

**Report of the Chief of Staff
June 2019**

Good morning. As Chief of Staff (COS), it is a pleasure to speak to you on behalf of the medical staff.

Leadership:

- There have been many changes this year. As all of you know, for medical reasons, our former CEO Bev McFarlane has had to step aside. The medical staff has great respect for Bev because of her style of leading by example and always putting the patient at the center of decision making. We miss her, and wish her the best.
- Our senior administration team did an excellent job when taking turns as acting CEO in Bev's absence. Personally and on behalf of the medical staff, I would like to thank you for going above and beyond with that very busy dual role.
- When Vickie Kaminski was hired as acting CEO, she quickly developed a good rapport with the medical staff. We felt confident in her leadership. Her opinions, insight and council during the application phase for developing an Ontario Health Team were invaluable.
- The medical staff is really excited that Dr. Barry Guppy has joined our hospital as the new CEO. His background as a physician will bring a new perspective to patient centred care and physician engagement with the hospital. He brings a philosophy that the relationship between the doctors, the administration and the board should be that of a partnership

Clinical Partnerships/Improving care:

- Most people are aware that the outcome for patients having a heart attack is much better when they can get to definitive care ASAP. Every minute is important.
- Up until recently, patients who presented to our ED with an MI were being transferred urgently to KHSC.
- Brought forward by our physicians in Smiths Falls ER and confirmed by data from our EMS service that based on true distance, and other considerations such as traffic patterns and weather conditions, that transporting patients to Ottawa Heart Institute could save up to 10-15 minutes. With this knowledge, and the cooperation of both Ottawa and Kingston, we now have a new protocol and all patients with an acute MI are urgently transferred to Ottawa.

Regional Hospital Information System:

- We continue with our regional partner hospitals (Brockville, KHSC, Providence Care, Quinte and Lennox Addington) to work towards a real clinical transformation to deliver seamless, well –coordinated care throughout the region as patients’ transition from one hospital to another, from one ward to another, back to their homes and communities. All with one patient chart which will include a patient portal so patients have access to their medical records.
- With remarkable extensive engagement and involvement of many stakeholders including patient advisors, physicians, nurses, managers, administration, our IT specialists and our boards we will select the vendor who will best meets our clinical needs. Some of this activity has been completed, some is ongoing and still more is planned for the near future.

Recruitment:

- Top of mind for many members of our community.
- Anticipation of some of our physicians moving out of the area to pursue new practice opportunities, some retirements.
- Participate with the Rideau-Tay Physician Recruitment Task Force
- Members include representation from each Town Councils, Valley Heartland economic development office, primary care physician groups, Rideau CHC, our recruiter and community members.
- Coordinated Community wide effort to recruit and retain physicians to our area.
- One of the most successful ways to recruit and retain physicians is by having medical learners come and experience working in a rural setting.
- For many years, first year medical students from both Ottawa University and Queens medical schools have come and spent a week in the country getting exposure to office and hospital practices.
- Long term learners, often senior medical students who work for 3-6 months with one of our family physicians as part of their educational requirements.
- Locums. These are normally young recently graduated physicians who will cover a maternity or sabbatical leave.
- They all have the opportunity to get experience and learn how wonderful it is to practice in a rural setting, they get to see what our communities have to offer outside of their work life.
- Ongoing challenges is to recruit a general internal medicine specialist to the area-truly unicorns. Few graduates with many opportunities to work across Canada. We need to be competitive in what we have to offer, again not just by the hospital but also by the community.

Thank you:

Thank our board chair Donna Howard and the members of the board of governors of the hospital for their dedication and generosity in volunteering their time in helping steward the hospital achieve its strategic aims.

The physicians applaud you with your initiative in the Capital Campaign to increasing the public's awareness that the ministry of Health does not fund capital expenditures and that funds raised through the campaign help support program needs of both sites of our hospital.

The medical staff also wants to thank our two foundations for all the work they did to make our recent Radiothon so successful. It was another excellent opportunity to educate our community about the funding challenge hospitals face when needing to purchase new equipment. The physicians who had a chance to participate in the Radiothon really enjoyed the opportunity to promote the great work that they do.

It goes without saying that our medical staff remains eternally grateful to the GWM and Smiths Falls foundations and auxiliaries for their dedicated fundraising efforts year after year. It is hard to imagine what would happen to our hospital and to the health of our community if we couldn't provide something as simple as a hospital bed or as complex as an anaesthesia machine necessary for our surgical programs.

In closing, my final thank you today goes out to Marilyn Litle, our medical staff secretary who has retired after 10 years of service to the medical staff. Not only has she set agendas and meeting, taken minutes at so many committee meetings and been a great wing man or should I say wing person to myself and previously to Dr. Peter Roney as Chiefs of Staff but she has on many an occasion been a mom, a friend, a confidant and a cheerleader to so many of the medical staff.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Kate Stolee
Chief of Staff