

# CEO's Blog

November 29, 2022



Thunder Bay Regional  
Health Sciences  
Centre

Thunder Bay Regional  
Health Research  
Institute

Hello, Boozhou, Bonjour,

I want to begin by acknowledging today is 'Giving Tuesday' and to thank the many of you who improve the patient experience by giving back through donations to the Foundation or through donating to the patient clothing cupboard. These gestures, no matter how big or small, make big impacts when it comes to the patient experience. No matter how or when you give please know it all impacts patient care and provides a more positive experience. Thank you to all who give back and know that your donations and extra efforts always make a difference. Thank you for going that extra mile.

## Emergency Department (ED) Atmosphere

As you know, we have one of the busiest EDs in the province. Last week our ED averaged 228 patients a day and for the month prior, 273 patients with a peak of 307 patients. While I anticipate we will continue to be extremely busy over the next few months, I also recognize that overall, our organization and our Emergency Department is significantly busier than it has been throughout the last few years. The challenges of our clinical environment can often be stressful for all individuals. If the patient can have a better waiting experience and the environment is more receptive and pleasing, then we will likely get a better patient history and have a better staff interaction also. So, with that said, I am pleased to announce that we are making improvements to our ED that will provide a better environment for those who are working there and for patients using our ED for care. Initial improvements will be geared to improving our triage area and having an expanded registration area to streamline the intake process. Providing these upgrades will allow for a more private and safe area for patients and provide a better environment for both staff and patients. Having a better clinical atmosphere adds to a better patient experience, while also contributing to a better work environment.

## Reducing Surgical Wait Times

Throughout COVID-19 we have seen Ontario hospital surgical wait lists and wait times increase considerably due to decreased hospital capacity and other factors impacting referral patterns. Longer wait times are happening across a range of different surgical categories and conditions. These delays can create serious consequences and lead to poor outcomes and experience. Although there may not be any single strategy to fix a long waiting list, I am pleased to inform that a review of our activities under the oversight of Dr. LeFrancois and the surgical team has led to a reduction in long-waiting cases by 35%. The review and data clean-up in consultation with surgeons has resulted in patients having their surgeries done sooner and thus creating a better patient experience.

## Contributions to Clinical Psychology

Some fantastic news to share with you. Dr. Christopher Mushquash, our Vice President of Research at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC) and Chief Scientist at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Research Institute (TBRHRI), was part of the team awarded the 2022 Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) Clinical Section Award for clinical excellence for their work developing the Best Practices in Psychology Portal. The portal is an online hub for psychologists and trainees in psychology across Canada. The portal connects research and practice by providing the latest evidence-based resources, information, and tools. Dr. Mushquash contributed to the development of a video resource discussing considerations for when applying evidence-based psychological practice with Indigenous people. Being part of something like this is truly a reflection of going above the call of duty to contribute to a better patient experience for First Nations peoples and our rural and northern communities.

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## It Takes All of Us

This month there were many professions and teams recognized for their various contributions such as Physician Assistants, Nurse Practitioners, Kinesiologists, Medical Radiation Technologists, Genetic Counsellors and Portering teams to name a few. Together these groups and professions work towards our shared vision and mission and our goals and priorities cannot be met without each and every one of us. We know that excellent care is not provided in a vacuum, and all contribute to the overall patient experience. I am choosing this month to reflect on the importance of the seemingly simple things that add to a better experience to the patients we serve. Such things as making eye contact and introducing ourselves prior to treating a patient, communicating empathy or actively listening are all simple gestures of care. The patient experience is a big part of delivering quality and compassionate care and truly great people and teams care about what they are doing.

## Final Thoughts

I began this blog by talking about 'Giving Tuesday' and I'd be remiss if I didn't mention that the Foundation's 50/50 draw in December is a guaranteed minimum jackpot of \$1 MILLION DOLLARS! There are also \$50,000 in Early Bird Prizes throughout December. The funds raised will be going towards improving care and services in our Emergency Department. Please spread the word!

Finally, I have to say it's hard to believe it has been two years since being appointed as President and CEO. I'd like to say *thank you* to everyone for their hard work, dedication and support. Please know that you are appreciated, and I am proud to call all of you colleagues.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have comments on this blog or connect with me for any other matter. You can reach me at:

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