



Chapter 1

Health and Wellness; Internal Services; IWK Health Centre; and Nova Scotia Health Authority: Management and Oversight of Health Sector Information Technology

Overall Conclusions

- The Department of Health and Wellness does not provide effective leadership and direction on information technology (IT) in the health sector
- The four government organizations responsible for IT in the health sector (Department of Health and Wellness; Department of Internal Services; IWK Health Centre; Nova Scotia Health Authority)
 - have not formalized roles and accountabilities
 - do not adequately manage IT risks

Accountability for Information Technology in the Health Sector

The four entities have not finalized key agreements for centralized health sector IT services

- A roles and accountabilities exercise started in 2017 is ongoing as of fall 2018
- An Executive Committee proposed to provide strategic oversight has not met

The health sector does not adequately monitor IT service levels

- Health sector does not ensure that required service levels are met by providers
- Contracts, with one dating back to 1996, have not been reviewed or updated

Managing Information Technology Risks in the Health Sector

The four entities do not have adequate risk management frameworks

- Health and Wellness and Internal Services do not have risk management frameworks
- IWK and Health Authority frameworks have risk identification and mitigation weaknesses

Internal Services and the Health Authority do not have policies requiring IT controls to be monitored

The four entities do not ensure that collective risk to the health sector is adequately managed



Recommendations at a Glance

Recommendation 1.1

The Department of Health and Wellness, Department of Internal Services, IWK Health Centre, and Nova Scotia Health Authority should finalize agreements related to information technology services in the health sector, including the roles and accountabilities of each entity.

Recommendation 1.2

The Department of Health and Wellness, Department of Internal Services, IWK Health Centre, and Nova Scotia Health Authority should evaluate the transition to centralized information technology services, and identify lessons learned which can be applied to future collaborative health sector initiatives.

Recommendation 1.3

The Department of Health and Wellness, IWK Health Centre, and Nova Scotia Health Authority should develop and implement policies for the management of IT service levels, including periodic review of agreements and monitoring of service levels.

Recommendation 1.4

The Department of Health and Wellness, Department of Internal Services, IWK Health Centre, and Nova Scotia Health Authority should develop and implement comprehensive risk management frameworks which include risk management policies, risk registers, a defined risk tolerance, and risk mitigation strategies.

Recommendation 1.5

The Department of Internal Services and Nova Scotia Health Authority should ensure policies are in place to require that IT controls are monitored, results are reported, and deficiencies are managed.

Recommendation 1.6

The Department of Health and Wellness, Department of Internal Services, IWK Health Centre, and Nova Scotia Health Authority should establish a process to assess if IT risks are collectively identified, assessed, and mitigated.