

# CEO's Blog

February 28, 2023



Thunder Bay Regional  
Health Sciences  
Centre

Thunder Bay Regional  
Health Research  
Institute

Hello, Boozhou, Bonjour.

I would like to begin this month by acknowledging the information picket held locally last week as part of a provincial movement. As I have shared with local media before, nurses and all front-line health care workers are fundamental to health care in our community and you are facing historic challenges right now. Here at our Hospital, we rely on your clinical excellence and ability to care with compassion and professionalism.

Despite the health human resources pressures both provincially and regionally, our recent efforts to recruit more nurses to our organization have been promising. We have successfully hired 66 full time nurses in the first phase of recruiting this year.

In addition to those nursing positions, we have introduced 40 personal support workers (PSWs) to three of our Inpatient Units and hired over 100 unit care aides to assist with patient care activities and daily routines. These roles support our nursing team, enabling them to focus on their skills of providing acute nursing care for our patients.

If you get the chance, welcome our new colleagues and help them transition in as smoothly as possible.

Staff experience and the wellbeing of our workforce is critical to everything we do, and we know there is still more work to do across so many disciplines. With the formation of the Staff Advisory Committee, we will work together to innovate new and better solutions, change our approach to care and approach to challenges and problems.

That said, much more needs to be done to address these ongoing challenges. That is why we continue to engage with the Ministry of Health to communicate both the challenges we face here in Northwestern Ontario, and how they may differ from other parts of the province. We will continue those conversations moving forward.

As well, we are doing an environmental scan to see how other hospitals across the province and across the country are moving forward post-COVID-19's "new normal". Public Health Ontario also provides guidance on COVID-19 that is indexed to risk.

Over the next month, recommendations will be reviewed and advanced through Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) and Senior Leadership.

By way of background, last year the Hospital engaged the people of our region in the development of our new Strategic Plan 2026, and through this process, we heard stories that helped us to shape our priorities and our future through our Strategic Plan.

One of our first priorities is a pillar related to *Equity, Diversity and Inclusion*. That means creating an organization where we all belong – where we embed equity, diversity and inclusion in everything we do and providing a culturally safe experience for all patients and staff.

This past month, I had the distinct pleasure of joining our new Vice President, Indigenous Collaboration, Equity, and Inclusion – Dr. Miranda Lesperance – to officially launch the Wake the Giant Indigenous Culture and Inclusivity Training.

We collaborated with local Indigenous partner organizations to develop this training. As a regional acute care provider, providing care that honours our patient's identity, background and experiences is a priority for us.

The Wake the Giant Indigenous Culture and Inclusivity Training will help our staff to better serve our community and bring us forward in a good way. Moreover, we remain committed to continually working with community partners in developing our Hospital as a more culturally inclusive, safe space.

Finally, I want to recognize that this is Employee Appreciation Week – one of my favourite highlights is the popular "kindness carts." I do hope that I get the opportunity to personally thank you for your continued efforts and dedication while making rounds. Last evening I was able to connect with many individuals and look forward to continuing the conversation.

As always, 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: [rhonda.ellacott@tbh.net](mailto:rhonda.ellacott@tbh.net)



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