

## Mission Moment

Nanaandawe'ewin, the Traditional Healing Program, was asked to provide cultural services to a client receiving end-of-life care at St. Joseph's Hospital. Family members staying at the client's bedside were supported with daily visits and smudging from the Cultural Practitioner. As the client's condition progressed, the family became anxious. The Cultural Practitioner shared Indigenous teachings surrounding death and dying and provided ceremony and spiritual offerings to support their loved ones end-of-life journey and beyond. Not long after the client passed away, one of the family members came to the hospital to see the Cultural Practitioner to share how grateful they were for the teachings and shared how their grief was alleviated in a good way, which they owed to their new-found understanding of Indigenous teachings regarding the continuity of life beyond death.

Submitted by N'doo'owe Binesi



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 2020-2024 will focus on four key Strategic Priorities:

### Here for Our Clients

To address unmet needs through the provision of quality services.

### Here for Our Partners

To transform the healthcare system.

### Here for Our People

To support staff, physicians and volunteers to live our values.

### Here for Our Future

To ensure continued organizational sustainability.

## Here for Our Clients

### Community Stroke Rehabilitation Program Scalability Assessment

Returning home from the hospital is a challenge for stroke survivors and their care partners. Many stroke survivors require ongoing rehabilitation in the community to support their continued recovery and re-integration to life after stroke. A recent study led by McMaster University researchers tested the Transitional Care Stroke Intervention in two community stroke rehabilitation programs in Ontario, and found that clients who received the intervention in addition to usual stroke care reported improved physical function, stroke self-management and patient experience, compared to clients who received usual stroke care alone.

In this study, researchers at McMaster are working with Ontario Health (CorHealth) to assess the scalability of (readiness to expand) the Transitional Care Stroke Intervention to reach more people who are recovering from stroke in Ontario. The Outpatient Neurology Interprofessional Team at St. Joseph's Hospital has agreed to participate in this research, being part of a working group of stroke care providers (e.g., occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech-language pathologists, etc.), program leaders, persons with lived experience with stroke, care partners, the research team, and representatives from Ontario Health (CorHealth). The results of the study inform community stroke rehabilitation in our Region and across Ontario.

## Indigenous Traditional Fire Teachings with Sister Margaret Smith Centre Live-In Treatment Groups

The Cultural Practitioners of Nanaandawe'ewin Traditional Healing Program provide Traditional Healing Programs to the Live-In Treatment programs at Sister Margaret Smith Centre. Cultural Practitioner Andrew Nahwegahbow shared his gift of knowledge on fire teaching with the Men's and Youth groups. Participants learned about fire teachings and how they pertain to traditional roles that men carry within Anishinaabe culture. Andrew provided a demonstration of how to start fire using the flint and striker and then provided an opportunity to each of the participants to try it out themselves. As participants made their attempts to light the fire, the Cultural Practitioner observed the positive qualities of patience, determination, focus and confidence. Participants learned about the spirit of fire as well and how, through our creation stories, all people are given a fire inside representing our life and spirit. They discussed how Indigenous worldview understands alcohol and drug use as something that dims our inner light. The teaching that participants left with was that, by participating in healing activities, they can brighten their inner fire.

## Supporting Tenants with Loss and Loneliness during the Holidays

While many think of joy and warmth during the holidays, for some it is a challenging time. Seniors living in our supportive housing units relate well to Elvis Presley's "Blue Christmas, so Client Counselors and the Client and Family Engagement Lead organized Blue Christmas events for the tenants of PR Cook and Sister Leila Greco apartments. The events celebrated loved ones who had passed away in the previous year, and created space to recognize and acknowledge those who are struggling with the pain of loss as well as those who may be estranged or isolated.



## Voluntary Integration for Addiction Continuum of Care

On December 13, 2023, Ontario Health approved the proposed voluntary integration between Crossroads Centre Inc. and St. Joseph's Care Group (SJCG). Our two organizations have a long history of partnership and collaboration, and together we have the best combination of dedication, shared values and commitment to our clients, employees and partners. This voluntary integration formalizes our relationship, with Crossroads Centre becoming part of the continuum of mental health and addiction services offered by SJCG. Service delivery will be enhanced by:

- Ensuring existing services are maintained while increasing the ability to meet the need for stabilization and longer-term recovery support;
- Increasing access to addiction counselling and clinical services for addiction and mental health recovery; and
- Facilitating seamless transitions and faster connection to different services and levels of care to create a continuum of care for clients as their needs change.

Between now and March 31, 2024, we will be formalizing the integration of services and smooth transition of operations with no disruption to client care. Crossroads Centre and SJCG are committed to being as transparent as possible and will provide regular updates to staff, clients and partners as we proceed.



## Volunteer Training

St. Joseph's Care Group volunteers are an integral part of creating an environment that is culturally safe. Volunteer Services and N'doo'owe Binesi collaborated to offer *Repairing the Sacred Circle: An Indigenous Cultural Awareness and Education Primer* training to volunteers. Ensuring our volunteers have the skills, knowledge and attitudes to engage in more effective and respectful ways with Indigenous clients is an important step to providing people-centered care. In December, three people attended the inaugural volunteer session led by N'doo'owe Binesi. It was well received by the volunteers and more sessions will take place in 2024.

## Successful Grant Funding for Post-Doctoral Fellow

In partnership with Lakehead University, the Centre for Applied Health Research (CAHR) will receive \$45,000 in funding from the Mitacs Accelerate grant. This grant provides funding and internship options for graduate students to gain hands-on experience at partner organizations seeking highly skilled research talent. The CAHR is currently recruiting for a two-year, full-time post-doctoral fellow to conduct research into the development of a care partner tool to measure compassionate care from the perspective of residents. This work will support a host of activities to enhance the delivery of compassionate and high-quality care to individuals residing in long-term care settings.



## Northern Ontario Psychology Internship Consortium Accreditation Renewal

St. Joseph's Care Group was notified that the accreditation status of the Northern Ontario Psychology Internship Consortium has been reaffirmed through 2026-2027 when the next self-study is due for submission to the Canadian Psychological Association. The Consortium, which has been in place since 2009, supports psychology residents for a one-year term, preparing them for their post-doctoral supervised practice in psychology through rotations in a variety of settings across Northwestern Ontario.

The Northern Ontario Psychology Internship Consortium is one of six consortium sites in Canada, offering training opportunities in a wide variety of clinical settings including school, hospital, community, health care teams and private practices settings across the lifespan of their term. For St. Joseph's Care Group and Northwestern Ontario, it directly translates to attracting new staff by growing the next generation of professionals while increasing capacity for care.

## Strategic Plan – Staff Engagement on Our Refreshed Mission, Vision & Values

In summer 2023, work began on the development of our next Strategic Plan. More than 900 people shared their thoughts, experiences, and hopes for St. Joseph's Care Group through online surveys, focus groups and interviews. We heard that our Mission, Vision & Values had not been updated in some time and that it would make sense to revisit them to ensure they continue to reflect what we do, why we do it, and how we do it.

With direction from our Board, Open House sessions were held at 8 sites across St. Joseph's Care Group to hear from our staff firsthand what still resonates in our current Mission, Vision & Values, and where opportunity exists to reflect our work and organization as it is today. An online survey was also circulated, both to enable anyone who could not attend in person to give their input, and for anyone that did attend in person to have time to reflect and add any additional thoughts.

Santis Health analyzed and themed hundreds of insights from 356 staff members. Using those themes, the Leadership Team prepared an initial draft Mission, Vision & Values that was shared with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. On February 10, 2024, a session was held with the Leadership Team and our Board of Directors to finalize our new Mission, Vision & Values.