest of service delivery and accountability to move to a single corporation that is skills based.

The benefits and value of a skills based board, which is now the standard model in Ontario Healthcare, is clear in the Provincial Auditor's examination of Ontario Hospital governance. This will be the direction of the CKHA corporate structure.

2. What happens to St Joseph's Hospital?

Today's announcement of a single corporation will lead to the end of Hospital sponsorship by the Sisters of St. Joseph in the Chatham-Kent region through the St. Joseph's Health Care Society. In noting this change, it is important to specifically acknowledge the care, dedication and compassion of the Sisters of St. Joseph for the over 100 years of service they have provided to the community and thank them for this tremendous contribution. The Sisters and St Joseph's Hospital filled important gaps in the web of services in the community and for this they must be recognized for this contribution.

3. How will the needs of the Sydenham District Hospital be met if there is no longer a Sydenham specific Board?

We are confident the needs of Sydenham will be met by this new Board. The past year has proven that starting with a clear vision of a two-site hospital system must be a fundamental building block for the Alliance to ensure the needs of both the Wallaceburg and Chatham sites are considered. In the past year, the Wallaceburg site has seen reinvestments and service improvements including the addition of respiratory services and new medical specialty clinics. This represents more service improvement in Wallaceburg than any of the Boards over the past 20 years were able to achieve. In addition, a boiler plant replacement project for Wallaceburg has already been approved by the LHIN and detailed facility renewal plans are currently under LHIN review.

This two-site vision, which anchors the service enhancement investments and redevelopment plans, will be written into the [Corporate Objects](#) contained within the Letters Patent for the Alliance.

Board recruitment and selection will focus on selecting individuals from the entire community of Chatham-Kent including Wallaceburg who have the right skills and experience to govern a hospital.

4. Is the Board elected?

Directors will be elected by the Board using a [skills-based screen](#) to make sure that the “best” and most qualified candidates are entrusted with the complex job of governing a hospital system. We need the best people with the right skills to serve in these roles while striving to reflect the diversity of the Chatham-Kent community.

The role of governing a hospital system is a very complex and requires a lot of responsibility and risk. An error in the Boardroom can become a risk at the bedside and jeopardize patient care. A board member has an extremely important role and a skills-based process ensures that directors are delivering the best governance for the organization.

The right skills in these roles are important. Previously, not all of the Alliance Boards used a skills-based approach. This led to a number of governance gaps including, the Board Quality Committee not meeting for almost a year. That’s not something we can have happen again. With a skills-based board, governance level oversight of quality of care, patient safety, workplace health and fiscal sustainability will be strengthened.

5. Why is the Alliance not dissolved and made into two separate organizations?

All of the Alliance operations including the staff and physicians have been integrated for almost 20 years. The only distinct piece that has not been merged is the governance model. Taking the existing organization apart would weaken the hospital system and services for the community.

6. How will Board members be selected?

Assuming all approvals are in place for the new structure, the Supervisor will lead the process for recruitment and selection of the Board with the support of a Nominations and Selection Committee. This is not a CEO or staff led process. It will be a competency based process overseen by an experienced selection committee of citizen representatives with experience in governance and leadership.

The Search Committee would be supported by the same executive search firm that conducted the CEO search and supported Medical Advisory Committee searches. Advertisements would be posted seeking interested and appropriately skilled candidates to develop a long list of potential directors. The selection process will include community wide advertisements, interviews, and reference checks. This robust process will ensure that the best possible candidates are selected for the new Board.

7. Will this change have any impact on staff?

The staff of the Alliance already functions in an integrated fashion, caring for and serving patients. The Terms and Conditions of employment for Alliance staff will not change as a result of this integration.