



# DEAN'S REPORT

TO THE **NOSM** BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**DR. SARITA VERMA**, DEAN, PRESIDENT, AND CEO

## "Finding my voice"

Since my last report to the Board, a key focus has been to consolidate the input from multiple sources on the development for the next strategic plan for NOSM. I continue to travel, ask, listen, and learn with our northern communities, and work closely with our Indigenous and Francophone stakeholders to maintain ongoing communication. I wrapped up the "Bonds Across Our Borders" Project between The Northern Ontario School of Medicine and the Center of American Indian and Minority Health (CAIMH). I also began outreach fundraising activities and began developing a list of "Dean's Priorities" for Advancement. In addition to significant consultations on the strategic plan, three other priorities have been a key focus since my last report: ***the onboarding of NOSM's new senior academic leaders and the search for additional positions in the academic team; the finalization of accreditation documents and submission to Canadian Committee on Accreditation of Medical Schools; and managing risk associated with the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (or 2019-nCoV).***

The first 8 months have been a 'momentum-building transition' phase which has included:

1. Establishing trust with NOSM stakeholders, partners, communities and the leadership team.
  - Identifying the strengths and the composition of the senior leadership team.
  - Assessing the current business model and its implications on the School's performance and sustainability.
  - Understanding expectations of the Governance and establishing strategic directions accordingly.
  - Engaging communities and partners across Northern Ontario in collaboration.
  - Listening, learning and understanding critical issues that affect NOSM's relationship with Indigenous communities
  
2. Establishing credibility in a culture that has only known one leader.
  - Reaching out to multiple stakeholders and listening carefully to their perspectives, histories, reference points, and points of view;
  - Completing an environmental scan of the current and future challenges of NOSM for the next 10 years;
  - Confirming the right initial set of priorities for the Dean, President and CEO with regular check-ins both internally and externally.

3. Ensuring seamless business continuity in core NOSM functions during transition period:

- Ensuring the medical school functions and prepares for its next accreditation;
- Dealing with Projects and Initiatives that are already underway;
- Furthering the research agenda, community engagement and financial stability;
- Creating a culture of collaborative, team decision making;
- Seeking solutions to the budget challenges.

The next phase “leading change” will take place over the next 6 months and will focus on aligning NOSM’s operation with its new strategic direction.

Key activities will be to:

- Define NOSM’s vision and communicate it effectively.
- Get Board endorsement of the next 5-year Strategic Plan, implementation tactics and performance measures.
- Renew existing partnerships and rekindle community engagement;
- Establish new major partnerships in collaborative projects in Research, Data and Health Systems Performance.

As a new Dean, President and CEO stepping into the role with a compelling change agenda, realistically calibrating the pace and scope of the role across a huge geography, has been challenging. As the roadmap becomes clearer especially as I explore views on the strategic plan, it will be critically important to allocate sufficient time and proper resources to cascade the change throughout the organization. Finding the critical point where logic and human dynamics intersect has been a learning curve. Experiencing NOSM’s culture, understanding its key partners, recognizing the skills of its leadership team along with identifying major priorities for the Board, for the communities and for the School will all factor in to the next “leading change” phase.

The list of Dean engagements and ongoing commitments are summarized in the table below and in the attachment.

The Board has approved 5 performance goals for this first year up to May 2020 and the report on each goal is below.

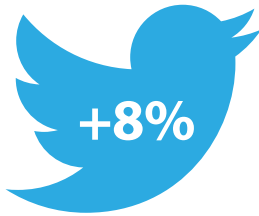
Goal	Timeline	Tactics	Outcomes
<p><b>Transition as the new Dean, President and CEO</b></p> <p><b>Recruitment of Leadership Team</b></p>	<p>Nov 27 2019 – March 18 2020</p>	<p>Public Presentations and Representational Events</p> <p>See Appendix 1 Dean’s Engagement Report</p> <p>Blog and Video:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feb. 25 - Why should we attend to physicians’ wellbeing? (Guest Blog: Dr. Cervin)</li> <li>• Feb. 11- Is climate change really a human health emergency?</li> <li>• Jan. 28 - Vive les communautés francophones ici à l’EMNO : On y va avec le bon travail</li> <li>• Jan. 14 - Food, glorious food! In all its forms of consumerism, is food insecurity real?</li> <li>• Dec. 17 - Thank you. Merci. Miigwetch. (Holiday Movies)</li> <li>• Dec. 3 - Top Ten Survival Tips: NOSM’s recipe for self-care</li> <li>• Nov. 21- Now is the time. We are counting on you. Contribute to NOSM’s next Strategic Plan.</li> </ul> <p>Portfolio reviews completed</p> <p>Strategic Reorganization of reports underway</p> <p>2 searches underway for AD EI and AD FA.</p> <p>Advancement Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• November 14: 40 under 40 Gala in Sudbury</li> <li>• December 4: Arrell Foundation</li> <li>• December 4: Dr. Evan Fraser, U of Guelph, Director of Aero Food Institute</li> <li>• January 16: Sault Ste. Marie “Bring a Doctor Home”</li> <li>• January 25: Chinese New Year Celebration, Thunder Bay</li> <li>• January 29: TD Bank - The Ready Commitment</li> <li>• January 29: Fred Cass- long time donor</li> <li>• January 30: MD Financial</li> <li>• February 13: Call to thank Stan and Judy Strato for \$155,455 donation to support UME learners.</li> <li>• February 18th Met with CMA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established Name and Brand</li> <li>• Change management through consistent and accessible communication</li> <li>• PRESENCE on both campuses</li> <li>• New Associate Dean Research, Innovation and International Relations,</li> <li>• Senior Directors, Postgraduate Medical Education and Health Sciences Programs, Undergraduate Medical Education;</li> <li>• New Senior Associate Dean and Special Advisor to the Dean started January 1 2020.</li> <li>• Hire of new Assistant Dean Physician Workforce Strategy to begin March 1 2020; Promotion of Assistant to Associate Dean Continuing Education and Professional Development and creation of Council of Education Deans under Vice Dean Academic.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Cultivating Northern Ontario Relationships with an emphasis on Indigenous Communities</b></p>	<p>Nov 27 2019 – March 18 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach to all key partners Laurentian University, Lakehead University, Health Sciences North (HSN), Thunder Bay Regional Health Science Centre (TBRHSC),</li> <li>• Francophone Reference Group (FRG)</li> <li>• Indigenous Reference Group (IRG)</li> <li>• Council of Elders (COE)</li> <li>• Provincial Territorial Organizations (PTO)</li> <li>• Travel to Communities Appendix 2</li> </ul> <p>Quick stats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 Communities visited - Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Little Current, Mindemoya, Wikwemikong, Espanola, Blind River, Sault Ste Marie, Wawa, Dryden, Duluth, Iroquois Falls</li> <li>• Met with 7 First Nation Health Authorities and/or Service Providers</li> </ul>	<p>Reestablished strategic commitment to Northern Ontario</p> <p>Clarification of roles of IRG, co-chairs, Council of Elders, Indigenous Health Committee of Academic Council, Indigenous Affairs Unit (IAU) and IAU Director, Creation of Indigenous Health Education Committee at Academic Council</p> <p>Healing Meeting November 25,2020</p> <p>Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• November 6th Dean's presentation to– Grand Assembly Anishnabek Nation (40 chiefs)</li> <li>• November 7th Dean's presentation at Health Care Summit at College Boreal</li> <li>• November 9th Strategic Plan Presentation at LEG Lead Retreat</li> <li>• November 25th Strategic Plan presentation at TBRHSC M.A.C</li> <li>• November 27th Strategic Plan Session at NOSM Board of Directors</li> <li>• November 29th NAN</li> <li>• December 6th – Presentation to CAIMH University of Minnesota in Duluth</li> <li>• December 30th NOSM Student Council</li> <li>• December 9th – Strategic Plan Session with NOSM Staff – Thunder Bay Campus</li> <li>• December 12th – Strategic Plan Session with NOSM Staff – Sudbury Campus</li> <li>• December 12th Strategic Plan Presentation to NOSM Academic Council January 14th Strategic Plan Session to NOSM Management Group</li> <li>• January 15th Strategic Plan Session with NOSM Executive Group</li> <li>• January 18th Strategic Plan Session with Francophone Reference Group</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Advancing External and Government Relations for Growth and Sustainability</b></p>	<p>Nov 27 2019 – March 18 2020</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ongoing advocacy efforts: Meetings with Ontario Ministers of Health (MOH) and Colleges and Universities (CU), Associate Minister Mental Health and Addictions; Meetings with political representatives, MPs, MPPs</li> <li>2. Ongoing outreach to Municipalities</li> <li>3. Work with/support local Ontario Health Teams (OHT) as they emerge in Northern Ontario Working with Academic Health Science Centres for integration, as well as with the Northern Teaching Hospitals Council</li> <li>4. Meetings and representation with the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC), Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine (COFM), Canadian Medical Association (CMA), Ontario Medical Association (OMA), and FEDNOR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AFMC Board meetings: October 28th – 29th and February 3rd and 4th</li> <li>• AFMC Future of Admissions in Canada Think Tank (FACTT) - December 20th Sept 30th &amp; Jan 21st</li> <li>• COFM Dean’s Meetings: Sept 16th, Oct 21st, Jan 30th Feb 19th March 9th</li> <li>• Meeting with Executive Director of FEDNOR and his team- January 9th</li> <li>• Chair for Advanced Health Care Technology - Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continued messaging on our application for MTCU’s Northern Sustainability Fund (re: tuition reduction)</li> <li>2. Meetings with key individuals/ representatives of municipal associations</li> <li>3. Discussions with Algoma University regarding the joint collaborative proposal from Algoma University, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Sault Area Hospital and Shingwauk Kinooomaage Gamig on a Ontario Mental Health and Addictions Research and Training Institute.</li> <li>4. Representing the academic voice in the governance/health. services at new “integrated” (OHT) organizations across Northern Ontario.</li> <li>5. Near completion of bilateral affiliation agreements.</li> <li>6. Building relationships across Northern Teaching Hospitals Council.</li> <li>7. Advocacy for national and provincial strategies on HHR, Indigenous Health, Social Accountability, Northern Health, Climate Change, Wellness.</li> <li>8. Preparations for next phase of Alternate Funding Plan (NOAMA) negotiations.</li> <li>9. Outreach to Weeneebayko Area Health Authorities and Queen’s University about further collaboration in James Bay.</li> <li>10. Participation on national and provincial committees: including as Chair of Ministry of Economic Development</li> </ol>
<p><b>Achieving Transition of the Strategic Plan</b></p>	<p>Nov 27 2019 – March 18 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Plan Process developed. Secretariat, Core team and Steering Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Strategic Plan underway. See detailed presentation to the Board and attachments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Completing UME Accreditation and IQAP</b></p>	<p>Nov 27 2019 – March 18 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive review of status of all accreditation documents and standards requiring attention</li> <li>• Documents filed January 20 2020</li> <li>• Medical School Self Study Completed</li> <li>• Preparatory Meetings underway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications Plan set in motion.</li> <li>• Managing high-risk areas such as human- rights complaints or legal issues.</li> </ul>

# DEAN ENGAGEMENT



**Increased Twitter followers to 1578**

(11/08/2019 - 03/03/2020)

## DECEMBER 2019 SUMMARY

Tweets	Impressions	Profile visits	Mentions	New followers
36	43.5K	435	55	21

## JANUARY 2020 SUMMARY

Tweets	Impressions	Profile visits	Mentions	New followers
46	47.6K	514	60	38

## FEBRUARY 2020 SUMMARY

Tweets	Impressions	Profile visits	Mentions	New followers
30	42.9K	495	162	33

**17**

**blogs**

03/03/2020

**3636  
Subscribers**

**Open Rate  
28%**

vs. 14.5% Industry Avg.

**Click Rate  
2.1%**

vs. 1.6% Industry Avg.

**10**

**Donor  
Meetings**

**12**

**Community  
visits**

**6**

**Presentations**

## 20 Strategic Plan Presentations

- LEG Lead Retreat
- TBRHSC M.A.C
- NOSM Board of Directors
- NOSM Staff – Thunder Bay Campus
- NOSM Staff – Sudbury Campus
- NOSM Academic Council
- NOSM Management Group
- NOSM Executive Group
- Francophone Reference Group
- Francophone Town hall session in Thunder Bay
- Indigenous Strategic Plan Session
- HSN M.A.C
- HSN Board of Directors
- Lakehead Board of Directors
- Plan Francophone Town hall session in Sudbury
- Afternoon - Strategic Plan Town hall session in Sudbury
- Evening - Strategic Plan Town hall session in Sudbury
- Social Accountability Group in Sudbury
- Social Accountability Group in Thunder Bay
- Afternoon - Strategic Plan Town hall session in Thunder Bay

## Presentations

- NAN
- CAIMU University of Minnesota in Duluth
- NOSM Student Council
- MIC's LEG Educational Conference
- Grand Assembly Anishnabek Nation
- Health Care Summit College Boreal

## Communities Visited

Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Little Current, Mindemoya, Wikwemikong, Espanola, Blind River, Sault Ste Marie, Wawa, Dryden, Duluth, Iroquois Falls

### Sudbury's first-ever health care summit

key messages was one delivered by Doctor Sarita Verma, who is the new Dean of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine...



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News

## PEI looks to Northern ON for solution to doctor shortage

November 1, 2019

As healthcare wait times continue to rise for residents of Prince Edward Island, provincial leaders are looking to Northern Ontario's successful implementation of a medical school as a solution to their problem. CBC reports that nearly 10% of PEI's population, 15,215 people, are currently on the patient registry awaiting a family doctor. Like PEI today, Northern Ontario experienced a similar shortage of family doctors in the early 2000s until the Northern Ontario School of Medicine was created. NOSM Dean Sarita Verma stated that although medical schools are not easy to create, she believes that "the idea of a medical school on P.E.I. is a good one because the island faces a lot of the same issues northern Ontario was dealing with." CBC (PEI)

## Med School Needs More Students, Dean Says; Cap 'Makes Me Crazy,' Dr. Sarita Verma Tells Sudbury Chamber Of Commerce

Sudbury Star (Print Edition) Jim Moodie  
Oct 24, 2019 • 1:29 PM

It's been 15 years since the Northern Ontario School of Medicine came into being, and a decade since its first class of physicians graduated.

While its mission remains essentially the same - to produce high-quality doctors, many of whom will hopefully choose to remain in the North - there is now an opportunity to take the organization to another level, according to the organization's new dean.

"We're trying to rekindle excitement around NOSM and bring us back to those heady days where everybody thought it was a great idea," said Dr. Sarita Verma, at a luncheon address hosted by the Sudbury Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday. "Well, it's still a great idea, but what do the next 10 to 15 years look like?" The school is embarking on a strategic plan, she

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### Board Retreat Held in Thunder Bay Focuses on NOSM's Strategic Direction

by **annatalk** on December 2, 2019

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) held a two-day Board of Directors meeting in Thunder Bay on November 27 and 28, 2019.

On the first day, the Board attended the Lakehead University Report to the Community where they learned about annual achievements and viewed interactive research exhibits. The afternoon was spent in a workshop discussing the future of social accountability and what the School's role could be moving forward. This session was facilitated by Drs. Alexander Answell, Erin Cameron and Joseph LeBlanc.

The second day of meetings focused on the School's strategic priorities with Dr. Sarita Verma, Dean, President and CEO along with facilitator Erik Lackhan led a strategic planning workshop. The Board discussed long-term directions and desires for NOSM, contributed to an environmental scan by identifying issues, opportunities and challenges for the School, and discussed priorities over the next five years.

The day concluded with an open meeting of the Board of Directors, the Financial report for the months ending September 30, 2019, the Occupational Health & Safety Policy, and the Joint Benefits Committee recommendations for Health and Dental benefits effective October 1, 2019 were approved.

### Would a P.E.I. medical school help keep doctors on the Island? It worked in northern Ontario

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'Medical schools are not easy commodities to produce'

Tony Davis - CBC News - Posted: Oct 30, 2019 8:00 PM AT | Last Updated: October 30, 2019

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Board Retreat Held in Thunder Bay Focuses on NOSM's Strategic Direction

Press Release

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## First female dean of Northern medical school hits the ground running



Sarita Verma began her duties as dean of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine on July 1, 2019.

"This job is challenging," she declares. "It's actually impossible for a single person to address all the expectations. Collaborations and partnerships will be key to achieving a long-term sustainable plan for Northern Ontario and I'm learning that every community is different."

With a campus at both Laurentian and Lakehead universities and a vast region that encompasses dozens of communities, including small towns and First Nations, she's expected to drop in everywhere and that NOSM should be all things to all people.

Three months into the biggest challenge of her career, Sarita Verma is learning that "the North" is more than just the cities of Sudbury and Thunder Bay.

"There's quite a learning curve, with people, places and cultures," acknowledges the dean, president and CEO of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM).

Her five-year term began in July and Sarita is already putting in the miles, travelling regularly between the two campuses, meeting students and staff, and becoming acquainted with the communities in between, ranging from Indigenous to francophone, along with a sprinkling of Italians and Firms.

"To be honest, living in the south the North seemed to be one culture," she says. "But you discover it's ten cultures. Even town to town there are differences, ceremony and protocols."

"You realize how rich the Canadian experience is here. I'm just beginning to experience the tip of it."

In a way, NOSM's first female dean perfectly mirrors the diversity of the region she now serves. Her parents were east Indian and she was born... among

The kids were in their teens and Sarita joined her brother in high school, integrating without much fuss.

"It's a testament to Canadian culture that, at that time anyway, it was a very open, warm environment," she says of those formative years. "I had little experience with negativity until I entered the academic career of medicine."

Before medicine, however, there was law. She graduated from the University of Ottawa in 1981 and joined the foreign service. She took short postings in New York City. Inspired by Stephen Lewis and his wife Michele Landsberg, she went into humanitarian work, assisting the United Nations in famine-ravaged Ethiopia and Sudan. It opened her eyes -- in a way she did not expect.

"My intention was to return to some form of international diplomatic work," she recalls. "But the more you work in these places the more you realize you're more effective in other areas. They didn't need an international lawyer there. What they needed was physicians."

The way to make a difference, she realized, was not negotiating contracts; it was delivering immunization or nutrition programs.