

HeartBeats

A Quarterly Newsletter from Haldimand War Memorial Hospital & Edgewater Gardens Winter 2021

Message from the Interim President

Happy New Year! After dealing with the worst pandemic the world has experienced in more than a century, it seems that life will return to some sense of normality later in 2021 once a vaccine becomes widely distributed.

The COVID-19 pandemic was all consuming for HWMH and Edgewater Gardens, as we undertook extraordinary measures to keep our patients, employees and visitors safe. By mid-December 2020, we had seen 41 patients with COVID at the hospital – with no deaths – and no residents testing positive at Edgewater.

We were not able to celebrate the holiday season with a Christmas party for our staff, but instead organized in-hospital events over 12 days. As part of this, our team participated in a toy drive and collected food donations for the Dunnville Salvation Army Food Bank.

The pandemic has resulted in changes to the design of our new Outpatient Clinic, Main Entrance area and Admitting Department to allow for more wide-open, social distancing space in these high-traffic areas. Construction will include opening up the lobby area by knocking out some walls and moving the cafeteria entrance, and having an open-concept waiting area for admissions and clinic visits.

Dunnville's COVID testing centre, which for months had operated by hospital employees from a tent at 420 Lock Street, was moved at the end of October to the former Pharmasave location inside the hospital, to the east of the Emergency Department. Testing is provided to members of the public on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 - 11 a.m. and from noon - 2 p.m. To book an appointment, call 905-774-7431 ext 1000.



Connecting Residents and Families

Edgewater Gardens recreation director Judy O'Neill helps resident Maxine Booker with "Genie," a new communication device for residents and families to share pictures, videos and messages. Family members can download a mobile app to connect with the Genie portal and their loved ones in the home.

Edgewater Gardens is working with Genie's creator, Ambient Activity Technologies, to trial new products designed to address social isolation in long-term care.

For most of 2021, it seems that the infection control practices in HWMH and Edgewater Gardens – as well as in the community – will remain in effect. Let's not let our guard down! Please continue to wear a mask and practice social distancing so that our community can stay safe and healthy.

Sharon Moore, Interim President and CEO

Search for a New President and CEO Nears Completion

The Board of Directors of HWMH and Edgewater Gardens was expected to complete its search for a new president and CEO at the end of December 2020.

At press time for this edition of HeartBeats, the board's CEO Search Task Force was completing its final set of interviews, with the goal of announcing the new president and CEO in early January 2021.

The task force was established in late summer and decided it would seek out

candidates that could develop and maintain strong partnerships, create trusted relationships, be visionary with a strategic focus, be a team builder with strong problem-solving skills, and quickly and effectively identify and manage risks, among other attributes.

The position was advertised through the Ontario Hospital Association and the Longwoods Health Services websites. A total of 32 applications were received from across Canada and overseas.

"We received applications from some excellent candidates," says board and task force chair Lorne Boyko. "Our task force group has been very pleased with our search process, even though conducting interviews via Zoom meetings has proven to be somewhat challenging."

"We are confident the selected candidate will effectively guide our hospital and home into the future, and be able to successfully navigate the health care challenges ahead."

Trees of Hope Campaign Tops \$100,000 in Gifts

The Dunnville Hospital & Healthcare Foundation's annual "Trees of Hope" campaign had received well over \$100,000 in gifts by the mid-December press time of this edition of HeartBeats, beginning with a \$15,000 donation from Dunnville's Buma family.



Among the people participating in the "Henriette McMichen Stride and Ride for Your Hospital" last October were Mike Black and his sons Henry (in the foreground) and John.

Another of the foundation's main fund-raising events raised more than \$30,000 in October. More than 70 people participated in the "Henriette McMichen Stride and Ride for Your Hospital."

Planning at the foundation is now underway for 2021, with some new events for the community. "We'll also be featuring some amazing donor and patient stories, along with celebrating our hospital staff and the great work that happens at HWMH and Edgewater Gardens each and every day," says foundation executive director Penny Banks.



Offering a Warm Welcome to HWMH Patients

Cheryl Schweyer
outside the Admitting
Department, in a photo
taken before the pandemic.

For most patients who come to HWMH, the first person they engage with is Cheryl Schweyer. As the hospital's admitting clerk, it's her responsibility to book appointments for clinic visits, pre-arranged surgeries and other procedures, and to check in patients once they arrive. She also does the paperwork for the clinics, creates patient charts, and accepts payments for uninsured services such as ambulance trips and telephone rental in inpatient units.

A HWMH employee for 36 years, Cheryl works most weekdays in the Admitting Department, but began her time at the hospital as a part-time registered practical nurse. She gradually moved into working full time in a clerical role.

She has come to know most of the hospital's employees, volunteers, and even patients who often drop in to say hello – even when they don't need to come see her. She says many have become friends.

"I love my job," Cheryl says, but has decided to retire early in 2021, adding that the COVID pandemic has made her realize "it's time to slow down and enjoy life." She will continue to serve as a casual employee, covering staff members on vacation or away from work due to illness.

A resident of Canfield, Cheryl lives with her husband Dave, a heavy equipment operator, on a 125-acre property – with the fields rented out to a local farmer for cash crops. Free time is spent taking long walks with the couple's three dogs and working in her flower garden.

She also enjoys spending time with her grown son, daughter and four-year old grandson, and also makes her own chemical-free beauty products, including deodorant, moisturizer, hand and body scrubs, and lip gloss.

Welcome New Staff

HOSPITAL:

Jessica Loeffen – RN
Paula Pitton – Laboratory Patient Technician
Cornelia Thorne – X-Ray Clerk
Cara Lammel – RPN
Barb Kovac – Housekeeper
Anna Draaistra – PSW
Lisa Vanderburg – Ultrasound Technologist
Shelly Holmes – RN
Melanie Hoeksema – RPN
Shawn Kennedy – RN

Jaime Heersink – RN
Kirsten Schmidt – RPN

EDGEWATER:

Lydia Ellis – Music Therapy Aide
Emma Feltrin – Recreation Therapy Aide
Ty Jerome – Pandemic Response Worker
Laurie Huisman – Pandemic Response Worker
Lisa Petta – Pandemic Response Worker



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