



### **'Values in Action' Award**

Each meeting of the Quinte Health Care (QHC) Board of Directors begins with a story that reminds us of the exceptional care extended by staff, volunteers and physicians each and every day at QHC hospitals. At this meeting, the Board is presenting the TMH Inpatient Unit team with the QHC 'Values in Action' award. *See full story on page 2.*

### **Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) Budget Advocacy**

In her report to the Board of Directors, President and CEO Mary Clare Egberts, provided an update on the Ontario Hospital Association's pre-budget advocacy efforts. Egberts includes an OHA fact sheet supporting the recommendation that the province increase the investment for Ontario hospitals by 4.85% to address the capacity issues being felt across the hospital system including at QHC hospitals.

### **Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Project**

Patrick Johnston, Chair of Quality of Patient Care Committee, presented an update to the Board on QHC's involvement with a collaborative 3 year COPD project with community partners. Ontarians living with COPD account for 24% of hospital admissions and 24% of emergency department (ED) visits. This population of patients also represents one of the highest readmission rates of any group. Last year (2018/19), QHC hospitals saw a significant 40% increase of COPD patients over the previous year, reaching more than 700 admissions. Key areas of focus for the partnership project are: improve prevention strategies for smoking cessation, improve self-management services for patients and coordinate community/outpatient best practice services all with a goal to increase the quality of life for people living with COPD.

### **Competition "Capacity Buster"**

QHC is looking at innovative ways to address the capacity challenges. A crowd-sourcing competition was held in December. QHC staff, physicians and community partners were asked to submit ideas on innovative service delivery models that could be implemented to help alleviate capacity pressures. Over 100 ideas were submitted. The planning team categorized the suggestions into the following themes: Transitional Care, Care at Home, Care Outreach Model, and Medical follow-up clinics. These ideas were discussed by a group of approximately 40 participants including hospital representatives and community partners over a three-hour period on January 16. The ideas now go to the leadership team to consider the business cases for implementation of the top ideas in the 2020/21 operating budget.

### **Regional Intensive Care Unit (ICU) expansion**

QHC is trying to expedite the urgently needed expansion of the regional ICU located at Belleville General Hospital to meet the needs of the sickest patients in the areas served by QHC hospitals. The occupancy of QHC's ICU is well over 100% most of the year. As a result, critical care patients have been waiting in the ED for an ICU bed. In recognition of the service pressure, QHC has received operational funding for bed number 15, 16 and 17 from the Ministry of Health (MOH). The 14 bed unit cannot house the 17 patients, plus the two to three more required in surge situations. QHC has submitted plans to the MOH to renovate the ICU and add four additional ICU rooms. Based on recent conversations with officials at the MOH, QHC is optimistic that they understand the urgency of this request and will provide a response very soon.

### **Screening precautions for coronavirus**

While the risk of coronavirus in our region is low at this point, Quinte Health Care is taking precautions by proactively screening patients at all of our hospitals. On arrival to one of our Emergency Departments, patients

will be asked about their symptoms, particularly respiratory symptoms, whether they have traveled to Wuhan, China and if they have come in contact with someone who has or is suspected of having coronavirus. If they are at risk of having the virus, they will be asked to clean their hands, put on a mask and may be taken to a special isolation room until a diagnosis can be confirmed.

The symptoms of Wuhan novel coronavirus, which can include fever and cough, are similar to other respiratory infections, including influenza. As a result, individuals who may simply have the flu are being tested out of an abundance of caution and in line with Ontario's robust detection protocols. This means that most individuals who are tested are unlikely to be infected with Wuhan novel coronavirus. It's important to note that diligent hand hygiene is the best defense in preventing the spread of viruses in our community including influenza, which causes about 12,200 hospitalizations and 3,500 deaths in Canada each year.

### **Board Recognition – January 29, 2020**

This Board year, we begin each meeting with a story that reminds us of the exceptional care extended by staff, volunteers and physicians each and every day at QHC hospitals. Today we are recognizing the Inpatient Unit at Trenton Memorial Hospital. Lisa, the daughter of a long-time patient, wrote in to the hospital to thank the team for their tremendous care of her mother who suffers from dementia.

Lisa describes the team as caring, compassionate and professional. She said they have bent over backwards to help Lisa and her sister understand dementia and how they can support their mom. When Lisa and her sister were discouraged or upset, the team supported and educated them. When they didn't know how to react when their mom was frustrated or crying, the team redirected their mom and showed Lisa and her sister coping mechanisms that really helped to improve their visits.

Without other family members to lean on, Lisa and her sister rely on the nurses and PSWs on the unit. They trust them fully and know that they will treat their mom like a member of their own family. Lisa and her sister can take a night off knowing their mother is in good hands.

Lisa says she knows that the hospital is not where her mother belongs – she's waiting for placement in a long term care facility – but until she gets where she needs to be, her mother is safe, respected and very well taken care of.

Thank you to the Trenton Memorial Hospital Inpatient Unit for everything you do to educate and support patients and their families. The circle of care involves care providers, patients AND their families and educating families on the condition of their loved one is an integral part of providing exceptional care. You are an incredible team and we thank you for representing QHC so well and living our values. I'd like to ask the members of the team who are here with us today to come up to accept the Values in Action Award presented to you by the Quinte Health Care Board of Directors.