



# CEO Report to the Board

May 22, 2024



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## 1.0 Strategy in Action

### Reaching Out to Our Community

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#### **Back by ‘pap-ular’ demand**

Overflowing attendance at St. Joseph’s innovative Pop-up Pap Test Clinic held in January 2024 signaled success, yet also revealed a crucial gap in care in London. So, the clinic popped up again.

As previously reported, the initial Pop-up Pap Test Clinic, hosted in collaboration with the South West Regional Cancer Program (SWRCP), attracted a staggering 103 people who began lining up even before the doors opened. The response surpassed all expectations. Most of those who turned out did not have a family doctor and were overdue for the screening – some as long as 15 years. For five individuals (five per cent), the pap test results were abnormal and they are receiving follow-up care.

The high demand, along with inquiries from people who couldn’t attend, inspired Dr. Robert Di Cecco, Medical Director of the Colposcopy Clinic, his team and the SWRCP to host a second clinic on May 10. Once again, the clinic was an outstanding success with 80 people dropping in for a pap test. On [St. Joseph’s website](#), read more about this unique outreach initiative to make cervical screening more accessible.

#### **Parkwood Fitness Centre reopens to community membership**

After a four-year pause to in-person fitness training, the Parkwood Fitness Centre has reopened its doors to community membership thanks in part to an Implementation Seed Grant through the [Western Research Hub for Physical Activity and Health](#). The Parkwood Fitness Centre provides access to specialized equipment not available in the community but essential to maintaining long-term health and fitness goals for those who have experienced significant neurological injury or disease. The Fitness Centre is now in new space with new staff and leveraging an online booking system. During this pilot phase of the relaunched community membership program, the team is working with the centre’s members to ensure their needs are being met and formal evaluation aims to identify areas for improvement. This work is being supported by the Research 2 Practice (R2P) team and researchers with the Gray Centre for Mobility and Activity at Parkwood Institute. The Fitness Centre team is also looking at ways to expand the centre and exploring partnerships to build the community’s capacity to support our patients post-rehabilitation.

### Advancing Excellence in Care Together

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#### **Capital master planning – an update**

As capital master planning at St. Joseph’s enters phase 2, the following are key updates as this work progresses:

- **Presentation of the Clinical Services Plan:** On April 26, 2024, President and CEO Roy Butler, Vice President Jodi Younger, St. Joseph’s capital master planning team, along with our consultants KPMG, Preyra Solutions Group (data and analytics) and Resource Planning Group (service delivery and spaces), presented highlights of our Clinical Services Plan to Ontario Health and the Ministry of Health, Capital Branch. The Ministry representatives were very receptive to the plan and offered encouragement to the team to continue to work with partners to further develop the future.

The Clinical Services Plan was also presented at a follow up vision session held May 6. All who participated in the first vision session were invited to the follow-up. Approximately 170 people attended this second session, which also included a look ahead at the development of a proposal for the space and infrastructure required to realize our vision. Positive feedback was received on our clinical directions from our broader stakeholders, community and hospital partners, who expressed a desire to continue moving forward with the hospital as our project progresses.

- **Outreach expanded to youth:** During April 2024, engagement outreach for capital master planning was broadened to include youth groups. An interactive session was facilitated with members of the Youth Mental Health & Addictions Council, which shared thoughts on opportunities for improvement in mental health care and how technology should be considered.

### **Garden planting kick-off**

A planting kick-off event was held May 9 at Parkwood Institute to start the growing season for the Nourish Project's onsite garden. Digging in alongside staff and volunteers were patients from St. Joseph's Mental Health Care Program for whom the garden has become part of therapeutic recreation, which has had a positive impact on wellness.

As previously reported, the onsite garden is a key component of St. Joseph's Nourish Project led by a team with Food and Nutrition Services. The team is one of five across Canada participating in a new, two-year Nourish Anchor Cohort that launched in September 2023, which aims to encourage innovation that can impact climate, equity and community well-being through food in health care.

This will be the third summer for the garden, which supplies fresh ingredients directly to inpatients and residents at St. Joseph's. New this year:

- The Nourish Project is partnering with the Biigajiikaan: Indigenous Pathways to Mental Wellness program at St. Joseph's to add the growing of traditional medicines.
- The garden now has a name – Onuhkw:t Tsi'tKah^tay^' (pronounced Ho-new-gwat Geet-Guh-Haw-Die-yah) – an Oneida word provided by an Indigenous knowledge keeper that means "In the Medicine Garden."
- Thanks to donor support through St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation, and expertise and support from Clintar and Facilities Management, a new irrigation system has been installed to enrich and increase the garden's yields and allow teams to spend more time on planting, weeding and overall maintenance.
- Two students hired through a Canada Summer Jobs Grant will support the garden as part St. Joseph's commitment to build the skills and knowledge of students through summer employment.

The garden is maintained in partnership with Urban Roots London, a non-profit organization that specializes in using underutilized land for agriculture.

### **Funding boost for stroke rehabilitation**

Over the past two fiscal years, Parkwood Institute's Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Program (CORP) and Community Stroke Rehabilitation Team (CSRT) have benefitted from a significant investment in community stroke rehabilitation made in 2022 by the Ministry of Health. This additional one-time funding for CORP and CSRT has been used to pilot additional human

resources and to purchase equipment and assessment tools crucial in providing evidence-based stroke rehabilitation to optimize patient care.

Starting 2024-2025, the Ministry has provided additional base funding to support community stroke rehabilitation (CORP and CSRT). The goal is to use this funding to enhance human resources to improve access to care and expand stroke care services in the community.

## Leading in Research and Innovation

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### **Landmark study tests promising treatment for advanced melanoma**

Researchers at St. Joseph's are playing a lead role in one of the world's largest randomized controlled clinical trials using fecal microbiota transplantation (FMT) to improve the effectiveness of the standard of care for advanced melanoma. The Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) is uniting with a team of 12 researchers and collaborators for this phase II trial, which will test new technology developed by Dr. Michael Silverman, Lawson Health Research Institute scientist and Medical Director of St. Joseph's Infectious Disease Care Program, along with Lawson scientist Dr. Seema Parvathy (PhD). The St. Joseph's team developed the technology to transfer gut microbes using capsules produced from healthy donors to improve the microbiome of patients with cancer and other diseases. In partnership with London Health Sciences Centre researchers Dr. Saman Maleki and Dr. John Lenehan, the London team demonstrated the safety and therapeutic potential of using the capsules produced at St Joseph's to influence a patient's gut microbiota and make treatment for advanced melanoma more effective.

An estimated 11,300 Canadians are expected to be diagnosed with melanoma in 2024. The current standard of care for patients with advanced melanoma is a type of immunotherapy called immune checkpoint blockade (ICB). While ICB plays an important role in treatment, more than half of patients will still experience disease progression and unfortunately die of the disease. Finding a path to make this treatment effective for more people would have enormous impact on patient care and significantly improve the odds of surviving advanced melanoma.

The phase II trial will be co-led by a researcher from Université de Montréal and Dr. Lenehan, alongside collaborators and nearly 130 patients with advanced melanoma who will be recruited throughout Canada for the study. The St. Joseph's team will be providing the FMT capsules for the \$2 million, 16-site trial and are part of an informational [video](#) about this exciting therapy potential. Overall, the trial positions the team and organization as world leaders in the field of FMT. Read more on the [CCS website](#).

### **New study sheds light on patients experiencing homelessness**

A study co-authored by Dr. Cheryl Forchuk (PhD), Assistant Scientific Director at Lawson Health Research Institute, has found that nearly 30,000 people last year were homeless when admitted to hospital and/or discharged from hospital. The [first-of-its-kind Canadian analysis](#) also found that almost all of these inpatients were admitted following a visit to an emergency department and the complexity of their illnesses meant they stayed twice as long as the national average. Particularly troubling is that many were discharged into the community without stable housing.

The new analysis – using a database from the Canadian Institute for Health Information – is the first detailed look at Canadian hospitals' use of Z59.0, a mandatory record-keeping code intended to identify and improve services for patients experiencing homelessness. Key findings include:

- Nearly 30,000 patients identified as living without housing were hospitalized across Canada last year.

- Average length of stay for people experiencing homelessness was 15.4 days, compared with the national eight-day average.
- A little more than 12 per cent of patients had hospital stays of more than one month.
- Estimated average cost of each stay was \$16,800, compared with the national average of \$7,800.
- Substance use, schizophrenic disorders and cellulitis (a bacterial infection) are the three most common reasons for hospital stays.
- Of these patients, 93 per cent were admitted to hospital after an emergency department visit.

The study highlights how housing is intimately connected to health and wellbeing, and the importance of hospitals like St. Joseph's and London Health Sciences Centre participating in initiatives such as the Health and Homelessness Whole of Community Response in London. The data also supports finding workable solutions to the complex problem of how people experiencing homelessness receive care. Read more on [Lawson's website](#).

### **Parkwood Institute Research - Research Day**

Parkwood Institute Research (PIR) hosted its annual Research Day on May 16 with a focus on 'Pursuing 'Techquity' through Health Research'. The keynote speaker was Tarun Katapally, Canada Research Chair in Digital Health for Equity at Western University, a "digital epidemiologist" and founder of the Digital Epidemiology and Population Health Laboratory. The lab brings together interdisciplinary researchers, community partners and multi-sector stakeholders to develop digital solutions for existing and emerging population health crises.

Displays showcasing how technology and health care go hand-in-hand, along with workshops, panel discussions and research posters, allowed the 175 participants to explore innovative basic, clinical and population-level health care research and practices being conducted locally and reflect upon diverse methodological approaches to conduct innovative and impactful research in health care.

St. Joseph's care partners and the Care Partnership Office played a key role in the popular, sold-out event. Care partners took part in evaluating some of the research posters and in the award selection process and participated in a workshop for the researchers led by the Care Partnership Office team. The goal of the workshop was to help researchers understand why involving patients and families in tech design is vital in achieving 'techquity', the challenges in designing inclusive health care technology, and to gain knowledge of methods and best practices for inclusive and collaborative research design. The participating care partners shared their experiences being involved in research projects and expressed their perspectives on tech equity.

### **Leveraging technology**

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#### **OneChart Phase II – an update**

OneChart Phase II went live on April 23, 2024, for St. Joseph's Mental Health Care Program's ambulatory care teams including the Operational Stress Injury, electroconvulsive therapy and transcranial magnetic stimulation clinic teams, as well as the seven Assertive Community Teams. Much work by the clinical leads, staff in all roles, clinicians and the OneChart project team resulted in a smooth launch without any major issues. Feedback to date has been overwhelmingly positive. This transition to electronic patient documentation provides physicians, nurses and other health disciplines with improved access to patient health information and more comprehensive information in a single source to better support patients.

## Empowering people

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### Celebrating our nurses

St. Joseph's celebrated National Nursing Week May 6 to 12 in various ways to recognize the tremendous contributions and impact of our 1,470 nurses on the lives of patients, residents and families, our organization and the health care system:

- Three nurses and their unique roles were profiled on [St. Joseph's website](#), in social media, and in a [video](#), with each describing what this year's theme – "Changing Lives. Shaping Tomorrow" – means to them.
- At all sites, nurses were invited to take a selfie in roving photo frames and share the photo on social media.
- St. Joseph's was featured in Hospital News with an ad thanking the dedication and commitment of our nurses in caring for patients and residents.
- Three care partners expressed their appreciation for nurses in an intranet feature.
- All staff and physicians were encouraged to send an E-card saying thank you to nursing colleagues who exemplify St. Joseph's values of respect, excellence and compassion.
- As always, the annual Blessing of the Hands was held at each site – an important tradition of Nursing Week.

### Interim Chair of St. Joseph's Medical Advisory Committee

Medical Affairs has announced Dr. Scott McKay as Interim Chair of St. Joseph's Medical Advisory Committee, effective May 1. Medical Affairs expresses gratitude to Dr. Sandra Northcott for her dedication and commitment while serving as Chair from 2023 to 2024, and as Vice Chair from 2021 to 2023. Dr. Northcott is leaving St. Joseph's to assume the leadership role of Chief of Staff at The Royal, which includes the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre and the Brockville Mental Health Centre.

### Westminster Ponds Clean Up Day

St. Joseph's was well represented at the Westminster Ponds Clean-Up Day on May 4. Earth Day booths across St. Joseph's in April 2024 encouraged participation in the event, a shared initiative of London Health Sciences Centre, St. Joseph's and our landscape management partner, Clintar. Joining in the clean-up, which is held twice a year in an effort to improve the environmental integrity of the ponds, reinforces environmental stewardship and good sustainable practices. The Westminster Ponds is an environmentally significant area and a haven for biodiversity in the centre of the city – and in the backyard of St. Joseph's Parkwood Institute. It includes 10 km of trails over 200 hectares of land. The volunteer spring clean-up event was attended by a total of about 80 people from St. Joseph's and LHSC. The next clean-up will take place in the fall.

## 2.0 Operational Updates

### Recruitment and retention of personal support workers

Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care has been successful in accessing two, new funding opportunities offered by Health Force Ontario aimed at attracting and retaining personal support worker (PSW) graduates in long-term care:

- **Return-of-service incentive:** Mount Hope has been approved for a \$10,000 return-of-service incentive per PSW graduate to be provided to 15 recent PSW graduates in exchange for a 12-month commitment to work in a long-term care home or for a home and community care employer.



- **Clinical placement stipend:** Mount Hope has been approved for the provision of up to \$5,440 per PSW student – 140 PSW students total – as a stipend during their clinical placement in a long-term care home and/or home and community care employer. Within this opportunity, employers also receive a one-time payment of up to \$852.50 for each PSW student to offset administrative costs of placements.

### **Capacity Optimization Project**

To help meet the growing and changing demands on the health care system, optimizing capacity has been the focus of various projects and initiatives for some time at Parkwood Institute Main Building. As a result, much progress has been made. Over the past six months, multiple changes to the way patients flow into the building have resulted in a significant improvement in occupancy rates on our complex care, rehabilitation and specialized geriatric services inpatient units. Our collective efforts to make meaningful changes that support our teams and the significant needs in our community are now expanding even further. To enable a site-wide approach to optimizing capacity, the Parkwood Institute Main Building Capacity Optimization Project has been initiated. The purpose of the project is to enhance equitable access to care for patients and residents across all inpatient programs at Parkwood Institute Main Building by ensuring evidence-based processes and best practice recommendations are in place.

## **3.0 Recognition**

### **Patient Experience Week**

Patient Experience Week April 29 to May 3, 2024, was a time to recognize care partners at St. Joseph's who bring their valuable insights to help shape and enhance programs and services across the organization. The compassion, support and unwavering commitment of our care partners significantly improve the patient experience and contribute to the success of our organization.

To mark the week, St. Joseph's Care Partnership Office hosted an afternoon of camaraderie, appreciation, education and celebration to thank all our care partners. Held May 2, the afternoon featured guest speakers that helped further our care partners knowledge and understanding of the impact of storytelling, the nuances of research and quality improvement.

Also during the week, the Care Partnership Office launched its new care partner recruitment video on all social media platforms. This [video](#) highlights what care partnership is all about at St. Joseph's and how to get involved.

### **An outstanding hand therapist**

Congratulations to Joey Pipicelli, hand therapist with the Roth McFarlane Hand and Upper Limb Centre, who has received the Lifetime Membership Award by the Canadian Society of Hand Therapists. The award recognizes Joey's outstanding contributions to the society and the profession, and his dedication to training the next generation of hand therapists. In being nominated for the award, Joey was described as consistently demonstrating excellence in research, professional development, teaching, mentorship and clinical practice. "Because of his professional engagements, respectable example as a clinician, and constant encouragement for younger therapists, he has not only furthered the development of upper extremity rehabilitation practices, but he has also built up and edified a new generation of passionate hand therapists in Canada and across the world," according to his nomination. The award was presented at the Canadian Society of Hand Therapy Conference in Toronto in April 2024.

## 4.0 CEO Activity

### Health Care Leadership Summit

I was pleased to attend the Ontario Hospital Association's Health Care Leadership Summit May 1-3 with enlightening sessions on: Global Trends and Impacts on Health System Planning and Priorities; The Role of Hospitals in an Evolving Health Care System; Future Direction and Emerging Priorities for Ontario's Health Care System; and Ontario's Hospitals and Civil Society. A key element of this year's summit was the opportunity for informal engagement and networking among colleagues.

### Breakfast of Champions

[Breakfast of Champions](#) on May 7, hosted annually by St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation in partnership with Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services, was another success. I was pleased to participate in this event, which raises awareness and funds for mental health care in our region. Neil Pasricha, author of the popular Book of Awesome, was the featured speaker. The New York Times bestselling author and one of the most popular TED speakers in the world inspired the nearly 1,200 people in attendance to build resiliency and commit to cultivating a positive mindset. The event also introduced a new fund through St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation – the [Patient Assistance Fund for Mental Health Care](#) – that will provide individuals receiving mental health care with essentials in their recovery journey.

Congratulations to the winners of the Champions of Mental Health and Addictions Awards, which are presented at the event every year by CMHA Thames Valley Addiction & Mental Health Services. The winners are: Ned Burwell a tattoo artist, mentor and advocate who raises funds for mental health care through semicolon (a symbol of mental health, hope and resilience) tattoo events; and Youth Opportunities Unlimited, which supports youth with mental illness and addiction by raising awareness, providing resources and leading initiatives.

### Catholic Health Alliance of Canada's Annual National Conference

This year's Annual National Conference of the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada (CHAC) May 8-10 built upon the theme "Get to the Heart of It: Being, Caring, Doing" and the importance of fostering connections and taking action to make a difference in our communities and in people's lives. The keynote speakers, panelists, moderators and experts all inspired participants to consider new ways to strengthen the compassionate core of the programs and services we deliver as providers of Catholic health care.

For CEOs, the conference kicked off with a CHAC CEO Network meeting on May 8, which was an opportunity to discuss what it means to be a welcoming community for those entering a Catholic health care environment, identify specific actions our organizations can take to demonstrate welcoming, and determine next steps and where there may be barriers to moving forward. The meeting was also a platform for the CEOs to share challenges, seek advice and support one another regarding priorities and issues within our own organizations and broadly within Catholic health, particularly items of national importance.



## 5.0 Federal/Provincial Updates

### Bill seeks to set out patient-to-nurse ratios

On May 7, NDP Health Critic France Gélinas introduced Bill 192, the [Patient-to-Nurse Ratios for Hospitals Act, 2024](#) (Bill 192). This bill seeks to amend the Health Protection and Promotion Act, adding a new section that would set out the maximum patient-to-nurse ratios that would be enforced by the Ministry of Health. The Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) has provided its concerns with the bill to the Minister of Health, specifically that the bill is unnecessary and counterproductive to agile and quality patient care. In addition, the OHA strongly believes that individual hospitals are best situated to make clinical staffing decisions that reflect fluctuating patient care needs, and that the proposed legislation would limit the continuous evolution of models of care to enhance care delivery.

### Connecting seniors to specialized care and support

The Ontario government is investing more than [\\$4.1 million over two years](#) to expand [GeriMedRisk](#), a program that makes it easier and faster for seniors living with complex medical needs to access coordinated care in their community. The program connects primary care providers with an interdisciplinary team of geriatric specialists that help create and support care plans for seniors. Based out of the Grand River Hospital in Kitchener, the Ontario government expanded GeriMedRisk to be a province-wide service in 2019. With the additional funding, up to 21 additional geriatric specialists and pharmacists will be hired to provide more than 1,000 additional consults annually, helping primary care providers improve their patients' health and quality of life with:

- Fast, convenient and coordinated access to geriatric specialists during one appointment
- Timely education on how to manage their medication
- Fewer transfers to emergency departments and hospitals for seniors with complex medical needs, such as dementia
- Tools and supports to better manage complex conditions, such as dementia.

## 6.0 St. Joseph's in the News

[Move underway to get Indigenous foods into London hospital cafeterias](#), CBC London, April 25, 2024

[Top-tier PET/CT scanner reduces exam time to 14 minutes, head to toe](#), Canadian Healthcare Technology, April 30, 2024

[Telltale Sign: Advances in diagnosing Alzheimer's disease](#), Mind Over Matter magazine (page 53-55), Spring 2024

[Second pop-up pap test clinic to be held May 10 at St. Joseph's](#), London Free Press, May 2, 2024

[Q&A: 'I just fell in love with them' explains labyrinth expert ahead of World Labyrinth Day](#), CBC London, May 4, 2024

[What's the difference between a labyrinth and a maze?](#), London Morning (CBC London) May 3, 2024

[Pop-up pap test clinic returning to St. Joseph's](#), CK News Today, May 9, 2024

[Pop-up Pap test clinic returns to St. Joseph's Hospital in London, Ont.](#), Global News, May 9, 2024

[Addressing mental illness in prisons](#), The Agenda with Steve Paikin, TVO Today, May 9, 2024

[Back by 'pap-ular' demand: Second pop-up pap clinic held at St. Joseph's Hospital](#), CTV London, May 10, 2024

[London-based study details true cost of poor health care for homeless](#), London Free Press, May 15, 2024

[Study shows longer, more expensive hospital stays for Canada's homeless](#), Global News, May 15, 2024

[Homeless people stay sicker for longer and cost the health system more money, data shows](#), CBC London, May 15, 2024

[Those experiencing homelessness in hospitals twice as long](#), Afternoon Drive (CBC London), May 15, 2024

[New healthcare report sheds light on the cost of caring for homeless hospital patients](#), CTV London, (Also aired by CTV Kitchener) May 15, 2024

## 7.0 Environmental Scan

[Ontario scrapping sick notes to cut down on doctors' paperwork](#), CBC News, April 24, 2024

[Breast cancer rates rising among young women, Ottawa-based study finds](#), CBC News, April 29, 2024

[Amid an Ontario doctor shortage, there's hope: Western says it's brimming with future family docs](#), CBC London, May 1, 2024

[HPV test to be added to cervical screening in Ontario in 2025](#), City News Toronto, May 2, 2024

[Canada's new cancer figures reflect a mixed message: study](#), CBC News, May 13, 2024

[Ontario will need tens of thousands of new nurses, PSWs by 2032](#), CBC News, May 13, 2024