



**Report from Matt Simeoni
Chair, Board of Directors
November 7, 2018**

Our Hospital is committed to curtail smoking on the property. I applaud the initiatives of the Government of Ontario to reduce smoking rates, including amendments to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act to include the enforcement of smoke-free grounds for hospitals. It is no secret that our Hospital is challenged to implement and enforce smoke-free grounds. This is a source of frustration that frequently elicits complaints from patients, family members and staff.

Our Hospital is viewed as a leader in smoke-free grounds enforcement; we were named "Smoke-Free Champions" by the Northwest Tobacco Control Area Network in 2016. Extensive efforts have been made to foster and sustain a healthy, smoke-free environment. In 2013, we successfully advocated to have our municipal smoke-free by-law amended to include our Hospital grounds. We have partnered with enforcement officers at the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, deputized Hospital security guards, and collaborated with the Thunder Bay Police Services in an effort to enforce the Act.

In addition, strategies were implemented to educate the community of the Smoke-Free Grounds, and resources were enhanced to support patients and staff to quit smoking. Signage throughout the property advises people not to smoke, and reminders of the Smoke-Free Grounds were added to patient appointment letters and overhead announcements.

Despite these significant efforts, we regularly observe smokers on our property in contravention of our policy as well as municipal and provincial legislations. I have reached out to the Premier of Ontario to respectfully request a review and amendment of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act to make enforcement of the legislation more achievable. Unfortunately, recent legislation changes that include both vaping and the use of cannabis may increase the number of people using these products on hospital grounds, thus compounding the potential for infractions that we will have to contend with. I am grateful to Thunder Bay – Superior North MPP Michael Gravelle for his endorsement of my request.

On September 27, I was honoured to participate in the annual Sharing and Caring Together, an exhibition that highlights and celebrates our Hospital's commitment to Patient and Family Centred Care (PFCC) philosophy. Our Hospital has come a long way since beginning the PFCC journey, and it is still a priority for the entire Hospital community, including the Board of Directors. It is inspiring to see the level of dedication to PFCC held by staff, physicians and volunteers, and the passion applied to enhancing experiences for patients and their families. PFCC is about being Healthy Together, and I congratulate the entire team for demonstrating this every day.

Finally, I was pleased to attend the October 20 Resolute Save a Heart Ball, in support of cardiovascular services development at our Hospital. Fellow Board Directors Gord Wickam and Joy Wakefield were also present and equally impressed by the quality of the event, and the level of engagement of the attendees. Once again, the Health Sciences Foundation hosted an exceptional evening. I extend my appreciation and congratulations to the staff, volunteers, sponsors and guests who made the evening such a success.