



A message from our President Mirella Quattrin

It is the middle of February – extremely cold, but a beautiful sunny day. I must remind myself that Spring is just around the corner.

During our Christmas holidays, so many volunteers generously donated to the Volunteer Association. It is so nice to know that you support our mission for fundraising towards the purchase of Capital Equipment for our hospital. Your donations are hugely appreciated. Thank you.

Our fundraising efforts have been extremely restricted. Our most profitable program, the Vendor Program, had to be stopped due to increasing COVID numbers. We are very grateful that the Vendor Program will be resuming on March 1st. Over the past two years, the only program that was able to continue during COVID was our Isolette Program. This program is run by Erane Bocking. Thank you Erane for your continued support.

With our Gift Shop being deemed essential to our hospital, we continue to do very well. Thank you to the hospital staff for their continued support. In January, the hospital ordered another \$3,000 of chocolates to be distributed at the Vaccine Clinic. The Kindness Cart restarted again in January, with the purchase of \$2,402 worth of items from our shop. Thank you to all the volunteers who continued their service in the Gift Shop and the Information Desks, under a very difficult situation.

Our Tim Hortons proceeds have suffered a bit due to the volume restrictions on people in the hospital; however, the staff continued working hard, even with the reduced staff. In January, a new donut was offered where 100% of the proceeds would be donated to the Special Olympics. On a positive note, the Tim Hortons Kiosk is the recipient of a 2021 Platinum Award from Tim Hortons head office. This award is given in recognition of a lot of demanding work and dedication by the team to deliver that exceptional service to every guest. Congratulations to the Tim Hortons Staff for all their hard work.

With most Ontarians fully vaccinated and the gradual easing of restrictions, we are starting to see a little of what we used to call a normal life. In this issue, please see our upcoming fundraising events.

Hoping to see many volunteers returning to the hospital, resuming their volunteer services soon.

Please take care and stay healthy.

“Snowflakes are one of Nature’s most fragile things - but just look at what they can do when they stick together.” Vesta M. Kelly

Coming Events

Vendor Program

**Starts again on
March 1. Check the
weekly schedule
posted on the Retail
Therapy space for
which vendors will
be present**

Miller’s Shoe Sale

**March 28, 29, 30
Auditorium
Monday and Tuesday
7 am to 6 pm
Wednesday
7 am to noon**

**Mother’s Day
Vintage China
and Crystal Sale**

**Thursday, May 5
Portals of Care
10 am to 3 pm**

**Annual General
Meeting**

**Wednesday, June 15
Place and time to be
determined**

At the beginning of each HRH Volunteer Association Board meeting, the Volunteer Mission Statement is read:

The Humber River Hospital Volunteer Association encourages community partnership with the Hospital

- 1. By providing care and comfort to patients and their families.**
- 2. By raising funds to be used for the betterment of the Hospital.**

Call for Nominations



We are currently looking for volunteers to sit on the Volunteer Association Board for 2022-2023. All of these positions are non-paying. Board meetings are held on the third Tuesday morning each month. Please consider joining us for one of our Committee positions this year. It is a great privilege to work with such a dedicated group of people. This is a very rewarding area to be involved in helping our Association to continue working for the betterment of the Hospital. Our President's message on page 1 of this edition demonstrates how one of the responsibilities of the Volunteer Board is to help decide how the funds we raise will be spent. There is a posting in the Volunteer Services office providing further information.

Joyce Conway (Nominating Committee Chair)



ATTENTION GRADE 12 STUDENTS: SCHOLARSHIPS!

In support of post-secondary education, the HRH Volunteer Association is pleased to present scholarships of \$1500 to four successful applicants. Two will be awarded to current HRH student volunteers who have completed 100 hours of service during the past year, and two will be awarded to children of current staff members who have been employed by HRH for 12 months or more. The Scholarship Application form will be an electronic version and will be available in early April. The top 5 applicants in each category will be invited for a ZOOM interview. The money will be deposited into the university accounts of the four scholarship winners. We look forward to hearing from you.

GIANT THREE DAY SHOE SALE: MARCH 28, 29, 30 BRING YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY!

We traditionally hold shoe sales twice a year. These brand name shoes are clearance items from Miller Shoes based in Hamilton. Our most recent sale was two and a half years ago. Our spring sale is mostly winter stock while summer shoes are sold at our fall sale. Shoes are \$60 per pair with boots costing more. Some men's and children's shoes are usually available. We need your help. Set up day is Sunday, March 27 from 10 am to 2 pm. **The sale will start on Sunday March 27 from 3 pm to 6 pm for staff and volunteers' friends and family only!** The public sale day hours are 7 am to 6 pm on Monday and Tuesday and 7 am to 12 noon on Wednesday. On all sale days, volunteers are needed to keep shelves neat. Tear down starts at noon on Wednesday. We need volunteers for all shifts, particularly for Wednesday tear down. **Join the team! We need your help! Sign-in sheets will be located by the kiosks in Volunteer Services on Levels 1 and 3.**

MARCH 28 - MARCH 30

3 DAY SHOE SALE

WOMEN'S • MEN'S • KID'S

FEATURING

ecco MILLER Clarks MICHAEL KORS

AND MANY MORE BRANDS!

LEVEL 3 - AUDITORIUM

DAY	HOURS
Monday, March 28	7:00 AM - 6:00 PM
Tuesday, March 29	7:00 AM - 6:00 PM
Wednesday, March 30	7:00 AM - 12:00 PM

DEBIT & CASH ONLY

VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION

The logo for Humber River Hospital, featuring a blue cross and the text "Humber River Hospital".

MOTHERS' DAY SALE OF VINTAGE CHINA AND CRYSTAL

After two years, this sale will be held again on Thursday, May 5th from 10 am to 3 pm near the Portals of Care. Donations have continued to come in from volunteers, friends and neighbours and, as a result, there is a larger selection than usual including full sets of china, a flatware set in a chest, and carnival glass. Only donations of tea cups will be welcome at this time.



HRH President's Forums

Our hospital President and CEO Barb Collins has presented several President's Forums since she took office at the end of June 2016. Staff, physicians, and volunteers are invited to attend. These one-hour forums are full of information about what is going on at Humber River Hospital and they always start with "good news stories", usually notes or emails from grateful patients or their families. At this time, the forums are virtual only via Zoom and occur almost weekly. The abbreviated content of some of these forums is included in this report. (Pauline Kishimoto, Public Relations)

President's Forum – December 8

Barb read out compliments received from an outpatient in Mental Health and a grateful surgery patient who had ACL reconstruction who mentioned the surgeon and recovery room nursing staff by name.

Even without Omicron, it is expected that ICU occupancy in Ontario will grow to 400 beds in January. Omicron will likely drive these numbers much higher. The prediction is that there will be 3000 cases by January. The number of COVID positive staff has increased by 16 in the last few weeks; none of these new cases are hospital acquired. Vaccines continue to be administered at the Crossroads Clinic and in schools and places of worship. The second part of today's forum was a presentation from the Seniors Care Program. Their current emphasis is to train staff to handle situations with patients with dementia. Dementia is often a barrier to patients going home.

President's Forum – January 13

Compliments were received from a patient who was admitted through the Emergency Department, underwent surgery, and was released home all within 22 hours. It was a very detailed letter thanking many doctors and nurses by name.

Many surgeries have been cancelled and staff have been redeployed to other departments. COVID patient numbers are very high across Ontario and therefore it is difficult to find any empty beds to transfer patients to. In our region, the positivity rate is 33% whereas it is only 23% in the rest of Toronto. Across the province, 17,236 hospital beds are now occupied and there are 2721 patients in ICU. Our Emergency Department yesterday admitted 45 patients, 24 of whom had COVID-like symptoms. Many of these new admissions are older patients. Currently at HRH, there are 150 COVID positive patients (22 of whom are in ICU), and 45 recovered COVID patients who are still too ill to be released, for a total of 195 COVID beds. In the last two weeks, COVID patient admissions have been very high. It is hard to predict the future because of the lack of current testing data.

In November, there were no new staff COVID cases; however, there have been almost 500 new COVID staff cases in the last three weeks, mostly a result of staff to staff transmission. Barb recommends that staff should all self-isolate while at work as much as possible, including eating alone. All staff, physicians and volunteers must have the first vaccine dose by January 17, and the second dose by February 7. If not, they will be put on unpaid leave for 2 weeks. Currently, there are 155 active staff with 0 doses and 49 with 1 dose.

HRH bed status is still OK due to unused surgical beds. Surgeries and clinics are operating at 50% of normal. Due to staff illness, they are very carefully monitoring staffing in all departments and can redeploy staff from one area to another as needed. Visitors are not allowed to eat or drink in patient rooms. The Crossroads Vaccine Clinic has administered about 2000 doses per day.

President's Forum – January 27

Compliments were received from an ED patient who had outpatient surgery and was very impressed by the positive attitude of all doctors and nurses he encountered. Barb also expressed her appreciation of how staff came together during the 55 cm snowfall. Many staff planned ahead and stayed closer to the hospital the night before, worked longer shifts (up to 24 hours), had only a few hours of sleep, and then went back to work.

99.7% of COVID cases are now Omicron. Ontario is still opening new beds for patients even though surgeries are down everywhere. In Ontario, 82% of ICU beds are occupied and 96% of acute care beds are occupied. COVID patients occupy 25% of ICU beds across the province but 53% at HRH. HRH has the highest ambulance volume in Toronto, largely because of the merging of two hospital sites five years ago.

No visitors are allowed to visit COVID positive patients, even at end-of-life situations. This is very hard on everyone, including staff. Vaccine rates in northwest Toronto and northwest Etobicoke are still low. There are very low hospital admission rates for those with three vaccine doses. The unvaccinated have higher admissions, higher ICU occupancy, and higher death rates than the vaccinated groups.

About 114 shifts per day must be covered due to staff COVID illness, and another 150 shifts per day must be covered due to other illness or staff leaves. So far, we have not seen any impact due to students returning to in-class learning. Surgeries are at 25% normal rate, ambulatory visits are at 50% normal, and diagnostics are at 90% normal. Many of the staff in these areas have been redeployed.

A reminder, January 17 was the deadline for the first vaccine dose followed by a two week unpaid leave followed by termination of employment on February 3. If they have received the first dose, they have until March 9 for the second.

The presentation this time was on Humber Meadows Long Term Care Home, the new facility under construction beside the Finch Reactivation Care Centre. The web site is up: HumberMeadows.ca.

February 23

The forum began with a presentation from Cheryl Prescod who is the Executive Director of Black Creek Community Health Centre. She explained that social and economic conditions have resulted in the pandemic affecting the black community disproportionately. There is a very close correlation between maps that show areas with a high proportion of black residents and maps that show high COVID case numbers. This data helped support the initiation of targeted interventions in those areas. Her group began with targeted COVID testing and then they worked with a team of community ambassadors to address vaccine hesitancy by working with youth groups, sports clubs, churches, and other community groups. The current vaccine rate in these communities now almost matches the rest of Toronto. These community ambassadors were recruited for COVID but likely would be very useful working within the hospital to work on preventative health care in the black community.

Compliments were received by the Emergency Department staff, and the Vaccine Clinic staff. A cardiac patient who was admitted through the ED and then spent four days in hospital was very impressed with his treatment. All the COVID numbers look better. HRH surgeries are only down 54% as compared to pre-COVID numbers which is better than other Toronto hospitals. A more open visitor policy will start on March 1 but will not be back to normal as yet. Renovations on 8 East will start soon to increase the Critical Care Unit capacity. CCU patients will temporarily be moved to empty beds on the 4th floor. The Crossroads Vaccine Clinic will close at the end of March and be moved to the Finch Reactivation Care Centre where COVID testing is already taking place.

The Mainstream is a publication of the Humber River Hospital Volunteer Association

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