

Chapter 3 eHealth Saskatchewan

1.0 MAIN POINTS

Other than in the following areas, eHealth Saskatchewan had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources. eHealth Saskatchewan needs an adequate service-level agreement for the IT services it provides to the Saskatchewan Health Authority.

Also, eHealth Saskatchewan needs to continue to work towards having an approved and tested IT disaster recovery plan. Without tested systems, eHealth Saskatchewan may not be able to restore critical systems in the event of a disaster. The health sector relies on these systems to deliver and pay for health services in Saskatchewan.

eHealth Saskatchewan's 2017-18 financial statements were reliable. In addition, eHealth Saskatchewan complied with the authorities governing its activities related to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing and investing.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The mandate of eHealth Saskatchewan is to procure, implement, own, operate, and manage the Saskatchewan Electronic Health Record and where appropriate, other health IT systems.^{1,2}

eHealth Saskatchewan provides the Ministry of Health and the newly formed Saskatchewan Health Authority (made up of the 12 former regional health authorities) with certain critical IT services, and operates a data centre. eHealth Saskatchewan is the Saskatchewan health sector's primary disaster recovery provider for IT services.

In addition, eHealth manages Saskatchewan's vital statistics registry and health registrations.^{3,4}

2.1 Financial Overview

Figure 1 – Revenues and Expenses by Major Type

	Budget 2017-18	Actual 2017-18
	(in millions)	
Grant from the Ministry of Health	\$ 78.0	\$ 77.8
Other Revenues	22.2	19.7

¹ An electronic health record is a private, lifetime record of an individual's medical information, providing health care professionals with immediate access to a patient's test results, past treatments, and medication.

² Order in Council 734/2010 issued under *The Crown Corporations Act, 1993*.

³ The vital statistics registry registers all births, marriages, deaths, stillbirths, legal name changes, and changes of sex designation that occur in Saskatchewan.

⁴ Health registrations register new Saskatchewan residents for provincial health coverage and maintain the registry of residents who are eligible for benefits. eHealth Saskatchewan issues health services cards to residents approved for Saskatchewan basic health coverage.



	Budget 2017-18	Actual 2017-18
Total Revenue	<u>100.2</u>	<u>97.5</u>
Operational and Other Expenses	94.8	82.8
Amortization	<u>19.0</u>	<u>13.0</u>
Total Expense	<u>113.8</u>	<u>95.8</u>
Annual Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>\$ (13.6)</u>	<u>\$ 1.7</u>

Source: eHealth Saskatchewan 2017-18 financial statements.

3.0 AUDIT CONCLUSIONS

In our opinion, for the year ended March 31, 2018:

- **eHealth Saskatchewan had effective rules and procedures to safeguard public resources except for the matters described in this chapter**
- **eHealth Saskatchewan complied with the following authorities governing its activities related to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing, and investing:**

eHealth Saskatchewan's governing Orders in Council
The Crown Corporations Act, 1993
The Financial Administration Act, 1993
The Executive Government Administration Act
The Vital Statistics Act, 2009
 Regulations and Orders in Council issued pursuant to the above legislation

- **eHealth Saskatchewan had reliable financial statements**

We used standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook – Assurance* (including CSAE 3001) to conduct our audit. We used the control framework published by CPA Canada to make our judgments about the effectiveness of eHealth Saskatchewan's controls. The control framework defines control as comprising elements of an organization that, taken together, support people in the achievement of an organization's objectives.

We focused our audit efforts on the adequacy of user access, change management, and recovery processes for key financial IT applications; and the accuracy and reasonableness of significant estimates including accrued vacation liabilities and amortization.

4.0 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Adequate Service-Level Agreement Needed

eHealth Saskatchewan does not have an adequate service-level agreement with the Saskatchewan Health Authority for the IT services it provides.

IT is an integral part of delivering and managing healthcare services (e.g., lab systems).

As of January 2017, the Minister of Health directed eHealth Saskatchewan to consolidate, into a single service, IT services that the Saskatchewan Health Authority, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, and 3sHealth previously provided. Consequently, during 2017-18, the Authority moved the majority of its IT systems into eHealth Saskatchewan's data centre. The Authority expects to migrate its remaining IT systems into eHealth Saskatchewan in 2018-19 (e.g., IT systems at the former Regina Qu'Appelle Regional Health Authority).

On December 4, 2017, the Authority signed an interim operating agreement with eHealth Saskatchewan that was in effect for the period up to June 4, 2018. The agreement included an expectation to develop jointly an interim-period plan. This plan was to detail the IT services eHealth is to provide to the Authority along with IT governance processes, risk assessments, human resource plans, and technology and security plans. As of June 2018, this plan was not complete and remained under development.

Adequate service-level agreements make it clear what type of service must be provided, when, and at what cost. They outline in detail:

- Services to be provided (e.g., help desk services, server maintenance, frequency of applying patches)
- Service availability requirements (e.g., the percentage of time networks will be available)
- Service delivery targets (e.g., timeframes for creating and removing user accounts)
- Security and disaster recovery services
- Incident management processes (e.g., in the event of a data security breach)

Without an adequate service-level agreement, there is a risk that eHealth Saskatchewan is not meeting the Authority's IT service needs.

1. **We recommend that eHealth Saskatchewan sign an adequate service-level agreement with the Saskatchewan Health Authority.**

4.2 Disaster Recovery Plan Testing Not Complete

We recommended that eHealth Saskatchewan have an approved and tested disaster recovery plan for systems and data. (2007 Report – Volume 3; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 8, 2008)

Status – Partially Implemented

As of March 31, 2018, while eHealth Saskatchewan had completed its business continuity plan (which encompasses its IT disaster recovery plan), it had not completed detailed disaster recovery plans nor conducted testing of those plans for its critical IT systems. It has identified that it has 39 critical IT systems.

During 2017-18, eHealth Saskatchewan did not make progress on completing any additional detailed recovery plans nor testing them. In 2016-17, eHealth Saskatchewan created detailed disaster recovery plans for 4 of its 39 critical IT systems.



As of March 31, 2018, eHealth Saskatchewan had identified the need to hire a Business Continuity Plan and Disaster Recovery Co-ordinator. The co-ordinator's job will be to complete and test the detailed recovery plans developed for eHealth Saskatchewan and its clients.

Without tested plans, eHealth Saskatchewan, the Ministry of Health, and the Saskatchewan Health Authority may not be able to restore their critical IT systems and data (such as the Personal Health Registration System, Provincial Lab Systems) in the event of a disaster. These entities rely on the availability of those systems to deliver and pay for health services.