

## **AGM Message from the Chair - June 30, 2021**

Good evening everyone

*When I became Chair of the Board of the Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital a year ago, I was tremendously honoured and humbled to be given this privilege. I was excited to work with my fellow directors and the hospital's senior management team in order to maintain the high standard of excellence in our fiduciary governance work; as well as to push forward ambitious initiatives which would chart an even brighter future for our hospital*

*In retrospect, this past year turned out to be an extraordinary one...not only for the hospital and the community it serves, but also for the world writ large. The COVID pandemic quite literally turned our "normal" world upside down. It was no longer "business as usual". Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on your point of view) we have been forced to adjust, and accept, different - sometimes unconventional - and even innovative approaches in terms of re-setting our health, family and work obligations.*

*Yet, despite the upheavals, our hospital was a "rock" – "an anchor point" -in our community during the pandemic. The ability to respond and keep up with ever-changing, ever-evolving guidelines from multiple provincial, federal government branches as well as public health agencies; to adjust on the fly; to innovate; and to collaborate was truly remarkable. I would even say outstanding. Much of this praise needs to be directed to our uber-competent and uber-exceptional President and CEO – Mary Wilson-Trider as well as our unflappable Chief of Staff – Dr Jamie Fullerton. These two individuals went above and beyond in the performance of their duties in order "to keep the ship on an even keel while weathering the storm". The board meeting reports from our President and CEO and from our Chief of Staff gave us but a glimpse of what they, along with the members of our very skilled and capable senior management team - Kimberley Harbord, Vice President of Diagnostic Services & Chief Financial Officer;*

*Randy Shaw, Vice President of Corporate Support Services and Capital Projects, and Jason Hann, Patient and Resident Care and Chief Nursing Executive, had to contend with each and every day with respect to managing the hospital's operations in a COVID environment.. all while ensuring the safety of the hospital's staff, physicians, nurses and other front-line workers.. and all while providing exceptional care to the patients. Their team effort – along with the talents and dedication of the hospital's front-line and professional staff - was a huge success as there were no COVID outbreaks at the hospital this past year. Furthermore, as if that was not a full plate, the team was also able to move forward at an accelerated rate its all-important Capital Projects file – the new Emergency Department. I should also point out that a team's success is often defined by the dedicated commitment provided by the admin team; many thanks are deservedly directed to Tina McLelland, Angie Kelly and Cindy Skebo for their support of the management team and support of the board and its committees. I would also like to take this moment to give a special shout-out to Dr. Maria Bastin-Miller, who is completing her two-year term as President of the Medical Staff at the Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital. She is a wonderful clinician who fulfills her duties with dedication and enthusiasm, and cares for her patients deeply. Our hospital is very lucky to have her on board. (Maria, a token of the board's appreciation will be delivered to you soonest).*

*In times of great difficulty or crisis, an organization's leadership is often put to the test. Our President and CEO, Chief of Staff and the senior management team passed this test with flying colors and deserve our sincere gratitude.*

*Governing during a pandemic year tested the Board of Directors as well. How does the board continue to fulfil its fiduciary responsibilities in an ever-changing environment given the extraordinary stresses put on management and staff? Well, like everyone else, adjustments were made and ways were found to continue to provide the necessary organizational stewardship and oversight. The Board embraced "virtual"- giving up the conviviality of face-to-face meetings for the efficiency of Zoom technology. It*

*focused on the necessary board decisions that would support the organization and management through COVID and which would be critical to the long term success and sustainability of the hospital.*

*The pandemic served as a catalyst to forge stronger ties with the Almonte General Hospital through the Mississippi River Health Alliance. With enthusiastic endorsement from the Almonte Board -many thanks for the leadership provided by Dave Perley, Chair of the Almonte Board – we have aligned strategic plans and integrated select services that have led to greater efficiencies and innovations in our hospitals' delivery of care. Although there were many, I would like to take this moment to highlight a couple of the collaborative initiatives which occurred between the two hospitals this past year.*

**ONE:** *The two hospital boards spent an incredible amount of time poring over the details and eventually approving a Clinical Services Plan. The Plan sets out a vision for clinical services at both hospitals, with the ultimate goal being to deliver excellent health care and services to our communities close to home. The Plan recognizes that Emergency Department care and associated Diagnostic Imaging and Laboratory services will continue to be available in both hospitals, along with inpatient Medical/Surgical and General Surgery. The Plan, however, also recognizes that each hospital has specialty services which are best focused on one site in order to avoid duplications and concentrate clinical expertise; for example, Almonte General Hospital specialty services of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Senior Care and inpatient General Surgery; Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital specialty services of Outpatient Surgery and Ambulatory Care, including Telemedicine.*

**TWO:** *The two hospital boards also spent an incredible amount of time discussing the pros and cons of closer collaboration at a governance level; such as, integrating their board committees and boards as joint entities. In the coming year, we will continue to explore ways that the two boards can efficiently and collaboratively govern and oversee the two hospitals as a coordinated system of health services centred on patient care and improved access to care for their communities.*

*No remarks from the Chair would be complete without acknowledging the dedicated work undertaken by the Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital Foundation. This past year has been hard and even detrimental to many charities. The hospital's Foundation faced the challenge of fundraising during a pandemic head-on and their hard work and dedication lead to success, as the community we serve responded and were extremely generous in their giving for both hospital clinical equipment and for the capital campaign for the new Emergency Department. Many thanks to Ian Grant, outgoing Chair of the Foundation, and the Foundation's board directors and staff for a very successful year of fundraising.*

*In closing....I wish to thank my fellow directors who diligently attended the many board and committee meetings throughout the year; offered their advice and thoughtful input on our governance matters; and took courageous steps to approve initiatives which will lead to a brighter future for our hospital.*

*Going forward...We need to sustain the gains and innovations that came about as a result of working through this pandemic. We need to capitalize on the opportunities and continue to be vigilant and responsive to the challenges which we know will come. The collaborative team efforts of our skilled board, talented leadership team, dedicated staff, physicians and front-line workers bodes well for an exciting future for our hospital. Remember....The Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital may be small, but it is mighty!!*

*Thank you.*