**Report from Matt Simeoni**

**Chair, Board of Directors**

**May 1, 2019**

Our Hospital is a centre for learning for staff, researchers, students, teachers, and other health care professionals. Research is an essential element of our academic mission. The Thunder Bay Regional Health Research Institute, established in 2007 as a separate corporation, is the Hospital’s research arm. Integrating research, academics, learning, and clinical practice supports an inter-professional approach to conducting research on health care challenges with a particular focus on Northwestern Ontario, and with a global impact. An advisory committee has been formed to further strengthen the affiliation between the Hospital and Health Research Institute. The committee last met on April 12 to explore a new governance model to be presented to the Hospital and Health Research Institute Boards of Directors.

I am extremely proud of the commitment of our Board to Indigenous Health. During the April Board meeting, Directors received the same Indigenous Health orientation provided to all new staff members. In addition, Board Directors are completing the on-line San’yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training Program. The training was conceived in response to the Transformative Change Accord First Nations Health Plan requirement to enhance cultural competency within Health Authorities through Action Item 19: *First Nations and the Province will develop a curriculum for cultural competency for health authorities*.

Furthermore, an Indigenous Health Work Plan committee has been formed to monitor, support, and report to the Board of Directors on the implementation of our Indigenous Health Strategic Direction. I am grateful to Board Directors Micheal Hardy, Joy Wakefield, and Gordon Wickham, as well as President & CEO Jean Bartkowiak and Crystal Pirie, Senior Director, Indigenous Collaboration, for their involvement.

Our Hospital recently experienced an Influenza A outbreak on one of our in-patient units, as well as a gastrointestinal outbreak on the Hospital’s Transitional Care Unit at Hogarth Riverview Manor. Even with stringent infection control practices, there are many ways for infections to spread in a hospital environment. Infection prevention and control supports a safe and healthy environment. I take this opportunity to reinforce that all people accessing the Hospital to attend appointments, visit patients, or conduct business are encouraged to be diligent about hand hygiene. It is the most effective way to prevent and reduce the spread of infections.

Finally, I offer my heartfelt congratulations and gratitude to the organizers, volunteers, sponsors, and attendees of the Co-Operators Bachelors for Hope Charity Auction, held on Friday, April 12. The event raised $90,236 for the Northern Cancer Fund, bringing the 21-year total to $1,330,957. Funds raised directly support breast cancer research, education, diagnosis and treatment in Northwestern Ontario, ensuring women (and men) have access to quality cancer care close to home. The support of our community is inspiring, and helps us to be Healthy Together.