



IWK Annual General Meeting
**Report of the
President & CEO**

June 25, 2020

There is no doubt that when looking back at 2019/20, what will most fill our collective memories will be the extraordinary events surrounding the global pandemic known as COVID-19. Few events in recent history have had such a profound impact on all levels of society on such a global level. Healthcare organizations were required to respond to a rapidly changing environment to build capacity to provide care. The IWK was no exception. Working with partners from the Department of Health and Wellness, Public Health, the Nova Scotia Health Authority and the IWK Foundation, we reorganized service delivery to prepare for COVID patients, stood up testing and assessment centers, reprioritized ambulatory appointments and services and supported new COVID. Some staff were re-deployed to cover new services, some moved to working from home and others continued in roles providing urgent, emergent and time sensitive services. Ways of working and spaces to meet new standards were devised to ensure that patients and families could receive care. It is anticipated that we will continue to need to plan for and manage the pandemic response for the next 12 to 18 months as the longer term impacts unroll.

Not to be forgotten however are the great number of successes experienced at the IWK over the past year as we continued to work toward our goals outline in the strategic plan “ASPIRE”.

System Leadership, Partnership and Advocacy

Work facilitating a co-created IWK Indigenous Health Strategy with First Nation partners has progressed with First Nation organizations and First Nation Health Directors. A number of events including participation in the blanket exercise as well as meetings focused on management of COVID 19 and on the roll-out of payment for those impacted by residential schools have taken place.

Pandemic response has strengthened pre-existing relationships and developed new ones with sectors such as long term care and 811 services.

Research and Innovation

The arrival in January 2020 of our new Vice President of Research and Innovation, Dr Jeannie Shoveller has paved the way for the development of our new research strategic action plan, including a proposal for the creation of a Board Committee to provide strategic oversight for Research and Innovation.

Working with partners at NSHA, Dalhousie University, Research Nova Scotia and the Foundations, a \$1.5 million fund to support COVID research was launched. Seven researchers from the IWK were supported through the funds in areas encompassing social science, clinical and basic science research.

High Reliability Organization

Dr Doug Sinclair joined us in November 2019 in the newly designed role of Vice President Medicine, Quality and Safety, combining two previous executive positions in one realigned portfolio.

Throughout the year we continued to make progress on increasing access and improving flow through several of our clinic areas including Mental Health and Addictions, Autism, Emergency and Surgical gynecology. The impacts of the suspension of non-urgent and booked appointments and surgeries in response to COVID19 has unfortunately negatively affected that progress. Several areas within pediatric surgical specialties as well as for gynecology services will require increased focus and planning as we begin the process of resuming services, but we have the tools to do so.

We successfully met targets to reduce serious safety events this year and remain dedicated to further reductions as we implement recommendations from root cause analyses (RCA) examining the events.

During the pandemic our Human Resources team has been agile and responsive creating a number of opportunities for our staff to be redeployed throughout our organization and to the broader health system, several of which we wish to maintain. A number of innovative staff supports have been implemented in the past two months to focus on the health and well-being of staff, physicians and leadership.

Responsible Stewardship

With hard work from the teams across the organization we maintained a balanced financial position.

Despite the significant competing priorities due to the pandemic we have continued to make good progress on both the implementation of our updated ERM framework and the completion of the tasks within the Control Environment Project.

Major redevelopment projects in critical care and MRI replacement remain on schedule, with the PICU and central support core expected to open in late August. ED redevelopment planning has continued and we are awaiting feedback from the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DTIR).

The Master Space Plan process has been placed on hold and will be resumed when we are able to increase activities on-site.

IWK Foundation

The work of the IWK Foundation continued as a strong partnership throughout the year. Last June saw another record-breaking Telethon, raising over \$6.7 million for needed equipment and ongoing redevelopment at the IWK. This year saw the opening of the second phase of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and the ramp up of the construction on the final phase of the critical care redevelopment, the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and the core family support spaces. We took delivery of a fleet of new technologically enabled “Smart Beds”, the first hospital in Canada to have these widely available for patient care. When the pandemic arrived, business for the Foundation changed as well but that has not kept their staff from adapting and continuing to support our needs. With other Foundations they developed a coalition which rapidly raised \$1.5 million dollars for COVID research here in Nova Scotia. Working for our Mental Health and Addictions team they secured funding for expansion of services and research in virtual health, a new way of service delivery. As always, the Foundation has been there for us connecting us with our community, even when facing the same challenges of COVID-19.

So this year’s annual report and AGM look a little different in form, but not in content. We continue to focus on providing necessary high quality, safe care to women, children and families; researching and innovating to create new knowledge; supporting and collaborating with partners while being responsible for managing wisely and carefully. The way in which we approach these important responsibilities has served us, our patients and the community well as we faced the unexpected and extraordinary events surrounding the pandemic. It is with this collective strength we will face the future and continue to succeed.

Respectfully submitted

Krista Jangaard
President & CEO