



## **Board of Directors**

### **Highlights**

**November, 2021**

***Enriching life's journey together.***

***Cultivating quality care that is patient centred, timely, efficient, effective, equitable and safe.***

#### **System Capacity and Planning**

Acute care and ICU capacity in the south west remain at greater than 90% with Listowel and Wingham ranging from 65 to 75%. Hospitals in the South West have committed to undertaking collective clinical services planning in anticipation of ongoing capacity challenges within the system.

We offered our support and help earlier this month and both the Listowel and Wingham teams accepted patients from other hospitals. Michelle Wick, VP/CNE at Exeter, sent a thank you note wanting to recognize the support that they received from nursing staff and physicians. "Please extend my appreciation to your teams, your assistance was seamless and helped us to ensure our patients received great care (even if it wasn't in our own hospital)."

#### **Wingham Emergency Department**

Throughout the course of a year, the Wingham Emergency Department is staffed with a mixture of Wingham physicians and locum doctors. Wingham has not been part of the provincial Emergency Department Locum Program (EDLP) for a couple years. Listowel continues to rely on EDLP to cover a substantial number of ER shifts each month. The current Wingham ER schedule has 4 shifts over the Christmas/New Years period that are currently un-staffed. Significant local discussions have occurred regarding these vacancies and it is clear that there is no incremental local capacity to fill the shifts.

EDLP also has an unprecedented demand for locums and significantly lower supply of interested physicians. They have been clear that there is little likelihood that they will be in a position to cover the Wingham vacancies.

This situation creates a possible scenario where the Wingham ER would need to close due to a lack of physician staffing. We have a process drafted that outlines the steps we would take in order to close an ER. A full communication strategy will need to be developed.

#### **InterHospital Laboratory Partnership**

The InterHospital Laboratory Partnership (IHLP) is currently comprised of 12 hospitals in Huron, Perth, Grey and Wellington Counties. It is a longstanding arrangement that supports hospital laboratories through standardization of equipment, pathologist leadership, policies and procedures. Daily courier services transport samples and specimens to Stratford for testing not provided in local laboratories along with pathology and other centralized tests. The IHLP recently agreed to welcome the South Bruce Grey Health Centre to the organization and will be working closely with the 4 hospitals within that corporation to transition them to the IHLP.

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One of this year's strategic initiatives of the IHLP has been to complete a laboratory service needs assessment to review current state and determine future service. Sites will focus on key parameters such as access to lab services (on-site vs. call), blood bank services, test menu, equipment, staffing, etc. with the outcome being a site specific requirement listing that will be used to inform future equipment procurement and human resources. Medical Laboratory Technologists have been difficult to recruit in recent years with a large number of vacancies existing across all sites of the IHLP.

### **Nursing Health Human Resources**

The Ministry has initiated a Surgical Recovery Plan in order to deal with the back log of surgeries due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Part of this plan is to support health human resources by training Operating Room Nurses in order to increase the capacity and volumes of surgical cases. LWHA has received approval from Ontario Health to offer support for tuition and clinical hours for 3 RN's and 3 RPN's at both sites to complete the Peri-Operative Nursing Certificate Program.

### **Wingham Rehab Program**

The Wingham Rehab Program is starting a project that will offer Complex Continuing Care (CCC), Rehab and Alternate Level of Care (ALC) patients the option to participate in communal dining. This addition to the rehab program encourages patients to be up and dressed in their personal clothes, gets them out of their rooms and of course offers opportunities for social interaction.

### **Ocean E-Referral**

The Diagnostic Imaging Departments at both sites went live with Ocean E-referral on Nov 8, 2021. This was a successful joint project with the North Huron and North Perth Family Health Teams to utilize e-referrals for diagnostic imaging services in South Western Ontario. The project is a part of a larger Ontario Health Team project taking another step towards "axing the fax".

### **Pharmacy**

Kaydian Hedgin, our new pharmacist, will be starting at the hospital in December. With this added support we will have in house capacity to cover pharmacist vacation time, additional support for our oncology program and the ability to provide more thorough service to our colleagues and patients for pharmacy related services. This includes medication reviews, antimicrobial stewardship and support for quality teams.

### **Health and Safety / Emergency Response**

November 4, 2021 the Wingham site successfully completed their annual vulnerable occupancy evacuation testing with the North Huron Fire Prevention Officer and Fire Chief present for evaluation. Four designated staff responded to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Inpatient unit to evacuate the "hot room" within the expected time, and moving a total of 10 "occupants" beyond a set of fire doors to conclude the testing under the 7-minute mark. The team received positive and encouraging feedback, as they completed this in a quick and safe manner.

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### **COVID-related initiatives and practices**

COVID Boosters are now available to hospital staff. Although 2 doses are considered fully vaccinated a number of staff are making plans for receiving a booster dose. Dr. Trojnar has been assisting with a hospital clinic to allow staff a local clinic to attend.

### **Occupational Health**

The annual flu shot campaign is currently underway with vaccines being available to all staff through Occupational Health. Staff continue to demonstrate their commitment to quality patient care with positive uptake for the annual flu shot.

## ***Cultivating a workplace that nurtures individual and collective potential.***

### **Vaccination Policy**

We are beyond the date at which employees and credentialed staff could begin the process to obtain both COVID vaccines prior to the established November 30<sup>th</sup> deadline for having a full series of vaccines. We expect a maximum of 8 staff members of over 400 employees to be non-compliant with the policy. A rate of 2% of our total staff being unvaccinated is consistent with the experience of other hospitals with mandatory vaccination policies.

### **Acknowledgement**

As we approach the end of 2021, LWHA would like to highlight that there is a total of 41 staff members between both sites receiving service recognition awards. The combined years of service being recognized is 505 years. There is a total of 8 staff members being recognized for greater than 20 years of service and 1 staff member for 45 years.

### **Contact North**

Contact North is an organization funded by the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities to provide remote access to education and training in small, rural and remote communities. We have been recently exploring how Contact North can assist LWHA and other local health care providers in meeting our training and education needs.

### **Professional Practice**

The focus for professional practice this fall has been organizing and hosting nursing skills days. Two days are allocated at each site for nursing staff to attend in the spring and in the fall. By hosting these skills days, we can continue to support organizational initiatives and nursing competencies. Some of the topics being covered this month are; enhancements in the electronic health record, central venous catheters, blood bank in the lab and guest educators from the Trillium Gift of Life Network.

### **Clinical Leadership Team**

Mary-Lou Albers has accepted the Listowel Clinical Manager position. Mary-Lou has been with

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the organization for nearly 11 years and has worked in a number of roles across the alliance. Most recently, Mary-Lou has worked in the role of Professional Practice Coordinator and Clinical Informatics Manager where she has led and supported initiatives related to our COVID response, implementation of an electronic health record and nursing clinical skill development. The clinical team is working on a plan to replace the vacant position and are hoping to host interviews in early December.

### **Recruitment**

In previous reports Skilled Trades positions have been highlighted as hard to recruit positions. In the past 4 months Listowel has successfully recruited a part-time Gas Fitter/Metal Fabricator and a full-time Electrician.

Continued efforts for recruitment of a radiologist for part time with onsite coverage and support for time off for Dr. Erenberg continue.

### ***Cultivating a sustainable and resilient environment that is here for future generations.***

#### **Scheduling:**

Christmas and New Year's schedules have been finalized at both sites. As an effort to address staffing pressures during the Christmas and New Year's period additional nursing staff is in place for both holidays at each site to assist with any unanticipated vacancies or staffing needs.

#### **Benefit Claims History:**

Greenshield has released the benefit claims insight for both Listowel and Wingham for the period of October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021. Listowel premiums paid were \$370,841 with total claims paid of \$373,189 for a loss ratio of 100.63%. There was a total of 4815 claims processed. Wingham premiums paid were \$233,132 with total claims paid of \$175,530 for a loss ratio of 75.29%. There was a total of 2184 claims processed.

### ***Cultivating a sustainable and resilient environment that is here for future generations.***

#### **Fisher Clinic**

Before the end of December, we anticipate receiving more detailed sketches and cost estimates for the proposed expansion of the Fisher Family Primary Care Centre in Listowel.

#### **Mammography Unit**

The successful vendor for the purchase of the mammography unit is GE. Implementation of the new equipment will be in the March 2022. The installation will result in a few weeks of downtime without mammography services and currently the team is working on mitigation plans for this interruption in service. The radiology department plans to offer new services in 2022/23 including contrast mammography, stereotactic biopsy and contrast enhanced biopsy.

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GE was the first vendor in Canada to have contrast enhanced biopsy approved by Health Canada and LWHA will be one of the first sites to have this technology available.

### **Wingham Water Event**

The total cost of the Wingham water event was \$169,374. Wingham will pay a \$25,000 deductible with insurance covering the remaining \$144,374. This total cost included both the emergency work as well as the repair work.

## ***Cultivating partnerships to offer a seamless patient experience.***

### **Long Term Care**

North Perth Mayor, Todd Kasenberg hosted a recent meeting of local stakeholders and influencers to discuss the Long Term Care (LTC) situation in North Perth. Some meeting participants focused on the need to have timely, appropriate access to home care services as a priority over a new or redeveloped long term care home in Listowel. The province has committed to creating 30,000 new LTC beds in Ontario by 2028. The long term care sector is highly regulated and the province requires applicants to be an existing LTC operator or have a partnership arrangement with an established operator. None of the participants in the meeting are currently LTC operators.

The current provincial financial model for LTC homes results in 96 beds being the minimum number at which a facility is financially viable. Braemar Retirement Centre was approved in March 2021 for 27 new and 69 upgraded spaces, to create a 96-bed home through the construction of a new building in Morris-Turnberry. The Caressant Care home in Listowel is currently approved for 52 beds, although will be operating at lower capacity due to limitations on the number of patients allowed per room.

### **Emergency Patient Transport**

The Township of North Huron has entered into an agreement to sell the Richard W. LeVan Airport. The agreement requires the operation of the facility as an airport for 15 years including ongoing access for ORNGE, the provincial air ambulance service. Discussions with the municipality over the last number of years have highlighted the value of the airport facility for emergency patient transfers. The hospital pays a small annual sum for snow removal at the airport. Listowel continues to be served by an ad-hoc heliport located at Listowel Livestock just north of town.

### **North Perth and North Huron Family Health Team**

Mary Atkinson will be retiring from the Executive Director role at the North Perth North Huron Family Health Team (FHT) in the spring of 2022. An executive recruitment firm has been hired to search for a replacement. The hospital has been engaged in discussions to assist the FHT with defining the skills required for the new FHT Executive Director.

The FHT is also undertaking a strategic planning exercise and has invited hospital participation in that exercise. Justine Leslie is currently serving as the hospital representative on the FHT board of directors.



### **Huron Perth and Area Ontario Health Team (HPOHT)**

- The Listowel Wingham Hospitals Alliance has indicated interest in the joint Accreditation survey for the OHT if a suitable transition strategy can be developed.
- A new collaboration agreement has been drafted and has been circulated for comment.
- HP OHT is seeking a facilitator to assist with the creation of an inaugural strategic plan for the HP OHT.

### **Cancer Care Ontario Benchmarks**

The organization is monitoring our time from breast biopsy to diagnosis to ensure we are in line with Cancer Care Ontario benchmarks. The benchmark from time of screen to diagnosis is within 7 weeks. Currently our wait times are still within the suggested timeline of 7 weeks. An increased screening volume has been noted post covid and internally we are seeing tighter timelines than we are accustomed to.