



CEO Report to the Board

August 31, 2023



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1.0 Strategy in Action

Reaching Out to Our Community

Employment success

Project SEARCH success continues. As previously reported, a graduation ceremony was held in June 2023 for the first cohort of interns. Now three interns are in paid summer student positions at St. Joseph's for a 16 week period. One intern is working in Food and Nutrition Services at Parkwood Institute Mental Health Care and has successfully secured employment in the community, one day a week, at a catering company. The second intern is working in Specialized Geriatric Services and the third is with Environmental Services, both at Parkwood Institute Main Building.

As well, a fourth intern has secured a part time stores clerk position with Healthcare Materials Management Services (HMMS).

As previously reported, St. Joseph's, in collaboration with Hutton House and Thames Valley District School Board, was the host organization for Project SEARCH, a 10-month internship program that helps youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities find meaningful employment. The school-to-work training program involves collaboration with organizations, including health care, to establish internships that prepare young adults in their final year of high school for the working world. In the pilot year at St. Joseph's, seven individuals were provided valuable work experience within various programs and services at Parkwood Institute.

Hiring of the four students is another uplifting outcome of this important partnership initiative. A new cohort of eight interns will begin the program in September 2023.

Health and Homeless: Whole System Response – an update

As previously reported, St. Joseph's remains a key partner in London's "whole-of-community system response" – a far reaching system solution to better serve and support the homeless in our community co-designed with those who have lived experience with homelessness. As this person-centred plan takes shape, St. Joseph's has representatives at the various planning and implementation tables created to date. The following are updates regarding St. Joseph's involvement in this work:

- **Surveys of inpatients:** Summer students with St. Joseph's Mental Health Care Program conducted surveys of individuals with lived/living experiencing with homelessness to validate and gain further information for the planning and implementation of supportive housing and hub services – a key component of the whole-of-community system response. In this first survey phase, 15 individuals who are 'homeless in hospital' candidly shared their thoughts on what would be of value regarding both supportive housing and transition from hospital.

The students conducting the survey expressed how meaningful the survey process was and the potential impact of the experience on their career choices going forward. The students are from various undergraduate programs and are spending the summer primarily supporting meaningful activities for mental health care inpatients. They will be engaged in phase two of the survey, which will involve reaching out to individuals who are currently homeless within the community.

- **Opinion column:** St. Joseph's and London Health Sciences Centre worked together on a [joint op-ed](#) (opinion column) on behalf of the CEOs of each organization. The op-ed, titled *Housing the Homeless is Health Care*, focused on the link between health care and homelessness and how the city's whole-of-community response will support the health and well-being of individuals experiencing homelessness and, in turn, the health care system as a whole. The op-ed appeared in the London Free Press on July 11, 2023.
- **Nurses for Housing:** As previously reported, a fundraising initiative called [Nurses for Housing](#) has nursing leaders and nurses across the city raising money to support Indwell's transformation of the former Children's Hospital in London into 42 units of affordable housing with on-site supports. As an update, three St. Joseph's nurse leaders have been part of the Nurses for Housing Cabinet and many St. Joseph's nurses have participated in and contributed to various fundraising initiatives of the campaign, which has now raised more than \$81,000 towards a \$150,000 target.

Advancing Excellence in Care Together

Optimizing patient access and flow

On July 12, 2023, Ontario Health issued the directive *Operational Direction for Rehabilitation and Complex Care Capacity and Flow*. This directive demands a call to action for improved utilization, patient flow, and overall system capacity and to address the rate of alternate level of care (ALC) patients in acute care, rehabilitative and complex care settings. Currently in Ontario, more than 4,500 patients are designated as requiring ALC. Of ALC patients in acute care, approximately 25 per cent are waiting for rehabilitation and complex care. As we look ahead to the fall/winter and the accompanying resurgence of respiratory viruses, capacity pressures are anticipated across the health system. Given this context, it is critical to optimize rehabilitation and complex care capacity to support ALC reduction efforts and improve patient access to care.

To lead this call to action at St. Joseph's, Kelly McIntyre Muddle, Coordinator within Specialized Geriatric Services, has begun work to explore the complexities of access and flow and delve into a variety of key initiatives and strategies aimed at optimizing flow and enhancing the experience of patients, families and system partners. This project began August 1 and will run to January 31, 2024. With her recent leadership of the Parkwood Access Team and past experience in co-design during the development of the South West Frail Senior Strategy, Kelly is very well positioned to lead this exciting work.

Leading in Research and Innovation

Improving care for older adults

A team led by Dr. Jacobi Elliott (PhD), Interim Coordinator with Specialized Geriatric Services at St. Joseph's and associate scientist at Lawson Health Research Institute, was recently awarded \$100,000 by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research for a study titled "Implementation, Equity and Impact: Examining specialized geriatric care programs in Ontario". Across the province, there are more than 12 different geriatric outreach models of care, however, there is a gap in understanding how the models were developed, implemented or evaluated. As waitlists for geriatric services continue to grow, it's critical to understand whether the existing services are meeting the needs and goals of the diverse aging population. An in-depth understanding of current geriatric care models is vital to improve the future state of health care for older adults. Read more on [Lawson's website](#).

Study finds exercise, cognitive training combo boosts cognition

In a ground-breaking discovery that could reshape the approach to elderly cognitive care, Western University and Lawson Health Research Institute researchers have found that a combination of computerized cognitive training and aerobic-resistance exercises (such as walking and cycling along with weight training) can significantly improve cognitive functions, such as memory, attention, recognition and orientation in older adults with mild cognitive impairment (MCI).

The researchers found the effect of the combined intervention was greater than the individual effects of exercise or cognitive training alone, suggesting a synergism in the sequential combination. They also found that vitamin D supplements did not appear to contribute to improvement.

The study, led by Dr. Manuel Montero-Odasso, Director of Lawson's Gait and Brain Lab located at Parkwood Institute and a geriatrician at St. Joseph's, offers a new pathway to address declining mental sharpness in the aging population by incorporating aerobic-resistance exercises along with computer-based cognitive training. The multi-city clinical trial, published in [JAMA Network Open](#), included 175 participants aged between 60 and 85 with MCI. Read more on [Lawson's website](#).

Leveraging technology

Using technology for social connectedness

Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care will be participating in a study through Western University exploring how virtual presence technology such as iPads, tablets and smartphones can be used to support social connectedness between people living in long term care homes and their families.

During COVID-19 many residents of long-term care homes were separated from their family due to restrictions on in-person visits and social distancing measures. During this time many residents and family members turned to technology to stay socially connected. The study aims to gain a better understanding of the impact of virtual presence technology on social connectedness in long term care.

New PET-CT arrives

As previously reported, St. Joseph's and Lawson Health Research Institute, in partnership with GE HealthCare, will become [Canada's first centre of excellence in molecular imaging and theranostics](#) – a two-pronged approach to diagnosing and treating cancers and other diseases that merges molecular imaging with the use of radiotracers to identify the location and extent of diseased tissues and selectively destroy the abnormal cells. A new PET-CT for St. Joseph's – Canada's first GE HealthCare Omni Legend System – is part of the partnership.

As an update, this latest generation, state-of-the-art PET-CT arrived at St. Joseph's Hospital in August and installation is currently underway. This very special delivery was featured on [St. Joseph's social media platforms](#). Training on the new PET-CT is expected to begin in September 2023.

Empowering people

Wellbeing Team - an update

As previously reported St. Joseph's is making an enhanced commitment to staff, physician and volunteer well-being. In addition to strengthening initiatives already happening across our

organization and building foundational health and psychological well-being practices into our everyday work, a new “Wellbeing Team” was announced in June 2023. The team, made up of staff and physicians from across the organization, is more formally addressing well-being at St. Joseph’s. It is being led by Rosilee Peto, Director, Occupational Health, Infection Safety and Employee Wellbeing, along with two part-time staff well-being advisors, Trina Smith and Susan Rosato.

As an update, the Wellbeing Team has been engaging staff, building momentum and introducing new well-being initiatives across the organization:

- 10 blood pressure clinics have been held across all sites with 330 people participating.
- 135 “pop up”, three-minute stretch sessions have been held across St. Joseph’s with 2,778 participants coming together to recharge and refresh.
- Five “Mindfulness Moments” have been held (introduced in August) with 108 participants coming together for a five-minute, guided meditation session as an opportunity to focus on the present moment.

In addition, the Wellbeing Team has been participating in various accreditation activities, including tracers, as the organization prepares for Accreditation Canada’s on-site survey in October 2023.

Celebrating diversity

In the spirit of inclusivity, staff across the organization recently took part in two meaningful events:

- **Emancipation Day:** On August 26-27, London’s Emancipation Day Celebration was held at the WEAN Community Centre. The annual celebration honours the contributions of black Canadians, commemorates their collective journey, and embraces the beauty of our diverse community to foster understanding, respect and unity. The event showcased the vibrant culture of the black community, educational exhibits, captivating performances, and interactive activities and games. Staff from across the organization came out to celebrate alongside the black community, promote diversity and empower positive change. The event was also an opportunity for St. Joseph’s to provide information on opportunities to become involved with our organization through Volunteer Services, the Care Partnership Office for patients, family members and caregivers, and nursing placement programs. Representatives of the Care Partnership Office, Volunteer Services and nursing participated in the event, as well as St. Joseph’s Director of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging.
- **Raksha Bandha:** All staff and physicians were invited to attend a special Hindu and Sikh festival called Raksha Bandha on August 30 at St. Joseph’s Hospital, Southwest Centre for Forensic Mental Health Care and Parkwood Institute’s Finch Family Mental Health Care Building. Raksha Bandhan celebrates the love and unity between siblings. The word 'Raksha' means protection and 'Bandhan' means bonding. During the celebration, siblings tie Rakhi thread around each other’s arms as a symbol of love and protection. In modern times, Rakhi threads are tied to close family members, friends and those in our community as a symbol of oneness and shared humanity.

During the ceremonies at St. Joseph’s, Rakhi threads were tied to members of St. Joseph’s Security Services team in honour and recognition of their dedication and the protection they provide to all at St. Joseph’s. The event was organized and led by St. Joseph’s staff and physicians who celebrate this tradition and culture.

2.0 Operational Updates

Equitable distribution of gift shop revenue

Together, St. Joseph's Finance Department and Volunteer Services have developed a new process to equitably distribute discretionary revenue from the gift shops and variety stores to patient care, research and patient/resident programs. Previously, decisions regarding revenue distribution was made by the Volunteer Association, which oversaw the stores at the mental health care sites, as well as the St. Joseph's Auxiliary and Parkwood Auxiliary – in collaboration with St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation. When the Volunteer Association and both auxiliaries were disbanded in 2022, oversight of the stores transferred to Volunteer Services.

There are two components to the new revenue distribution process:

- An agreement made with the Volunteer Association prior to its disbandment stipulates that revenue generated by the stores at the mental health care sites must support those sites. Annually, a pre-determined amount will be provided to leadership at both mental health care sites (per anticipated annual sales using previous years' data) to apply to programs and patient care at their respective sites. The leaders will keep track of spending and provide a list at year end to Finance.
- The remainder of the revenue from the stores will be distributed to capital projects. A list of current capital projects will be shared with Volunteer Services by Finance and store volunteers will have an opportunity to provide feedback on which projects should receive funds.

This new process will be implemented over the next several months. At the end of each fiscal year, Finance will create an annual report that will be shared with Volunteer Services and volunteers detailing where funds were allocated and the impact of this support on patient care and services.

3.0 CEO Activity

MP visits

In recent weeks, the Ontario Hospital Association has been engaging local Members of Parliament (MPs) in tours of Ontario's research hospitals to learn about each organization, research underway, and the impact it has on the community and Canada as a whole. Showcasing the critical research being done locally provides the MPs with an opportunity to advocate for research funding when they return to Ottawa in the fall. The visits also build relationships between hospitals and their local MPs that will help create a strong case for increased research funding through next year's federal budget.

I was pleased to join researchers, clinicians and leaders in the following visits:

- A delegation from St. Joseph's and London Health Sciences Centre hosted MP Peter Fragiskatos (London North Centre) at Victoria Hospital on August 10. This visit highlighted cancer imaging research, including the upcoming new centre of excellence in molecular imaging and theranostics at St. Joseph's, and the importance of research funding to advance this area of patient care.
- On August 11, MP Lianne Rood (Lambton Kent Middlesex) visited St. Joseph's Hospital to learn about microbiome research and fecal transplantation and tour the labs involved in this important work.

In September, I will attend the following visits:

- MP Arielle Kayabaga (London West) will visit Victoria Hospital, where the focus will be on Dr. Cheryl Forchuck's research project that is studying the integration of harm reduction strategies into hospital settings for people who use methamphetamine.
- MP Lindsay Mathyssen (London Fanshawe) will tour the Gray Centre for Mobility and Activity at Parkwood Institute to learn about our areas of research and treatment development focused on diseases and conditions that affect mobility and activity.

4.0 Federal/Provincial Updates

Arbitrator decision - OPSEU

On August 3, the Kaplan Board of Arbitration released its award addressing the reopener on additional monetary outcomes for the April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2025, collective agreement between the Participating Hospitals and OPSEU. The hospital division of OPSEU represents laboratory technologists, respiratory therapists, physiotherapists and many others. Arbitrator William Kaplan awarded wage increases of 8.25 per cent over three years (in addition to the initial one per cent per year previously awarded), lump sum payments of \$750 – \$1,750 for hospital professionals who were excluded from the 2020 pandemic pay, and increases to shift and weekend premiums. Details are available in the [full arbitration decision](#).

5.0 St. Joseph's in the News

[I cried happy tears when doctors removed my eye after years of pain](#), New York Post, August 1, 2023

[Butterfly garden at long-term care home lets these seniors get their hands dirty as they socialize](#), CBC London, August 4, 2023

[Fecal transplants show promise in improving melanoma treatment](#), Health System News (Ontario Hospital Association), August 2023

[Add 300 beds, 3,000 staff to end London health-care 'crisis': Union](#), London Free Press, August 11, 2023

[Exercise, then brain training could be game-changer for slowing dementia: Canadian study](#), Global News, August, August 17, 2023

[Keep your mind and body active to hold off dementia, study finds](#), CBC London, August 16, 2023

['Kicks for Strength': Charity soccer event launched in London, Ont. for mental health awareness](#), Global News, August 25, 2023

6.0 Environmental Scan

[Mental health care access, electronic options, surgical backlogs: Report lays out health-care overhaul priorities](#), CTV News, August 2, 2023

[Overtime, sick days due to illness or disability rose for health-care workers during pandemic: StatCan](#), CTV News, August 12, 2023

[COVID: Study shows impact of hybrid immunity in Canada](#), CTV News, August 14, 2023
[Some breast cancer patients may not need radiation, new Canadian research suggests](#), CBC News, August 16, 2023

[Radiation not necessary for patients with low-risk breast cancer](#), McMaster University, August 17, 2023

[Long COVID symptoms create a greater burden of disability than heart disease or cancer, new study shows](#), CTV News, August 21, 2023

[COVID-19 in Ontario on the rise as new highly-mutated variant emerges](#), CTV News, August 22, 2023

[Ontario investing in a stronger public health sector](#), Ministry of Health, August 22, 2023

[COVID resurgence sparks concerns as hospitalizations increase across Canada](#), CTV News, August 23, 2023

[Canada faces critical anesthesiologist shortage, causing backlog of surgeries](#), Globe and Mail, August 24, 2023

[More than 120,000 Canadians hospitalized for COVID-19 last year](#), Canadian Institute for Health Information, August 24, 2023

[Mortality rose in 2021, led by cancer, heart disease, overdoses and COVID-19: StatCan](#), Canadian Press, August 28, 2023