



**Report from Nadine Doucette
Chair, Board of Directors
February 22, 2017**

A growing number of hospitals in Ontario are now offering unrestricted visiting hours. Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (our Hospital) has taken an innovative approach to this concept by consulting with our Patient Family Advisory (PFA) Council to offer 24/7 access to those identified by the patient as a Care Partner.

What's the difference between a Visitor and a Care Partner? Both are important to patients, and both help improve experiences in care. At our Hospital, Care Partners are important members of the patient's care team.

Our Patient and Family Centred Care philosophy is about working together – patients, families and health care providers. It means decisions are made as a team. That is why our Hospital distinguishes Visitors from Care Partners.

Patients determine who their Care Partners are. It may be a family member, friend, or significant other who provides physical, psychological, or emotional support. Care Partners have nearly unlimited access to the patient to support and participate in their care. Visitors are family members or friends of the patient, who have not been identified by the patient as a Care Partner. Regular visiting hours for visitors, excluding Care Partners, are from 10:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

To ensure the visitation policy would best suit the expectations of our patients, the Patient Family Advisory (PFA) Council was engaged to provide insight and recommendations.

As part of its commitment to transparency and accountability to patients and families in Northwestern Ontario, our Hospital continues to make the open meetings of its Board of Directors accessible for viewing via a live webcast. The option makes it possible for anyone – whether they live in Thunder Bay, Northwestern Ontario, or beyond – who is interested in the decisions being made about the Hospital to watch the open Board meetings online. These meetings occur monthly and are webcast live via the Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN).

On the day of an open Board meeting, viewers can go online to www.tbrhsc.net/webcast. There, they will find a link to the webcast, a meeting agenda, and a full schedule of upcoming open Board meetings. Webcasting begins at the time prescribed on the agenda, and ends immediately after the adjournment of the meeting. There's no need for viewers to register. Simply click, watch and learn. Webcasting our open Board meetings provides patients, families and stakeholders from across the region with a front row seat on the decisions being made about the Hospital, and it's another innovative way that we use technology to overcome the vast distance of Northwestern Ontario.

We have recently received the final report of the 2016 Operational Review and our President & CEO and the North West LHIN CEO have co-signed a letter to the Deputy Minister Bob Bell at the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) to inform him of the completion.