

Mission Moment



I recently spent an afternoon baking cupcakes with Katherine, one of my clients. Baking is always a fun and tasty way to spend time together, and when Katherine mentioned that she had three boxes of cake mix that she was eager to use up, I couldn't resist the opportunity to help her create something special.

Katherine, who is known for her kindness and thoughtfulness, decided to spread the joy by sharing her cupcakes with everyone in her building, and the smiles on people's faces when they received a cupcake were truly priceless. It was a heartwarming moment that highlighted Katherine's generosity and the genuine connections we try to create in our community.

This simple act of kindness served as a reminder of the joy that can come from small gestures and the impact of sharing moments together.

Submitted by Jessica, a Community Support Assistant at Pioneer Court

Drive High-Quality People-Centred Care

Expanding St. Joseph's Care Group's Quality Program

St. Joseph's Care Group (SJCG) is expanding and evolving our Quality program. It is a continuation of a journey that started in 2020 with the implementation of the Quality program in long-term care. To date, over 4,500 improvement tickets have been completed across Hogarth Riverview Manor and Bethammi Nursing Home. Through that experience, we are evolving our approach based on lessons learned and gradually bringing the updated program to all SJCG sites.

The Quality program's first expansion is in Rehabilitative Care beginning with a pilot program on the 2nd Floor (North & South) inpatient units and in the outpatient Wound Clinic at St. Joseph's Hospital. The pilot began on April 1, 2025, and will run through the summer. In the fall, the Quality program will expand to the next identified Rehabilitative Care areas.

At the beginning of March, the Leadership Team also commenced daily Quality Huddles, which the team look forward to as dedicated time to focus on priorities for the day, ask for and offer support, celebrate successes, and act on improvement ideas brought forward.

Nurture our People

Recruitment and Retention: Engaging Talent Early and Throughout Careers

Fostering an inclusive and healthy culture where people want to work, volunteer and grow finds roots in meaningful action and commitment across SJCG. There is no 'one size fits all' solution to recruitment and retention. Instead, it comes down to having a culture that values and prioritizes learning and development. Here are a few ways that SJCG does just that:



Secondary

Take Our Kids to Work Day can be that pivotal first introduction to SJCG, and is a glimpse into the work world of their parent or guardian. Combined with high school placements and options to volunteer, secondary school students learn about the breadth of rewarding careers that are available to them here in Thunder Bay. A total of 11 students joined Take Our Kids to Work Day in 2024.

Post-Secondary

SJCG engages with post-secondary students in many ways, including placements, summer employment, and much more. The following examples shine a spotlight on two pathways learners can follow for a career with SJCG:

2025 New Graduate Showcase: On April 3, 2025, SJCG hosted a Drop-In Showcase at St. Joseph's Hospital for soon-to-be post-secondary graduates. Despite a snowstorm, about 90 attendees connected with recruiters, managers, and care team members to explore clinical and non-clinical career opportunities at SJCG.



Medical Student Residencies: Medical residencies offer real-world experience and mentorship that can influence specialization or practice location. SJCG is expanding opportunities through post-secondary partnerships, including new northern residencies in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (PM&R), alongside existing options in Geriatrics, Rheumatology, Psychiatry, and Addictions Medicine.

Early Career Supports

Early career support for new SJCG employees begins with corporate and role-specific orientation, followed by ongoing training and resources. Programs like Nursing Preceptorships not only guide new staff but also foster professional and personal growth for experienced nurses.

Nursing Preceptors are longer-serving nurses who mentor students through teaching, observation, and feedback. The benefit to students is having a voice of experience to rely on as they learn, and it's just as rewarding for preceptors to contribute not just to nursing education but to sustaining SJCG's culture either by attracting new nurses to our organization or by instilling the values that will serve a nurse throughout their career.

Career Development

SJCG offers four education and development programs for staff pursuing continued education and development. Last year, 19 staff were supported to advance their professional growth.

Program	Description	# Staff in 2024-2025
Central Education Fund	Supports professional development through programs, workshops and conferences.	7
Advanced Academic Assistance	Provides funding for academic pursuits beyond the graduate level.	10
Tuition Loan Program	Offers up to \$2,000 toward tuition expenses.	1
Conference Travel Award	Covers travel, meals, and/or accommodation for staff presenting research or best practices to healthcare audiences	0

Lead and Enhanced Regional Specialized Care

More Post-Stroke Care for People in the Region

SJCG's North West Regional Rehabilitative Care Program's focus is finding ways to bring the rehabilitative care that people need closer to home. The work is innovative, drawing on the strengths that exist across the region, and leaning into the difference people make in many ways to support healthier communities.

The work is being noticed, with the Program receiving a base funding increase of \$467,000 to continue improving access through the evidence-informed community-based stroke rehabilitation service for people living east of Thunder Bay and in the remote First Nations of Treaties 3, 5, and 9.

In November 2024, a Stroke Outreach Team was formed. Comprised of a Navigator, together with health professionals specially trained in stroke rehabilitation, the team provides both in-home and virtual care. The team's goal is to provide equitable access to post-stroke care for people living in their home community during recovery.

Connection is important. The Team recently visited Sandy Lake and Pikangikum First Nations, where they were able to spend time with Community Rehabilitation Workers (CRW) to talk about local need, and collaborate on the delivery of post-stroke care in a way that builds on the skills of the CRWs who are serving their home community.

In the first four months, the Team was able to provide care for 15 clients in four remote First Nations and seven communities east of Thunder Bay. In a region where distances are measured in hours and where road access does not always exist, it makes all the difference for people whose focus is meeting the health goals that matter to them after a stroke.

Strategic Enablers

New Partnership: HART Hubs

On April 1, 2025, the province announced nine new Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hubs including one here in Thunder Bay. Operated by the NorWest Community Health Centres, the HART Hub will provide a suite of integrated, locally-tailored health and human services supporting treatment and recovery for people with complex needs.

St. Joseph's Care Group is partnering with the HART Hub to provide dedicated Indigenous cultural services to support clients and staff. Staffing through SJCG includes a Cultural Outreach Supervisor, an Indigenous Health Associate, a Cultural Practitioner, a Cultural Helper, and an Indigenous Peer Supporter. Connection is key, and clients will have access to supports and services through N'doo'owe Binesi including Indigenous Health clinical services, guidance through Ogichidaa-Kwe and access to Elders and Healers, and participation in ceremony. At the core of the work will be policies and spaces to support this work.

As always, St. Joseph's Care Group will continue to work in close collaboration and partnership to ensure that outreach and pathways exist for clients who would benefit from our programs and services.