



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release August 17, 2026

Update on Planning the Future of Healthcare in Our Communities

The Board of Directors of the North Shore Health Network (NSHN) would like to provide an update on ongoing efforts to ensure sustainable, high-quality healthcare services for the communities we serve.

North Shore Health Network is a single healthcare organization comprised of three sites located in Blind River, Thessalon and Richards Landing. To support informed decision-making about healthcare services across NSHN, the Board initiated a review several months ago of the infrastructure needs at all three sites. This work is examining facility requirements at each location and will help inform future planning and capital investment priorities across the organization.

As part of this broader review, a key issue that has been under discussion for several years is the long-term delivery of emergency department services in Central Algoma. The facilities in Thessalon and Richards Landing face infrastructure and service limitations required to support a modern emergency department. Recognizing these challenges, local physicians approached NSHN to explore the possibility of developing a single-site hospital for the Central Algoma area that could provide fully equipped emergency services and a limited number of short-stay acute care beds.

On July 15, 2026, area physicians hosted a public meeting at Central Algoma Secondary School to discuss this concept. The meeting was well attended, and participants expressed strong support for exploring options that would strengthen healthcare services and better meet the needs of residents currently served by the Thessalon and Richards Landing – Matthews sites.

The Board believes this concept warrants further study and has endorsed the initiation of the formal planning process. As the governing body of NSHN, the Board is responsible for leading and overseeing this work on behalf of the entire organization and the communities it serves. Hospital redevelopment is a complex, multi-stage undertaking that requires extensive analysis, stakeholder engagement, and rigorous planning. The Ministry of Health oversees this process and must approve each stage before a project can proceed. While beginning the planning process does not guarantee approval or construction of a new facility, it is an important first step in evaluating future healthcare needs and determining the best path forward.

Throughout this process, the Board is committed to ensuring meaningful engagement with residents, patients, staff, providers, Indigenous communities, municipal leaders, and community partners. Given the significance of this work, input from communities across the NSHN catchment area will be critical to informing future decisions and ensuring local perspectives help shape the path forward.

Should a single-site hospital in Central Algoma emerge as the preferred option for residents currently served by the Thessalon and Richards Landing-Matthews sites, NSHN will work with local communities, healthcare

partners, and government stakeholders to advocate for and explore opportunities that support continued access to healthcare services in those communities.

NSHN is committed to keeping communities informed throughout both the organization-wide infrastructure review and the Central Algoma planning process. A dedicated webpage has been established at **www.nshn.care/future**, where residents can access updates, background information, and details regarding future engagement opportunities.

The Board values the leadership shown by Dr. Crawford and his colleagues in bringing this issue forward and thanks the many residents and community partners who have contributed to the discussion. We look forward to continuing this work together as we plan for the future of healthcare at North Shore Health Network.

Sincerely,

Lisa Bell-Murray
Chair, Board of Directors
North Shore Health Network

-30-

For further information, contact:
Melanie Kubatlija,
Chief Communications Officer
mkubatlija@nshn.care