

AVENS: A Community for Seniors

2020 Strategic Plan - At A Glance

Vision

AVENS envisions a future where seniors age well and have choices, where they are connected to a safe and caring community for life.

Mission

AVENS delivers quality services to seniors so they can make choices about how and where they live.

Values

Respect Dignity Collaboration Accountability Integrity

Strategic Priorities

Continue to provide high quality services to AVENS residents.

Demonstrate leadership, partner innovatively and share knowledge, in the development and delivery of senior's services in the NWT.

Proceed with construction and commissioning of more seniors' affordable housing.

Explore, through dialogue with the GNWT, AVENS' future role in the delivery of long-term care.

Begin planning and preparation for the delivery of ageing in place services.



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Strategic Plan Review 2020

Overview

In the fall of 2017, AVENS developed Strategic Plan 2017. A review of the strategic plan was completed summer 2018. This document summarizes a further update to the strategic plan as at August, 2020.

On July 21, 2020, the board of directors of AVENS, along with the AVENS management team, met to discuss its strategic direction moving forward, given changes in the operating landscape, challenges, and opportunities since the strategic plan was written and updated. Participating in the meeting were:

Board:

Marion Lavigne, President
Matt Spence
Debbie DeLancey
Ron Allen (remote)
Lynda Koe
Bronwyn Watters
Sandra Turner

Management team:

Daryl Dolynny, CEO
Randie Salaveria, Housekeeping Supervisor
Steven Nicholas, Maintenance Supervisor
Carol Norwegian, Health & Wellness Supervisor
Maxime Carpenter, Director of Operations
Frances Bower, Director of Care
Sandra Crocker-Walsh, Care Manager
Lawrence Malaque, Food Service Supervisor
Lindsey Dwojak, Director of HR/OHS
Sara Fullerton, Director of Finance

Facilitator:

Leanne Tait

The purpose of exercise was to review AVENS' strategic direction, establish clear direction for AVENS, and set priorities on which to focus moving forward.

Environmental Scan

Since the development of the strategic plan in 2017, many of the same considerations and situations are present in AVENS' operating environment, some of which have evolved. A full environmental scan has been compiled as a separate document. Highlights are summarized below.

Demand for Seniors' Services

The need for seniors services continues to grow as a result of an ageing population, as well as AVENS' long-established reputation for excellence in care. Not only is there a demand for more of the existing services, there is also a growing demand for services for seniors not yet offered in the NWT, such as meal delivery, and other services that could help seniors age in place.

Acuity of Seniors' Needs

Seniors are living longer than ever. As a person ages, their care needs generally increase. As the population ages, not only will there be more seniors requiring services, the services required by that population will become more intense.

AVENS Reputation

AVENS continues to enjoy a strong, positive reputation among its residents, their families, and the community at large, for quality of care. AVENS is sometimes thought to be a government entity, as it delivers services that are delivered, in other communities, by government.

Territorial Admissions Committee (TAC)

The role of TAC is unchanged from 2017. The Admissions Committee continues to be the funnel through which residents enter AVENS. Because of this, AVENS lacks the ability to easily control movement of residents within AVENS' various levels of care as the residents' needs evolve. This puts stress on resident and staff safety, and pressure on AVENS' efficiency and ability to deliver on its standard of quality care.

Funding and Funding Model

The amount of funding provided under a contribution agreement between the GNWT and AVENS is insufficient, meaning that AVENS cannot adequately fund operating budgets. For example, ageing infrastructure does become increasingly expensive to maintain, without sufficient budget to maintain it. The amount AVENS can charge per resident is regulated and is \$800 per month. This model of funding is out of step with costs. The funding issues are deep and complex, with multiple drivers. However, the result is that the contribution agreement with the GNWT does not cover the cost of delivering the services that AVENS delivers.

Relationship with GNWT

While AVENS' relationship with the GNWT has improved since 2017, still offers challenges. AVENS is highly dependent on the GNWT as its primary funder, and this dependency creates an inequitable power dynamic.

Staffing

Staffing continues to be pivotal to AVENS' culture, reputation, and service. Finding, training, and keeping staff continues to be challenging. As the GNWT's "legacy project" — an additional 72 long term care beds in the old Stanton Hospital — comes on stream, this will put additional staffing pressure on AVENS.

In addition to the above, which continue to have significant influence on AVENS' ability to operate effectively, the following aspects of the operating environment are prescient.

Pressure to Expand

Increasing demand for seniors' services, combined with emerging opportunities, are encouraging, and even pressing AVENS to expand. AVENS is currently pursuing its Pavilion project, which would create additional seniors' residences on the AVENS campus. The Stanton legacy project may present an opportunity for AVENS to take on the delivery of additional Long Term Care services in Yellowknife. And AVENS continues to see an opportunity to deliver services that will help seniors age in place and live independently for longer.

Care legislation

Changes are coming to continuing care standards. This has the potential to change AVENS' staffing model and may affect the expectation and processes currently in place. Much is still unknown with respect to changes to care, but the proposed legislation suggests sweeping changes for AVENS' autonomy for operating independently. Additionally, COVID-19 has highlighted significant issues in LTC facilities in some parts of Canada, placing pressure on the federal government to intervene.

Mandate Pressures and Shared Vision

One of the drivers for refreshing AVENS' strategic plan is the lack of a cohesive, or at least a clearly articulated vision with respect to AVENS' direction. The lack of a shared vision regarding what services AVENS should be delivering and to whom keeps AVENS' management team from moving forward effectively.

Ageing Infrastructure

AVENS' bricks and mortar continue to age, and to decline with age. This leads to higher maintenance and operational costs in addition to an inability to keep up with "big fixes" in a timely manner. The Manor needs to be replaced, and while the Stanton Legacy project may provide an opportunity to replace the Manor, no plan is currently in place. Building infrastructure continues to deteriorate due to insufficient funding, increasing the risk of a critical system issue in the facility.

Vision and Mission

One of the key drivers of this strategic update was the need for a clear and agreed direction for AVENS. Vision and Mission articulate that direction and provide clarity for management decision-making.

Vision

AVENS' Vision, as crafted in strategic planning several years ago, and confirmed in 2017 and again in 2018 is:

Seniors have access to a safe and caring community for life.

What AVENS' Vision Means

The following, excerpted from the 2017 strategic plan, describes with more clarity, what this vision means.

AVENS' vision describes the future state we aspire to for seniors in the NWT. Vision is a statement of an ideal future, upon which we set our sights. The vision may never be fully achieved, but it is what we strive for. It acts as our North Star: we take our bearings from it and use it to determine our direction, even if we may never reach it.

...Our ideal future is one where seniors are well-supported. They have access to the level of safety and care that they need and want. They have it within a sense of belonging and community, and it exists for the rest of their lives.

AVENS does not own this vision exclusively. We recognize that there are many partner organizations that also share a similar vision, or whose work supports our vision. [These partners] are stakeholders in that vision, and through their individual mandates, own a piece of that vision. We cannot achieve it alone.

Vision Update 2020

The board and management, in 2020 discussions, articulated and agreed on the conceptual elements that make up AVENS' vision, and while not inconsistent with the prior vision, describes that vision in more detail.

AVENS envisions a future where seniors age well and have choices, where they are connected to a safe and caring community for life.

Mission

AVENS Mission, as it was articulated in the 2017 Strategic Plan was:

AVENS delivers quality services in a safe and respectful manner to support residential living choices for seniors.

What AVENS' Mission Means

The following, excerpted from the 2017 strategic plan, describes with more clarity, what this mission means.

Mission states what we do, for who, and why, in pursuit of our vision.

The piece of the vision that AVENS owns and is reflected in our mission focuses on enabling choices for seniors with respect to where and how they live.

Everything we do is to allow seniors to be able to make choices that work for them, about where and how they live. Whether a senior wants to choose to live independently or be supported in their own home, or needs the supports of assisted living, long term care or dementia care, AVENS' services support that choice and those needs. We work to provide the supports that make those choices possible.

AVENS' mission also describes the nature of our services. The services we provide are focussed on quality over quantity; they are delivered in a way that balances safety of the senior with respect for their choices.

Mission Update 2020

The board and management, in 2020 discussions, articulated and agreed on the conceptual elements that describe AVENS' mission, and while not inconsistent with the prior mission, works to clarify that mission.

AVENS delivers quality services (in a safe, respectful manner) to NWT seniors so they can make lifestyle choices about how and where they live the rest of their lives.

Priorities

AVENS' Mission provides significant range in which to operate and serve seniors. The clarity sought in this strategic plan review is to identify the current priorities; to clarify what types of services AVENS offers and will pursue offering for seniors in aid of its Mission.

Several questions were considered in planning. In light of AVENS current operating environment, and its opportunities and threats:

- Should AVENS continue to provide Long Term Care?
- Should AVENS pursue opportunities arising from the Stanton Legacy Project?
- Should AVENS focus on housing and residential services?
- Should AVENS pursue the delivery of supports for ageing in place?

Barriers and Critical Success Factors

In order to consider AVENS' priorities moving forward, the board and management team engaged in a discussion of the critical success factors and barriers associated with each of the three major service areas it is or could see itself delivering:

- Long Term Care, in particular the Stanton Legacy Project
- Housing expansion, in particular the Pavilion Project
- Supports for ageing in place

Critical success factors (CSFs) are things that need to be put in place to ensure success. CSFs are conditions that must be created.

Barriers are those things that need to be gotten through, around, mitigated, or eliminated in order to succeed.

LTC: Stanton Legacy Project

Critical Success Factors	Barriers
Adequate funding	Operating deficit
Solid and experienced leadership team	Two campuses/decentralized campus
Vision and plan for operation, human resources, etc. Need an 18-month timeline.	Misalignment in standards of care between AVENS and GNWT
Up to date systems/technology; critical mass for operations	Emergency management for temporary relocation of 72 beds
Ability to find and train adequate staff	Fear of losing AVENS "culture" and feel
GNWT commitment to a stable and sustainable funding arrangement.	Trust issues with GNWT
Community and GNWT support	Regulatory environment
Open dialogue with GNWT and partners	Input/collaboration wrt TAC: campus autonomy and decision-making
Sufficient demand for LTC beds	

Housing

Critical Success Factors	Barriers
Adequate stock of various inventory	Community support and understanding of concept
Funding/\$	Court/Ridge: what's next?
Demand	Permitting and time
Wellness options	Site safety due to increased activity
Clear and acceptable admission criteria	

Supports for Ageing in Place

Critical Success Factors	Barriers
GNWT Funding	Lack of program design and plan
Experience and knowledge	Fear of change
Community Support	Legislation uncertainties
Partners: GNWT and NGOs	
Adequate infrastructure, esp kitchen, laundry	
Adequate knowledgeable staff	
Needs assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost analysis - Cost vs benefits - Needs identification - Initial assessment - ROI 	

The following timeline identifies the major milestones over the next several months in each of these three priority areas. Not all milestones are noted, and timing is approximate and subject to change, however, these milestones suggest the chronology to put the critical success factors in place and work toward eliminating the barriers.

	LTC: Legacy Project	Housing: Pavilion	Services: Ageing in Place
Now: Aug-Dec 2020	Start dialogue with NWT	Mortgage application	Research funding options/SEED
	LOI	Special membership meeting to borrow	
		Issue contract	
		LOI	
6-12 mo: Jan - June 2021		Community Consultation	Community consultation
		Permitting	Start kitchen/laundry building
		Foundation	Cost analysis
			Secure concrete funding

			Secure home care services
12-18 Mo: July-Dec 2021	Agreement/buy in with partners		List of services finalized
	Work with AC for training		Complete cost analysis for services
			Work with AC for training
			GNWT Funding
18 – 24 mo: Jan-July 2022	Staffing/training	Application and wait list process	
	Team support and volunteers	Advertise and promote	
		Open Pavilion	