

# HEART BEATS

Spring 2022

## Message from the President

With the easing of COVID restrictions across the province, the hospital has also relaxed visiting restrictions.

Family members and friends can visit patients by appointment (call 905-774-7431 ext. 1343) between the hours of 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. daily. Visitors must have no illness symptoms, be screened, wear a new mask provided by the hospital and practice physical distancing. Patients may have up to 4 visitors, one at a time, in the patient's room. More details about visiting patients are available on the hospital website, [hwmh.ca/patients-visitors/visiting-guidelines](http://hwmh.ca/patients-visitors/visiting-guidelines).

Visiting hours at Edgewater Gardens are from 9 a.m. until 7 p.m., with no appointment necessary. In addition to requiring visitors to show proof of full vaccination, undergo screening, wear masks and practice social distancing, they must also undergo a rapid antigen test upon entering the building.

Both organizations implemented a mandatory vaccine policy for staff earlier this year, and all but a few employees have complied. Those who have not are no longer working at the hospital or Edgewater. Several patients, residents and visitors have expressed their relief at knowing that all employees they may be in contact with are fully vaccinated.

Staffing continues to be an issue at both organizations, and recruitment is underway. New management employees recently hired include Sheila Hogan, director of ED/Perioperative Services/ MDRD & Outpatient Services; Ken Hudecki, director of Plant Maintenance/Engineering/EVS; and Hugh Hanley, who will be project manager for the Edgewater Gardens expansion.

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Volunteer John Carvalho packages up gifts of chocolates for employees for Valentine's Day.

**VOLUNTEER  
ASSOCIATION  
NEWS**

## Volunteers Keep Helping During the Pandemic

While the members of the Volunteer Association were unable to come to the hospital or Edgewater Gardens for much of the past two years due to pandemic restrictions, they did get involved in initiatives to support the staff who continued to work on site. These included drive-by parades of support; sponsoring staff breakfasts, lunches and barbecues; gifts of chocolate for employees on Valentine's Day; providing assistance in the COVID testing centre; and delivering lab materials to other area hospitals for processing.

The volunteers are now gradually resuming their work in supporting patient and resident care.

The association has gifted funds of approximately \$150,000 since early 2020, which have been used to enhance the patient and resident experience. This includes purchasing outdoor furniture for Edgewater, obtaining blanket warmers for the hospital's Diagnostic Imaging Department and Inpatient Unit, renovating the third-floor patient and long-term care lounges, and providing funds to support the construction of the new Outpatient Clinic. Funds were raised from such activities as gift shop sales and raffles, along with a substantial bequest from the estate of Sophie Nelson, a long-time ward clerk at the hospital and former Edgewater resident. The new Outpatient Department will soon be named in her memory.

The association is always seeking volunteers to help support the staff in their work with patients and residents. Those people interested in serving or obtaining more information are encouraged to contact president Chris Carvalho at [chriscarvalho14@gmail.com](mailto:chriscarvalho14@gmail.com) or coordinator Joanne Kiers at [joannekiers@hotmail.com](mailto:joannekiers@hotmail.com).



HWMH recently replaced its two aging autoclave machines.

# Managing the Risks of Living with Diabetes

Diabetes is among the most serious health conditions in Canada with more than 10 per cent of people aged 20 and older living with diagnosed diabetes. Yet most people with diabetes can lead healthy lives, and some can even reverse their disease, provided they are careful about their eating habits and get regular exercise.

Diabetes is a condition in which the body either cannot produce insulin or can't properly use the insulin it produces. Insulin is a hormone that regulates the amount of glucose (sugar) in the blood, and too much blood sugar can damage organs, blood vessels and nerves.

While people with Type 1 diabetes will need to inject insulin throughout their lives, 90 per cent of people with diabetes have Type 2 diabetes, which can be managed by healthy lifestyle habits – sometimes along with medication or insulin therapy.

Elaine Wylie is coordinator of the Haldimand-Norfolk Diabetes Program, which has a roster of 2,000 active patients at clinics in Simcoe, Hagersville and Dunnville. She says people will typically be referred to a clinic after experiencing symptoms such as increased thirst and urination, fatigue, dizziness and a change in weight. Some people will have no symptoms at all.

An A1C blood test measures the average

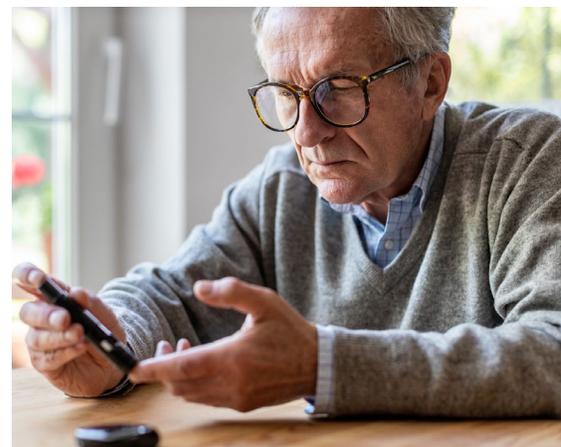
blood glucose over 3 months. A level of 6.5 millimoles per litre (mmol/L) or higher demonstrates a person has diabetes, a level of 5.5 to 6 indicates prediabetes, while a level of 5.5 or higher shows someone at risk of developing diabetes.

Elaine says her clinic staff educate people with diabetes or pre-diabetes on how – and how often – to monitor their blood sugar levels and the ways to keep those levels within a normal range. This includes regular glucose testing and information about what types of foods are more or less likely to affect blood sugar levels.

“It’s not only sugary foods that increase blood glucose levels,” she explains, pointing out that fast foods often cause spikes in blood sugar, as well as starchy foods – such as bread, potatoes, pasta, corn, and rice. “Then there are cans of pop which each contain 10 teaspoons of sugar,” she adds.

“Making a lifestyle change is never easy,” Elaine says, “but we support people along the way, by setting small goals.”

She points to one patient, who – in addition to regularly monitoring her blood glucose levels and practicing good nutrition – was able to eliminate most of her diabetes medications after working up from five minutes of walking per day to 1.5 hours.



Healthy eating and exercise habits – along with regular blood sugar testing – can dramatically reduce the health effects of diabetes.

Diabetes is a chronic condition and it's not unusual for people to just give up on managing their disease, Elaine says. “They tell us they don't want to do it anymore and don't want diabetes to be who they are.”

This attitude can have catastrophic health effects over the long term, resulting in complications including kidney disease, foot and leg problems, eye disease that can lead to blindness, heart attack and stroke, nerve damage, amputation and erectile dysfunction.

Living with diabetes is not easy, but needs to be managed Elaine says. “It's important that people get the support they need to help them with their journey.”

More information about diabetes, its risk factors and management is available on the Diabetes Canada website <https://www.diabetes.ca>

## Message from the President – continued from page 1

Two new board members will be recruited to replace outgoing members of the Board of Directors, and a member of the community with a finance background is being sought to sit on the board's Finance & Audit Committee.

A recent major equipment upgrade at the hospital was the installation of two new autoclave machines to sterilize patient equipment. The relaxation of COVID restrictions has also led to the opening of the new Outpatient Clinic near the hospital entrance.

Meanwhile, the community spread of the virus continues, with the rapid transmission of the more contagious Omicron BA.2 variant. While it is still unknown to what extent this variant will cause serious illness, and despite the lifting of the mask mandate in most public places in Ontario, we urge members of the community to continue to protect themselves from infection.

Sharon Moore, President and CEO



DHMF PRESENTS

The Henriette McMichen Memorial

# Stride & Ride

for our hospital

save THE date - SATURDAY MAY 28, 2022

EVENTS@DHMF.CA | 905.774.2529   

# From War to a Pandemic for Emergency Physician

When Omar Ezzat joined the medical staff at HWMH as an Emergency physician in May of 2020, he was more worried about the COVID-19 pandemic than the war that had affected his hometown of Kirkuk, Iraq. The city had been the scene of fierce fighting during the Second Iraq War with the invasion of American and British forces in 2003.

After obtaining a medical degree from the University of Bagdad in 2002, Dr. Ezzat worked in the Emergency Department at one of Kirkuk's two hospitals. In addition to dealing with the types of cases typically seen in EDs, he also faced situations including intermittent power failures and dozens of wartime casualties coming to the department all at once.

"It was a good learning experience in working with limited resources," he recalls, adding that luckily his hospital was not directly hit in the city's bombardment. "You do realize that life goes on and build some sort of immunity to what's happening."

The pandemic was a different matter. "I did lose sleep over COVID, because we were all dealing with the unknown," he says.

Dr. Ezzat applied to come to Canada as a skilled worker in 2005. Between the Iraq war and the constant battles between local ethnic factions in the northern part of the country, he expected continued strife for several years and decided it was time to leave.

Upon arriving in Canada in 2009, Dr. Ezzat became a volunteer and then an employee at the Catholic Centre for Immigrants in Ottawa, before being certified to practice medicine in this country. He then went to work as a physician at a small hospital in Buchans, Newfoundland.

"There are only 700 people living in that town and I knew every one of them," Dr. Ezzat says. "I signed on to work there for two years, but stayed for nine. I loved it there." In addition to the friendliness of the local community, he enjoyed the challenge of working in a small and somewhat remote hospital.

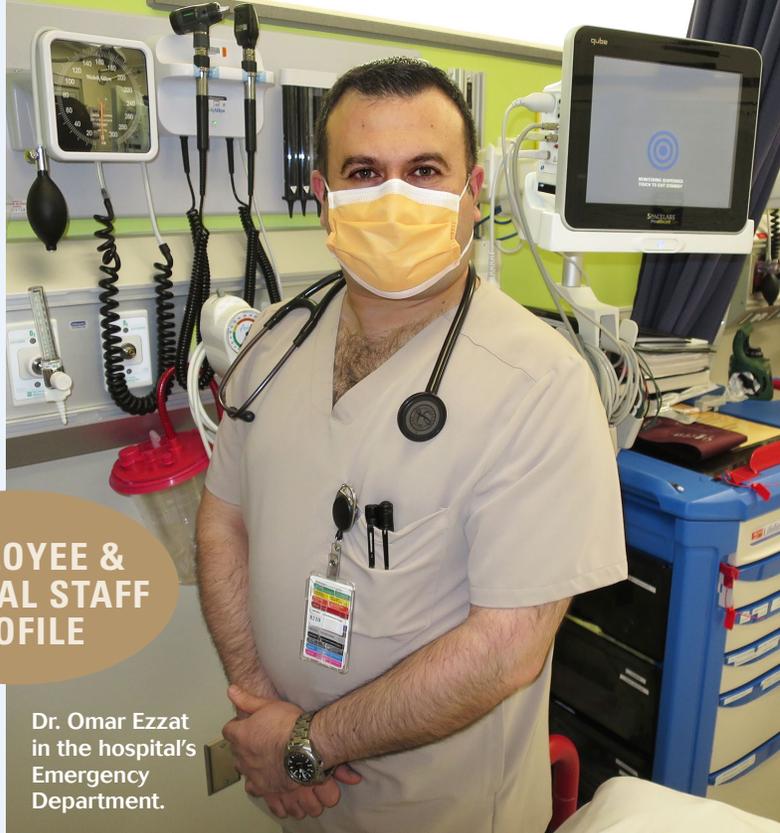
If it were not for his mother, who he sponsored to join him in Canada five years ago, he would have stayed.

She had been experiencing health issues, so Dr. Ezzat decided the pair should move to southern Ontario, close to other relatives who could offer some assistance in her care.

Dr. Ezzat says he made the right decision in coming to work in Dunnville. "I felt welcomed since day one. The other physicians are good to work with, and the nurses are very talented."

In addition to shifts in the Emergency Department at HWMH, he is a member of the local Family Health Team and also works part time at Grandview Lodge.

The diversity of the Canadian population is a benefit of living and working in



## EMPLOYEE & MEDICAL STAFF PROFILE

Dr. Omar Ezzat in the hospital's Emergency Department.

Canada, according to Dr. Ezzat. He has even learned to enjoy our frigid winters, including participating in such recreational activities as snowmobiling and curling. However, he won't be found at any local hockey rink, after three failed attempts at ice skating.

"I've decided this is just not my cup of tea," he says of his wobbly efforts in taking to the ice.



## EDGEWATER GARDENS NEWS

### Celebrating St. Patrick's Day

Edgewater resident Patrick McKean and PSW Lavare Taylor prepare to participate in activities to mark St. Patrick's Day.

# 50 Years of Volunteer Service

## VOLUNTEER PROFILE



Bev Jackson in  
the Edgewater  
Gift Shop

Bev Jackson's nearly 50 years of service as a volunteer at HWMH and then Edgewater Gardens started shortly after she and her husband moved to Dunnville. She joined the volunteer association as a way to get to know some of the town's residents and offer her service to the community.

She also followed in her parents' footsteps. Bev's mother had been a hospital volunteer for more than 30 years and her father, Howard Brown, was a HWMH board member – serving as chair from 1977 to 1979 – and founding member of the Dunnville Hospital & Healthcare Foundation.

Bev also worked part-time for 30 years at the Dunnville Public Library, retiring in 2005.

While raising two small children, her first job as a hospital volunteer was working in the little tuck shop, then located across the hallway from the current "Hidden Gem" Gift Shop. She progressed to taking on a variety of volunteer responsibilities, and also served on the executive of the regional and provincial hospital volunteer associations. She was president of the HWMH volunteer association during its 50th anniversary in 1983, and remains a director of the organization.

For nearly eight years, Bev has been in charge of the gift shop near the entrance to Edgewater Gardens. "I really enjoy retailing and public service," she says, adding that volunteering is a rewarding way of life.

While the pandemic resulted in Bev being unable to volunteer at Edgewater for most of 2020 and early 2021, and only sporadically during the past year, she is back to her regular shifts at the gift shop.

## Getting Involved

The hospital is reaching out to the local community to participate in its mission of "Best care, every person, every time." HWMH is seeking community input for two important initiatives.

A new "CEO Advisory Committee" is being established by president and CEO Sharon Moore to gather input on how the hospital can best serve the needs of the community – including patients, family members and visitors. Anyone interested in

joining this committee is invited to contact executive assistant Jennifer Miller at [jmiller@hwmh.ca](mailto:jmiller@hwmh.ca), 905-774-7431 ext. 1269.

The hospital is also looking for feedback from the community – including from people with disabilities – as it works on developing an updated accessibility policy and plan. Also welcome are thoughts about any accessibility barriers that members of the community may notice when visiting or being cared for at the hospital.

## Welcome New Staff

### HOSPITAL:

Cathy Oliver – Ward Clerk

Kenneth Hudecki – Director, Plant Maintenance/Engineering/EVS

Sheila Hogan – Director, ED/Perioperative Services/MDRD & Outpatient Services

Christopher DeBoer – RN

Johanna Lichty Mitchell – RN

Ricci Thompson – Pandemic Response Worker

Aldo Alexis Camargo Zavala – ED Clerk

Lisa Krick – RN

Susan Manwarren – Pandemic Response Worker

Haili Young – Housekeeper

Marli Case – ED Clerk

Kaella Graham – ED Clerk

Shannon Sjaarda – RPN

Nicole Reece – RN

Amanda McAlonan – Housekeeper

Shelly Holmes – RN

### EDGEWATER:

Taryn Cooper – Housekeeper

Mackenzie Mitchell – Recreation Therapy

Crystal Middleton-Edsall – Pandemic Response Worker

Hugh Hanly – Project Manager

Caitlyn Edgar – PSW

Kelly Harstine – PSW

Helmer Acuna – PSW

Members of the public are invited to provide feedback to Health & Safety representative Elaine Wielink, [ewielink@edgewaterlhc.ca](mailto:ewielink@edgewaterlhc.ca) or Human Resources director Jessica Field at [jfield@hwmh.ca](mailto:jfield@hwmh.ca). An in-person appointment can be made by contacting Elaine at 905-774-2208 or Jessica at 905-774-7431 ext. 1401.

The current accessibility policy and plan is posted on the hospital website, [www.hwmh.ca](http://www.hwmh.ca), with other formats available upon request.



**Haldimand  
War Memorial  
Hospital**

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### Contact for HWMH and EG:

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President and CEO  
905-774-7431 ext.1210



**Edgewater  
Gardens**

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