



**Report from Matt Simeoni  
Chair, Board of Directors  
February 5, 2020**

I am honoured to extend greetings to the residents of Northwestern Ontario in my first report of 2020.

This year marks the closing of our Strategic Plan 2020, which guided the Hospital's strategic activity over the past five years. Over that time, 95% of the strategic activities that we originally set out to accomplish are now complete. This is a remarkable achievement and moves us closer to our Vision of Healthy Together. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend congratulations to the staff, professional staff, scientists, patient family advisors, volunteers, learners, and donors for enabling our success.

As previously reported, the new Strategic Plan, called The Right Plan, will focus on the Right Care at the Right Time. The Right Plan will guide activity into 2021, and focus on overcapacity. Previous Strategic Plans have facilitated many successes and significant growth that have positive impacts to patients, families, and our community. Overcapacity, however, remains an ongoing challenge. The Right Plan will focus on overcapacity by addressing patient flow in terms of:

- Enabling Success at Home;
- Optimizing the Acute Inpatient Care Journey;
- Ensuring Effective Transitions in Care.

The process to recruit the next Hospital President and CEO, and Thunder Bay Regional Health Research Institute CEO is underway. An executive search firm will be selected in early March at the latest; and this expert firm will guide the recruitment process throughout the first half of 2020 until a new CEO is selected. Our current President & CEO, Mr. Jean Bartkowiak, has always been transparent regarding his planned retirement at the end of his existing contract. While there is still much work for him to do during his remaining time in office, I wanted to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Mr. Bartkowiak for all he has done for Northwestern Ontario over the last 4 years, and what he will continue to do in the year ahead. Our recruitment strategy and team will ensure the selection of the most suitable successor to lead our Hospital and Health Research Institute moving forward.

I had the opportunity to represent the Board of Directors at the January 14 Long Service Celebration and Walk the Talk Awards, to celebrate and recognize Hospital employees, professional staff and volunteers. It was an honour to present this year's Board of Directors Walk the Talk Award, which recognized the outstanding contribution of a team that has performed its responsibilities in an exemplary manner under extraordinary circumstances; the Award this year was presented to the Stores Department. This Department is responsible for ensuring the day-to-day availability of 3.5 million products used by the programs and services in our Hospital. Many of these products are vitally important to direct patient care. The dedicated staff in the Stores Department ensure the right products are available at the right time, enabling the best possible outcomes for our patients. Congratulations to the Stores Department on being recognized with this year's Board of Directors Award and to everyone that was recognized and celebrated that evening at such an important event for our Hospital.

Our Hospital is committed to improving Indigenous Health and to addressing disparities in health status between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Racism experienced by Indigenous people is a serious issue and a barrier to accessing health care. Our Board of Directors, along with members of the Senior Leadership Council, participated in an anti-racism workshop on January 27 to better understand the impact of racism and to learn how to embed anti-racism into our practices each and every day. The workshop will inform decisions regarding the priorities and accountabilities of our Board of Directors and Senior Leaders to address racism, especially systemic racist practices, and to ensure that Indigenous patients and their families are provided culturally safe, empathic, and respectful care at our Hospital.

Our Board of Director's remains committed to our Vision of Healthy Together. As we look toward the year ahead, we continue to be inspired by the commitment to patients and families, to ongoing progress, and to the ability to be responsive to the evolving health care environment for all communities across the entire region of Northwestern Ontario.