

Osler set to make difference at home and abroad with Global Health mission

William Osler Health System is looking beyond its borders and setting its sights across the world in order to improve the care it delivers at home.

Until May 14, a clinical team from Osler is visiting Punjab, India, to learn more about health care in that region and identify opportunities to partner with organizations there through research and education initiatives that will enhance the delivery of health care services in the local community and beyond.

"We have a large and engaged Punjabi community within our region," says Matthew Anderson, president and CEO of Osler. "Through this mission and support of health care initiatives in Punjab, we can contribute to the homeland of our local citizens in a meaningful way by learning how we can deliver services to better meet the needs of the patients and families we serve, now and into the future."

This is the first international mission to take place since Osler's Global Health program launched last summer. A five-member team from Osler will visit Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Amritsar and surrounding areas to meet with hospital leaders and non-governmental organizations (NGO) to learn more about health care in the Punjab region. They will also visit hospital-affiliated satellite clinics in rural areas to see first-hand how health care services are delivered. Upon the team's return, a steering committee headed by program co-leads Dr. Naveed Mohammad, vice-president of medical affairs and Susan deRyk, vice-president of patient experience, communications and strategy, will evaluate the partnership opportunities and begin planning the next stages of the India initiative. "Many people from this community come from other parts of the world. With them they bring their heritage, culture, genetics, and their disease processes," Mohammad said. "Understanding how health care is delivered in Punjab will help us establish partnerships with local health care providers to create innovative programs, such as screening for common illnesses or assisting with maternal health challenges, which will have a direct impact on patient care in the areas where it's needed most."

As part of Osler's corporate research strategy, the Global Health program has a number of priorities, including researching the progression and treatment of diseases within multi-generational and multi-cultural communities and exploring different treatment options to meet the needs of each patient. With this, Osler identified six clinical areas where there is the greatest potential for impact and selected the tour team based on these needs.

The tour team includes Mohammad; Dr. David Kocerginski, corporate chief of psychiatry and medical director of mental health and addictions; Dr. Davinder Wadehra, medical director of nephrology (representing chronic disease area); Kelly Falzon, director of the women's, children's and seniors programs; and Gurpreet Rosales, project manager and Global Health program lead

The funds provided for the mission have been donated by the William Osler Health System Foundation.

"Osler's Global Health program provides an exciting and unprecedented opportunity to learn, to share and to innovate" leading us to improved health care within this region and beyond," said Kulvir Singh Gill, chair of the Foundation. "Osler Foundation is thrilled to be a part of this monumental first international mission, and support the tremendous work of this hospital and its clinicians."