




2025 PROGRESS REPORT

INTEGRATED HEALTH INITIATIVE 2025 PROGRESS REPORT

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Bachelor of Health student, Evin Ali, tours the construction site of the new Health and Social Innovation Centre at UNB Saint John.



“The IHI is proof of what we can achieve, with your partnership and support.”

I often say and firmly believe that the world needs more UNB. The Integrated Health Initiative, or IHI, is an outstanding example of what our University and its friends and allies have achieved in 2024-25.

In April, the Integrated Health Initiative proudly hosted its second annual research symposium. The Honourable John Dornan (MBA'16), Minister of Health, shared his insightful perspective on the future of the health sector in New Brunswick during his keynote address. The symposium highlighted the innovative research being conducted by UNB's Bachelor of Health students and underscored their potential to drive meaningful health-care reform in New Brunswick.

This event was an important public acknowledgement of the increasingly large role that the IHI is playing in health education and collaborative research. Our University is establishing the foundations of a new health ecosystem that will serve the ongoing and emerging needs of New Brunswick communities.

The IHI aims to foster collaborative efforts between our researchers, students and dedicated partners as part of UNB's Grand Challenges initiative. As you will see in the following pages, the IHI is already advancing multidisciplinary efforts spanning our research, teaching and community engagement functions to foster meaningful partnerships and opportunities that create impactful, lasting change.

Our University's focus on responding to grand challenges, such as the challenge of building healthy communities, illustrates our commitment to addressing some of the major issues affecting our province – issues that demand fresh perspectives, interdisciplinary approaches and innovative thinking.

The IHI is proof of what we can achieve, with your partnership and support.

With kind regards,

Paul J. Mazerolle
President and Vice Chancellor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Photos above: Students, faculty, staff and collaborators are all a part of a vibrant Integrated Health Initiative.

"The IHI is no longer just an idea - it is a growing network of people and programs working together across institutions."



The momentum behind the Integrated Health Initiative (IHI) has never been stronger. What began as a bold vision has now become a powerful engine for change - one that is already making a measurable impact on health education, research and innovation in New Brunswick.

Over the past year, we have moved from aspiration to action. New collaborations have taken root, exciting research is underway and plans for interdisciplinary programming are progressing rapidly. Across the Saint John campus, there is a growing energy - driven by our shared commitment to reshaping how we educate health professionals, how we conduct research and how we partner to serve the needs of our communities.

The IHI is no longer just an idea - it is a growing network of people and programs working together across institutions. Located at the heart of an emerging health innovation corridor - anchored by UNB, NBCC Allied Health, Dalhousie Medicine NB, and the Saint John Regional Hospital - we are building something truly unique for the Atlantic region and beyond.

Already, we are seeing the impact: new partnerships are taking shape, research networks are expanding and innovative pilot programs are being launched. These are the building blocks of a more responsive, resilient and future-ready health system.

The momentum is undeniable. We are attracting interest from across the region and the country, positioning New Brunswick as a hub of health innovation. The work we are doing today will shape the health professionals, policies, and breakthroughs of tomorrow.

Thank you to all who are contributing to this journey. Together, we are not just imagining change - we are making it happen.

Warm regards,

Petra Hauf
Provost and Vice President Academic

PROVOST'S MESSAGE



Bachelor of Health students at UNB Saint John.

THE IHI: FROM VISION TO REALITY

The IHI is an example of UNB's strategic vision in action, serving the public good and tackling one of society's grand challenges.



INTERDISCIPLINARY
EDUCATION



INTEGRATED
RESEARCH



TECHNICAL & SOCIAL
INNOVATION



KNOWLEDGE
TRANSFER



STATE-OF-THE-ART INFRASTRUCTURE

Philanthropic support will be instrumental to our success as we continue to build a landscape where health research shapes tomorrow's solutions, where top talent gathers and where economic growth thrives alongside improved health outcomes.

Located on UNB's Saint John campus at the heart of a thriving health sector which includes New Brunswick Community College's Allied Health education program, Dalhousie Medicine NB's physician education program, and the Saint John Regional Hospital, the IHI serves as an ecosystem where interdisciplinary health education, cutting-edge research and ground-breaking innovation converge.

We are launching new academic programs and engaging existing healthcare workers in creating the skillsets to lead change in health and health-related sectors.

We are bringing world-class researchers to Saint John and consolidating UNB's research strengths, creating new networks and forming new partnerships.

We are building the foundational infrastructure of a growing campus that is anchored in the needs of our community, province and nation and which has the potential to spur significant private-sector innovation.

JOIN US IN SHAPING A FUTURE WHERE HEALTH KNOWS NO BOUNDS!



A rendering of the quad entrance of the Health and Social Innovation Centre.



IHI faculty members Jenn Woodland, Lisa Best, Maggie Brown and Tony Reiman.

INTERDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION



The Bachelor of Health program at UNB's Saint John campus is unique in Eastern Canada, offering an interdisciplinary curriculum that integrates arts, business and science. It offers students an unparalleled understanding of the health sector, preparing them for roles as administrators, policymakers, and informed citizens. Students interested in research can also complete an honours degree.

As of May 2025, two full four-year Bachelor of Health cohorts have graduated, fulfilling our vision to create a talent pipeline ready to shape the future of the health sector. We can confirm that more than 200 students are enrolled for 2025-26. We have already secured new scholarships for students of this new academic program, including a Saint John Hospital Foundation scholarship for

society and health majors that focuses on experiential education. Creating additional scholarships and bursaries for bachelor of health students will encourage more young people to consider careers in the health and social innovation sector.

The education pillar of IHI is driven by a dedicated team of faculty members and researchers, each bringing their expertise to the initiative's bachelor of health, and soon, its master's of health. Among them are Dr. Tony Reiman, Canadian Cancer Society research chair; Dr. Jennifer Woodland, an expert in experimental psychology with a focus on multisensory perception with over 10 years of experience in health research; Dr. Maggie Brown, assistant professor of mathematics and statistics whose expertise in statistical analysis and healthcare analytics is fundamental to health research and public health initiatives; Dr. Ziba Vaghri research chair in Child Rights and Child Development.

Dr. Lisa Best, dean of integrated health for the University of New Brunswick's IHI, leads this academic team and has played a key role in developing the IHI's unique degree program and certificate options.

"Education within IHI is about equipping students to tackle real-world health challenges head-on," Best said, offering participants the opportunity to change the face of health care in New Brunswick and beyond.

IHI strongly emphasizes experiential learning, as illustrated by one of its newest initiatives: a practicum course that offers students real-world exposure while earning academic credits.

"We developed a practicum for which bachelor of health students will receive three credit hours. We have our first group of students taking that class now," she said.

"We plan to expand these opportunities with a co-op program that will give students practical experience in health care settings, similar to business co-op programs."

Over the course of 10 weeks, practicum students work with a community partner to do health-focused work. In fall 2025, we expect 15 students to complete practicums in health.

The IHI has also provided a springboard for UNB to explore new educational partnerships with national leaders in the health sector. The IHI's Bachelor of Health program has entered into a strategic alliance with the Canadian College of Health Leaders (CCHL), which will enable bachelor of health students to work towards their Certified Health Executive designation. This certification provides support for lifelong learning in health services leadership; assistance with career advancement; peer recognition; and serves as an essential career designation.

UNB and the University of Waterloo have signed a memorandum of understanding to explore partnering with the intention of establishing a school of optometry in Saint John to serve Atlantic Canada.

The University of Waterloo is currently the only English-language school of optometry in Canada, while the only French-language program is offered at Université de Montreal in Quebec. This creates significant barriers for many qualified candidates in Atlantic Canada.

"This collaboration exemplifies the transformative potential of our Integrated Health Initiative," said Dr. Petra Hauf, Provost and Vice President Academic at UNB. "Partnerships like this enable us to expand health education and services, creating meaningful impact for our communities."

INTEGRATED HEALTH INITIATIVE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM



Students and faculty at the annual IHI Research Symposium on campus.

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

Collaborative research that has a direct impact upon New Brunswick, Canada and the world is at the heart of IHI. In 2024-25, we extended the reach of our research through the creation of new research clusters, began translating research knowledge to the public sector, and celebrated a gift that will consolidate the activities of our research chairs in the Health and Social Innovation Centre (HSIC).

Dr. Ziba Vaghri, associate professor and IHI Research Chair in Child Development & Child Rights for Child Health, celebrated a milestone on June 3 with the publication of her book *Children's Rights-Based Indicators*. This reference guide developed as part of the United Nations' GlobalChild platform project provides scholars, human rights professionals and others with an inventory of what the indicators are, how to calculate them, and what they reflect. The GlobalChild indicators are used in monitoring, assessing and reporting on how jurisdictions around the world are respecting the promises made under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Children's Rights-Based Indicators is published by Springer, and is available as a free, open access eBook or for purchase in print.

Thanks to the generous support of the Shannon family and Shannex, UNB is seeking applicants to fill the Shannon Family Research Chair in Aging Transitions. The Shannon Chair and associated Shannon Aging Transitions Lab will research, conceptualize and publicize best practices, innovative methodologies and the impact of transitions in aging through a variety of lenses, with an aim to improve the level of care and patient experience. The chair's focus on wellness and conditions at the community level that

support wellness throughout the aging process will create new avenues for partnership with public, private, and community stakeholders.

Additional chairs are in development in areas such as mental health, digital transformation of health care, public health and health policy and health economics. When the Health and Social Innovation Centre opens, all of these new research chairs and their associated labs will be housed on a single floor as the Pannell Centre for Integrated Health Research, thanks to a generous leadership gift from the Pannell family. The Pannell Centre is expected to drive positive change in the areas of public health and health policy, children's health, aging in the community, equitable access to digital health tools and more efficient management in health care.



TECHNICAL AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

The scale of technical and social innovation in a society can enhance or limit its growth. The IHI has become a force for fostering technical and social innovation in New Brunswick, through innovative and community based educational programs that bring the skills and insights of today's technical advances to the leaders of tomorrow.

The principal vehicle for this technical and social innovation is the IHI's Promise Partnership afterschool peer-to-peer mentoring and tutoring program, which began in Saint John more than a decade ago. Today, the Promise Partnership is helping k-12 students in two cities to build their digital literacy skills through activities like learning code through walking, talking robots; creating and exploring digital worlds and much more—all while forming lasting connections with mentors from the University of New Brunswick and the New Brunswick Community College.

This year, the Promise Partnership expanded its reach to Moncton thanks to support from the McKenna Institute, and donors like the Wes Armour Foundation and the Joyce Family Foundation. This expansion marked a significant milestone in the program's mission to bridge educational gaps and enhance digital literacy among youth throughout the province. Since 2010, the Promise Partnership has been dedicated to supporting youth in Saint John by pairing UNB student mentors with students from priority schools around the city.

The program addresses educational disparities caused by economic challenges while providing post-secondary students with opportunities for skill development and community engagement. In 2023, a comprehensive needs assessment identified communities in the greater Moncton area with significant academic needs and digital literacy gaps that would benefit from involvement with the Promise Partnership.

These findings, and the proximity to UNB's Moncton-based nursing program and NBCC, with whom the Promise Partnership has formed strong relationships, guided the decision to partner with Birchmount School.

Madison Bell is the Promise Partnership's Moncton program expansion coordinator. Having previously worked with the nursing program at UNB's Moncton site, she is thrilled to continue supporting the program by offering students hands-on experiential learning opportunities.

"It is incredibly exciting to bring the Promise Partnership to Moncton," Bell said. "We have seen such positive impacts in Saint John. I am confident we will experience success here, addressing the unique needs in the Moncton area."



"The enthusiasm from the school and the kids is contagious," Bell said. "We are not just teaching digital skills; we are building confidence and fostering a love for learning."

The program offers after-school digital literacy mentorship for grades three to five, with hands-on activities like coding, 3D printing and robotics. It also offers culturally sensitive snacks aimed at fostering food security and building community.

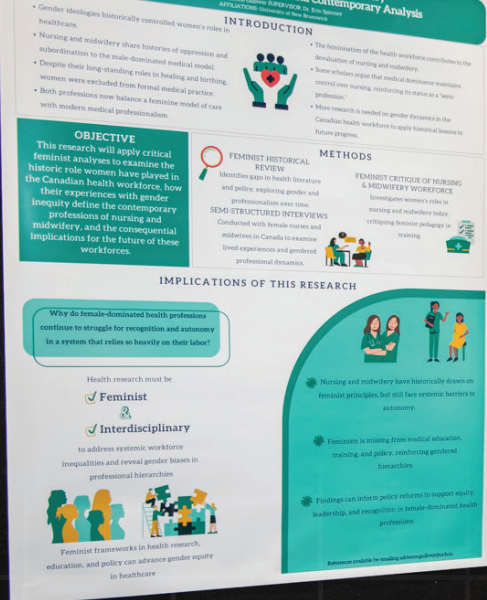
"The Promise Partnership's efforts in boosting digital literacy are vital for the future of our young people. By extending its reach to Moncton, we are making sure that more students in New Brunswick gain the essential skills they need to thrive in a digital world from an early stage."

Back in Saint John, the Promise Partnership team, led by Catherine Vanderburgh Kerr, managing director and Kate Saeedi, curriculum developer, are driving the development of a digital literacy assessment tool informed by extensive research and collaboration with experts like Dr. Matt McGuire, the inaugural McKenna Fellow in Digital Education, and a UNB faculty of education assistant professor.

The Promise Partnership received an additional boost this year through the generous support of the Jane and Michael Wilson Family Foundation Inc. Their investment will help the IHI grow Promise Partnership programs in the greater Moncton area and expand our reach to additional rural locations.



Promise Partnership student and UNB student mentor.



KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND COMMERCIALIZATION

A core goal of the IHI is to accelerate knowledge transfer and the commercialization of health innovation by building upon the current health ecosystem where public and private partners can engage with students and researchers to create new businesses, products and services. This vision

will position New Brunswick as a national hub for health solutions in Atlantic Canada.

With proximity to key health partners, innovators and entrepreneurs can work alongside UNB students, research scientists and clinicians. This synergistic environment will foster discussions between people who otherwise would never run into each other, leading to innovations.

The IHI's second annual research symposium on April 4 and 5 was an example of this community-building dynamic in action. The event highlighted the inspiring research being conducted by UNB students who are poised to be future health leaders and reformers while introducing them to movers and shakers in New Brunswick's health industries.

The symposium, offered through the continued support of AstraZeneca Canada Inc., began with a series of graduate student presentations that showcased diverse and innovative research topics, including the effects of internet gaming disorder, the inclusion of happiness and wellbeing in education and how dieticians can help address food insecurity.

Photo above: IHI Research Symposium presentation.



The honours research presentations continued to impress, with topics ranging from targeting the Hippo Pathway in multiple myeloma to exploring public coverage for outpatient drugs in the treatment of ductal carcinoma across Canada.

Another highlight of the weekend was a keynote address by New Brunswick Health Minister, Hon. Dr. John Dornan (MBA'16), who highlighted the shift towards collaborative practice models to address the shortage of healthcare providers in the province. He explained that integrating various healthcare professionals, such as social workers, nurse practitioners and pharmacists, into teams can significantly increase patient capacity. Dr. Dornan encouraged students to take advantage of opportunities and to be innovative in their approach to healthcare.

"There are real opportunities for graduating students to work in government and public health sectors where they can contribute to policymaking," Dr. Dornan said. "It's important to prepare for these roles."

Saturday's sessions focused on transformations and innovations in health, with presentations addressing issues such as

improving barriers to endometriosis diagnosis, enhancing youth mental health and addressing overcrowding in New Brunswick emergency departments.

The symposium also featured a career connections breakfast, providing an opportunity for over 70 students to network with mentors who discussed various careers in health.

Research and practicum poster presentations demonstrated the breadth of research being conducted at UNB. Topics included the impact of psychological flexibility on cannabis use behaviors, the role of emotion and anxiety in susceptibility to misinformation and bridging health gaps for newcomer communities.

UNB's Integrated Health Initiative Research Symposium not only showcased the innovative research being conducted by its students but also underscored their potential to drive meaningful healthcare reform in New Brunswick.

As Dr. Dornan aptly put it, "As healthcare students, you are part of the group that generates questions, answers them and applies those answers in our community."



Minister of Health, Hon. John Dornan, at the IHI Research Symposium.

THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL INNOVATION CENTRE

The pulse of progress is most noticeable at the site of the IHI's Health and Social Innovation Centre (HSIC). The 65,000 square foot, three and a half storey building is rapidly taking shape and already looms over the Saint John campus quad.

Since UNB broke ground on the project last year, a host of skilled contracting companies have joined forces to construct the HSIC to green building standards, aiming for the highest LEED certification and a low-carbon footprint. When it is completed, this fully accessible building will supply state-of-the-art space for the IHI's education, research and innovation efforts from a site overlooking the Saint John campus, the Brothers Islands and the scenic Kennebecasis River.

Over the past few months, visitors to the campus have been treated to the sight of the building's hybrid structure, which utilizes a concrete core, a steel frame and mass timber construction to create spaces that offer flexibility to meet future needs while creating a comfortable environment. A geothermal system will provide sustainable heating and cooling in alignment with UNB's Climate Change Action Plan.

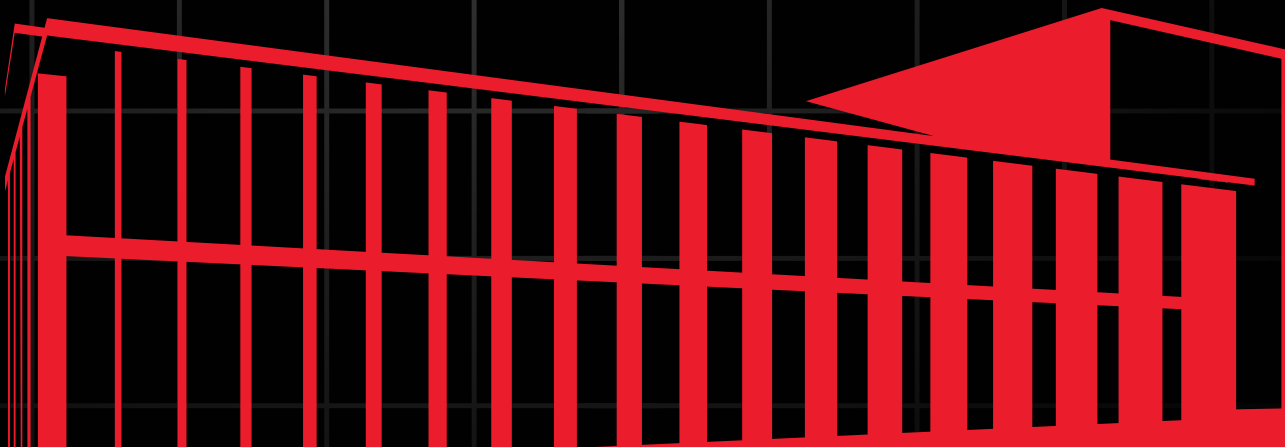
Walking paths, a tunnel system and a ring road will connect the HSIC to the rest of the campus.

The area to the south of the HSIC will honour New Brunswick's Indigenous history and UNB's commitment to reconciliation through a healing garden.

As the construction proceeds, excitement about the HSIC is building, too.

Over the next few months, civil work surrounding the building on all sides will bring earth up to finish-grade levels, start installation of curbs and sidewalks and see the addition of a fire hydrant in the quad. Underground infrastructure upgrades within the quad area will continue, including the addition of a new roof for the existing tunnel system between Hazen Hall and Ganong Hall.

The number of companies involved in bringing this project to fruition is a testament to the HSIC's provincial and regional impact. Contractors include Atlantic Roofers (roof), CNF Mallet (demolition), Controls & Equipment (controls), FCS Flooring & Concrete (concrete finishing and flooring), Lancor Concrete (concrete forming), Mass Timber Services (mass timber), MC Ventilation (HVAC), MQM Quality Manufacturing (structural steel), Nova Millwork (millwork), Ocean Steel (concrete reinforcement), Pomerleau Inc (general contractor), PQM (insulation and joint sealants), Security Electrical





Bachelor of Health student, Evin Ali, tours the construction site of the new Health and Social Innovation Centre at UNB Saint John.

(electrical), Select Mechanical (plumbing and heating), Spectrum Enterprises (earthwork and infrastructure), Strescon (concrete supply), TKE (elevator), Vitre Labereg (aluminum framing, glazing), Vipond (fire suppression) and PQM (wall and door protection and toilet partitions). Corporate, alumni and community partners continue to join our campaign in support

of the HSIC's construction, and naming opportunities in recognition of major gifts are still available.

To make a gift in support of the HSIC, please contact Darren McLeod at (506) 648-5844, or any of the IHI Campaign Cabinet members.



\$63M CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY, PROJECTED COMPLETION: **FALL 2026**

CELEBRATE OUR IHI CAMPAIGN CABINET



LARRY HACHEY

(BBA '87)

is president of Canlease, past chair of the UNB Board of Governors, past president of UNB's Associated Alumni, former president of the UNB Saint John Students' Representative Council, member of the UNB Saint John Alumni Action Team and member of UNB's faculty of management advisory board.



TOM GIBBONS

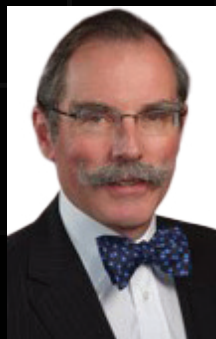
(BSF '83)

is a retired senior portfolio manager and investment advisor at RBC Dominion Securities and the past chair of the UNB Board of Governors. He is also a former member of the UNB Saint John Commons Advisory Committee. In October 2010, Tom received the UNB's Alumni Award of Distinction.



ROXANNE FAIRWEATHER

is a New Brunswick Business Hall of Fame member and co-president and co-owner of Innovatia Inc., a global knowledge management company providing software and services to Fortune 100 and 500 companies. She is a past chair of UNB's Board of Governors and was the second female chair in UNB history.



DANA HANSON

(BSc'70, MD'74, FRCPS Derm, DSc'10)

is a retired dermatologist, former president of the Canadian Medical Association and World Medical Association. Dana has been an advocate for the medical profession and patients provincially, nationally and internationally and is a strong supporter of initiatives focusing on the Social Determinants of Health.



DR. GEOFF FLOOD

(DLitt '16)

is the technology advisory leader of MNP Digital in Atlantic Canada. He is founder and CEO of Parasox Ltd., founder of the Atlantic Big Data Congress, co-founder and former owner of T4G Limited and a past member of the New Brunswick Business Council.



CHARLIE HARLING

ICD.D (BBA '85)

is founder and CEO of Harling Management Group Ltd.; chair of the advisory board for Canadian Health Solutions; a past board member and chair of the governance and nominations committee for the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC), and a founder of the Greater Saint John Economic Council.



BRIAN LOVE

is the president of Field Aerospace Canada. Brian is a growth driven executive with extensive experience in international sales, contract negotiations and business operations. In 2018 he became Chief Commercial Officer of Field Aerospace Global. In July of 2022 he was named president of Field Aerospace Canada.



DR. BRENDAN SHEEHAN, BSC, MD, FRCSC, Dip.Sport.Med. is an orthopaedic sports medicine specialist and an assistant professor with the faculty of medicine at both Dalhousie and Memorial universities. He is integrally involved in the Canadian Orthopaedic Association and is a member of the executive committee for the Arthroscopy Association of Canada.



ROBERT MACKINNON
PhD, FRCGS

is an experienced educator, administrator, and researcher, with Canadian and international post-secondary experience. He recently completed a term as Interim President and Vice-Chancellor of Mount Allison University. Previously, he served as Dean of Arts, Vice-President Saint John, and Professor of Geography at UNB.



JOHN RUNCIE, MM, CCLP
(BA '12)

is the director of commercial development and port facilities for Port Saint John, a former director and chair of the Saint John Arts Centre, a member of the Maritime Economic Development committee for the American Association of Port Authorities and director of the Place Fort La Tour.

OUR TEAM

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