

Leadership Team Report

September 2020



MISSION MOMENT

"It is offered in grateful thanks for the wonderful care our father received in his final days on the 3rd and 4th floors at St. Joseph's Hospital. We will not forget the kindness that was shown to all of us at a very difficult time. We have made a donation to St. Joseph's Foundation of Thunder Bay that we hope will help the most excellent work that your organization does in this community."

Family, St. Joseph's Hospital



As we advance our vision of becoming a leader in client-centred care, we plan through the lens of Quality, Safety and Risk. Our **Strategic Plan 2016-2020** will focus on four key Strategic Directions:

Here for Our Clients

We will address unmet needs through our programs and services

Here for Our Partners

We will collaboratively define our role in the provision of care for our communities

Here for Our People

We will work to advance our culture and continue our caring mission with our staff and volunteers

Here for Our Future

We will plan for continued financial sustainability

SPECIAL COVID-19 PANDEMIC REPORT

Our Leadership Team Report looks somewhat different this month - we felt it important to update the Board specifically on activities associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. At our September meeting, the Board heard from Leadership Team with respect to St. Joseph's Care Group's response to the pandemic from March 2020 to present. The September 2020 Leadership Team Report focuses on current and future initiatives and actions that are being taken to continue to be here for our clients, our people, our partners and our future, as we work through the pandemic. Next month, we will resume regular reporting on strategic initiatives as per usual practice.

It is important to note that St. Joseph's Care Group is constantly reviewing practices and process changes using a risk framework as the pandemic continues. In the event COVID-19 specific process changes are required into the foreseeable future, we will work to integrate them into our regular operations. The Incident Management System Committee continues to meet 1-2 times per week to conduct these assessments and make 'real time' changes.

HERE FOR OUR

Clients

Essential Visitors & Leaves of Absence

In compliance with provincial Directives and guidance from Public Health, we will continue to balance client wellbeing with risk to the health of clients and staff through rigorous monitoring of a number of factors including the prevalence of COVID-19 and the availability of personal protective equipment to safely permit essential visitors in all settings. For clients at end-of-life, Essential Visits were maintained even when other in-person visits were paused. Virtual or televisits continue, with the full support of families who have chosen not to visit in-person due to their concerns about potential risk of exposure to themselves or their loved one. There is some level of confidence to begin to offer clients leaves of absence, where required, using the required safety measures and risk assessment.

Resuming Outpatient Service Volumes

Outpatient services continued across all sectors, with priority clients receiving in-person services with a goal of avoiding poor health outcomes (e.g.: post-stroke, complex wounds, mental health crises). Innovative service delivery practices were adopted, leveraging technology, and some of those practices remain in place, for example, COPD clinics where there is reluctance to return to a healthcare environment, or where clients need access to care in a way that respects the new demands on their lives, such as a day treatment/virtual service model for programs at Sister Margaret Smith Centre. Increasing access to in-person services continues, with appropriate infection control and physical distancing practices in place. Plans have been made to further ramp up or ramp down outpatient services safely, based on factors including prevalence of COVID-19, availability of personal protective equipment, and the resuming of elective surgery.

Isolation/Illness Shelter

"Stay safe, stay home" is not possible for those experiencing homelessness or those who are under housed. Our 'Getting Appropriate Personal and Professional Supports' (GAPPS) Team continues to provide medical services to clients housed in the Isolation Shelter, which presently has up to 30 beds, for anyone awaiting test results for, or has tested positive for COVID-19. Clients receive a range of supports through partnership, including access to managed alcohol programs and addiction services. Experience has shown that, for clients who previously had not envisioned a future that included things like having secure housing, we will continue to connect them with the right supports – such as The Lodge on Dawson – to help them realize their vision of wellness and wellbeing.

HERE FOR OUR

Partners

Alternate Level of Care/Long-Term Care

The usual admission criteria were eased to avoid clients recently identified for long-term care from staying in acute care settings. As a result, in June, St. Joseph's Hospital was given a 1A Crisis Designation to assist with system flow as long-term care admissions (which had been temporarily paused by Directive) resumed. Hogarth Riverview Manor is currently admitting an average of six residents per week. The Provincial Directive allows for no more than two residents per room in long-term care, a condition that has affected new admissions and readmission from hospital, particularly for Bethammi Nursing Home.

Plans are in place to allow for the opening of additional beds should there be a Wave 2 COVID-19 surge and demand. Strong partnerships with acute care, community support services, and long-term care continues to enable agile and timely responsiveness to changes in system capacity and client flow.

HERE FOR OUR

People

Safeguarding the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Supply

To make sure that an adequate supply of PPE is maintained, St. Joseph's Care Group carefully monitors the availability of equipment on hand and via provincial stocks. A number of pilot programs resulted in more effective stewardship including goggle reprocessing, and the distribution of cloth masks to non-clinical staff. Currently, a pilot program is in place for the storage, use, collection and sanitizing of cloth gowns in hospital and long-term care.

Recruitment and Orientation

St. Joseph's Care Group must continue to maintain sufficient staffing, and to do so during the pandemic, technology was leveraged for virtual recruitments and online new employee orientation. Over 100 people were recruited between March and August 2020. This month, we welcomed students from post-secondary environments for placement and preceptorships because we recognize the importance of growing our next generation of healthcare professionals. We are unwavering in our commitment to maintaining adequate staffing now and in future both through recruitment and through partnership in education.

Maintaining Human Resources

With the ramping up of outpatient services, redeployed staff have for the most part, returned to their home positions. The Redeployment Centre's monitoring and processes continue to ensure the best use of available resources. Staff have and continue to face challenges with child or dependent care and the reduced or lack of available supports or spaces in the community. On an individual basis, we seek to accommodate in many ways, including modified hours where possible. The restriction of staff movement between long-term care homes remains.

Online Supports

Through technology, staff are able to access education and training safely and on-demand. The Behavioural Sciences Centre is providing Employee and Family Assistance through telephone and virtual services, with in-person services as appropriate.

HERE FOR OUR

Future

Improving Access to Withdrawal Management

A joint initiative between Balmoral Centre and TBRHSC to improve access to withdrawal management services will soon be underway. TBRHSC has had to decrease emergency department (ER) capacity due to COVID-19 infection control measures, and the overall system continues to face demand/capacity pressures. This initiative will ensure medically-supervised withdrawal management is consistently available at Balmoral Centre and will free up ER space.

Technology as an Enabler

Many gains were made as a direct result of having to quickly deploy virtual services to meet client need when in-person services were severely limited. St. Joseph's Care Group will continue to leverage existing and pursue opportunities to further integrate technologies into the 'new normal' of service delivery.