

Headwaters Health Care Centre officially unveils new three-year strategic plan

Written By MIKE BAKER

Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC) officially unveiled a new three-year strategic plan to the community on Tuesday, highlighting three key areas the hospital will focus on to improve delivery of services at the local facility.

During the facility's AGM, held in Shelburne on Tuesday (June 19), HHCC President and CEO Stacey Daub revealed staff at the hospital will focus on three strategic directions between now and 2022: 'Getting Even Better', 'Nothing About You, Without You', and 'Integrated Care Close to Home'.

"This is a huge milestone for Headwaters Health Care Centre. This is an initiative we have shared completely with the community. I didn't really need to unveil it tonight, because the community already knows all about this. It's their words. It's what they asked us to do," Ms. Daub told the Citizen. "I feel extraordinarily proud. We really engaged a lot of people. We've gone corner to corner and really listened to our residents. They gave us their voice and now we have a great plan moving forward."

HHCC began its Imagine Headwaters campaign in early 2018. Over the course of the last 18 months, staff at the facility has engaged with more than 3,000 residents, while receiving approximately 1,500 survey responses from community citizens.

A total of 20 partner organizations provided feedback on strengths and improvement opportunities throughout the process.

So what, exactly, did staff hear? The report states that patients and caregivers talked about their widespread experience of compassionate care and pride in their local hospital, as well as the need for improved integration of care, better access to essential services, more options for care, and necessary upgrades to the facility.

Staff, physicians and volunteers talked about how they can become stronger partners in day-to-day decisions, and in shaping the future of HHCC. They also identified opportunities to improve the hospital's ability to attract and retain staff across different departments, as well as the need to provide resources to support clinicians in specific areas.

Ms. Daub noted one of the key challenges the hospital faces over the next few years, as, seemingly, has always been the case, is identifying additional funding resources.

"Medium-sized hospital funding needs to be addressed so we can best service our community. We need to be creative and nimble with the resources that we have," Ms. Daub noted in the report. "We are operating at capacity and we need upgrades to our facilities and our infrastructure."

A complete renovation of the hospital's main lobby and emergency departments will begin in the next 12 months. Beyond that, Ms. Daub notes the maternity ward and obstetrics area will be specific focuses for improvement in the future.

"Identifying other projects for improvement will be part of our process going out and talking to the community and really asking about what longer-term programs. It all starts with clinical services and where they want to go," Ms. Daub said. "We've done a lot of the upper levels of the hospital, but all our in-patient units are obvious areas for us to continue to develop the hospital."

When asked how the hospital would measure the success of the strategic plan, Ms. Daub replied, simply, by doing the very things laid out in the document.

Under Getting Even Better, HHCC staff is tasked with relentlessly driving even higher levels of quality across its departments, investing in the continuous development and recognition of its staff, and continuously improving the facility and driving operational excellence. Through Nothing About You, Without You, Ms. Daub notes the main aim is partnering with patients and families on

what's most important to them, empowering individuals and teams to have more control over their work and work life, and continuing to build the future of HHCC with the local community. In embracing Integrated Care Close to home, the hospital is committed to partnering to advance integrated systems of care in the community and improving the health of the community alongside various community partners.

The strategic plan also highlights a new set of values, centred around kindness, passion, courage and teamwork.

HHCC Annual Report

During the annual report to the community, Ms. Daub declared 2018 as a year of progress at HHCC. The hospital has outlined a plan to enhance various programs and services over the coming years.

The Hemodialysis Unit will soon have a brand-new space in the facility's Ambulatory Care Centre, to ensure the needs of dialysis patients will continue to be met. In the meantime, while that unit is under development, the hospital has created a temporary six-bed unit on the lower hospital level so people in the community can continue to receive care close to home.

The facility embarked on a major renovation of its pre- and post-surgical areas over the past year, while the addition of a fourth operating room means HHCC can provide even more surgical services to its patients. A satellite pharmacy was opened in the Ambulatory Care Wing last year to enable onsite pharmacists to mix chemotherapy medications for patients. Previously, the hospital would purchase the medications, which would then be mixed at William Osler Health Systems, before being delivered to the Orangeville hospital. Staff at the hospital also launched a new diabetes program support group for women.

Although not exactly ?flashy? upgrades, as Ms. Daub commented, the hospital also commissioned expensive upgrades to its heating and ventilation systems last year, while also installing a new emergency generator.

Perhaps the one area the public will see the most immediate difference is in the emergency department. HHCC recruited nine ER physicians and almost 20 nurses last year to keep up with growing needs in the Headwaters community.

As far as statistics go, the hospital recorded 42,088 emergency department visits in 2018, carried out 4,688 day surgeries and 887 inpatient surgeries. The hospital recorded a total of 28,539 outpatient visits, saw 24,196 inpatient admissions, conducted 2,319 oncology consultations and administered 1,244 chemotherapy treatments. HHCC racked up a total of 3,886 dialysis visits, carried out 789,064 lab tests, and delivered 800 babies. As of the end of the 2018/19 fiscal year, the hospital employs a total of 729 staff, with 158 physicians. The hospital relied on the assistance of more than 400 community volunteers last year.

For more information on Headwaters Health Care Centre, visit www.headwatershealth.ca.