



Thunder Bay Regional  
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Board of Directors  
Conseil d'administration

## **Report from Matt Simeoni Chair, Board of Directors – May 5, 2021**

With spring in the air and vaccinations rolling out in Thunder Bay and across the Northwest in higher volumes, there seems to be a renewed sense of optimism with many people. Without a doubt, it is welcomed and with light at the end of the tunnel somewhat evident, it is in many ways justified.

However, there's work to do first. The third wave is hitting Ontario hard and is proving to be the most difficult wave yet. We have lost so many friends, family and neighbours during this pandemic. Our health care professionals are exhausted and yet continue to treat people with the highest levels of professionalism and compassion.

And, now with other parts of Ontario getting hit harder than us and experiencing crisis levels of cases, our Hospital is one of many that the province is turning to as a place where they can send patients to be treated. As you know, earlier in the pandemic, it was TBRHSC that needed help and had to send patients out as part of the provincial health care system. Now it is our turn to step up and show Ontario what makes our people the best – and that is exactly what they are doing. Our staff are currently going through a redeployment strategy within the Hospital to ensure we are best positioned to help the most vulnerable who are flown into us – while ensuring our communities in the Northwest are served for all of their urgent health care needs. Seeing this in action – seeing the ability of our senior leadership and staff to pivot quickly yet again is inspiring and comforting. They are truly role models and heroes for us all.

While we continue to struggle with the realities of COVID-19, senior leadership with input from the Board, has begun extremely important work on the Hospital's next strategic plan. What may sound bureaucratic to some is actually a critical roadmap that will help TBRHSC be successful post-pandemic. There has already been input from various stakeholders including the public, with more input happening as we speak. Now we are moving the process into the extremely crucial Phase 2.

We are asking people to engage and challenge this process. Now more than ever, it is critical we get this right. To inspire and challenge the process, the Hospital has engaged several thought leaders from various sectors across the province, as well as nationally and internationally. They are lending insight on future health modelling, health system redesign, post-COVID recovery, and new systems approach to care at a community and regional level. I am encouraging everyone to engage in the very important process and be heard.

As I conclude this update, I encourage everyone to reflect on what they have been through, what they have endured and how they did that. We are in the late rounds now and after speaking with our senior leadership team, front-line health care workers and research experts, it is clear this is the time for our communities to double-down on precautions related to social distancing and proper mask usage.

Stay safe, everyone. Be kind to one another. We're almost there.