



**Dr. Krista
Jangaard**

PRESIDENT & CEO

IWK Health

Report to the Board

Annual General Meeting

June 28, 2022

Today's AGM is the third colored by the impacts of the global pandemic and so much has changed as we continue our journey to balance the needs of patients and families with the pressures created by COVID. We've come a long way!

Here we are in June 2022, recovering from the largest wave of COVID experienced in Nova Scotia and learning to navigate as the world re-opens and we seek to integrate the virus into our routine planning and care provision. What has it taken in the last year to care for our patients, families, and community? In a single word, *resolve* - digging down deep, deciding what needs to be done, what solutions need to be found and then moving forward with firm determination.

Our success has only been possible because of the dedication, focus and tenacity of our people – those working at the frontlines, behind the scenes in the health centre and from home. When the virus adapted and hit us again this winter, people once again dug deep, found the strength to tackle the new issues it was throwing our way and remained focused on solutions.

While I am incredibly proud of our people and all they have accomplished this year, I realize it has not been easy and has taken a toll. While fatigue secondary to workload has been noted as a significant factor for many of our teams, many have also expressed the distress of not being able to fully provide care in the patient and family-centered way on which we pride ourselves. While understanding the need for restrictions, this distress has been felt widely. The impacts of the pandemic for those in healthcare are not solely found at work but like for others have been intertwined with all aspects of life. While the desire that the pandemic just "get over" so we can "get on with life", its grip on healthcare has not yet fully loosened. It is within that landscape that we look at accomplishments of IWK teams this year.

STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE

Despite balancing the ongoing demands of covid response and sustained increased patient activity, ten of thirteen strategic initiatives were completed by year-end, one extended for completion in Q1 of the current year and the final two revised and carried over to 2022-2023. Congratulations to our teams who were able to keep this important work on track.

The provincial government recently released its "Action for Health" plan outlining the strategic goals for health in Nova Scotia for the next four years. It is an ambitious document which will require the health authorities and government to work closely together and with other partners. The IWK strategy "The Road Forward" priorities, initiatives and related action items



proposed for 2022-2023 are well aligned with wider provincial goals, many building on the excellent work already accomplished this year.

System Leadership, Partnership and Advocacy

This year the organization continued forward progress on many of the initiatives related to our focus on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Reconciliation and Accessibility (EDIRA). While the work of the steering committees for several of the initiatives have met the targets set out for 2021-2022, perhaps one of the key indicators that consideration of EDIRA is working its way to being foundational in IWK Health's culture was found in the development of the IWK Health values. These values were developed with input from across the organization and one of the six is "Cultivating belonging", which states

"We co-create the conditions for belonging so all of us can thrive. Committed to equity, fairness and diversity, we accept and value all people. As we nurture safe and brave cultures, we develop open and inclusive relationships where everyone is invited to meaningfully contribute".

What a powerful statement when it is fully realized as a lived experience for all. Although there is much left to do, we have made a good start.

Steady progress continues with the co-created, indigenous-led health strategy which has now completed action statements and set specific community-identified priorities. Next steps in the process will focus heavily on community visits and listening sessions as well as moving forward arising from the work done to date. This year IWK has had the opportunity to work with the newly formed indigenous health authority, Tajikeymik, the department of health and NSH looking at issues such as workforce diversity, data sovereignty, and health system transformation.

The environmental scan of best practices in Women's Health has been completed and a preliminary report has been provided for our review and input. Internal engagement with the clinical team is ongoing with discussion of opportunities and challenges in women and gender diverse health to help inform next steps. The IWK Foundation has been an enthusiastic partner in discussions of supporting the growth of both care delivery and research in Women's health.

In addition to the success in our specific priorities in this area, teams at the IWK were involved widely in the pandemic response in 2021-2022 with significant contributions to the delivery of vaccines and PCR testing. Many thanks to the clinical teams, the staff in laboratory services and the operations teams that supported this success. We were very proud when Dr Jeannette Comeau, IWK Infectious Diseases and IPAC lead was awarded one of the first Platinum Jubilee Medals for her service in leading the COVID 19 response.

Research and Innovation

The Board reviewed and approved the new IWK Research and Innovation Strategy in fall of 2021. The bold new vision focused on delivering research that moves the needle on health for the populations we serve and integrates equity explicitly as a critical component of success. The foundations are in place for



this important work, and we will build upon our strong foundations to move it forward.

We were saddened by the departure of Dr Shoveller, VP Research and Innovation in December 2021 and thank Dr Doug Sinclair for providing leadership to the portfolio while a search for the permanent replacement was undertaken. We are in the final stages of this process and look forward to a new member joining our team.

Despite Covid and changing leadership, researchers continued their wonderful work this year and focused on bringing researchers back on site, where able this year while continuing to support virtual and remote research as able. Of note, IWK Health was one of the few national centres which was able to continue non-COVID studies during the pandemic. The video presented at the AGM will highlight the work of a few of our excellent research and innovation accomplishments.

Achieving as A High Reliability Organization

High reliability organizations (HRO's) focus on delivering safe, high-quality services underpinned by robust quality improvement and support for the people in the organization. A central tenant for HRO's is that the frontline workers are best placed to identify problems, often have the solutions and require support from leadership to remove barriers to making change. This philosophy has served us well during the second year of the pandemic.

The serious safety event rate which increased in the first year of the pandemic and was identified by teams as a concern. With renewed attention to key aspects of the safety program the rate has been reduced and maintained below the international SPS target exceeding our stated goal for this year.

Activities are underway to address the increased wait times in pediatric surgery including utilization of operating time at Scotia Surgery which has supported over 100 additional surgeries since February 2022. Initial patient feedback from the pilot program is positive. Despite these efforts, the wait list for surgery at IWK Health has continued to grow and further work and resources are required. IWK Health is working with NSHealth in the development of a multi-year plan to address surgical wait times for Nova Scotia.

Supporting people as they delivered services, from clinical services to research activities to facilities and operations was critical to our success this year. In many areas support for hybrid work, including the provision of virtual care necessitated the development of work flows and supportive policies as well as new infrastructure. Individuals, teams, and programs adapted overall guidelines to best meet the needs of their area to meet the clinical, research and operations goals. Moving forward we will be working to retain and build upon some of the flexibility we have gained in remote work and in virtual care. Not only does this allow us to remain agile and responsive, but it supports flexible work as a key factor in recruitment and retention of staff.

Responsible Stewardship

There has been tremendous activity in updating our facilities during the pandemic supported by federal and provincial funding. The team has been



diligent in seeking out opportunities, securing funding and delivering on projects. This infrastructure renewal stands us in good stead as we complete our master space plan.

Redevelopment of the Emergency Department is under way and demolition is slated to begin in the summer. Annette Elliott Rose and I presented to the IWK Foundation Board of Trustees to discuss how donors can take the Emergency Department to a cutting-edge, world class facility.

IWK Foundation

One of the highlights of my year occurred when Jennifer Gillivan, IWK Foundation President & CEO approached me with the concept of dedicating the 38th Annual Telethon to the staff at IWK Health. What a positive message of partnership and support. The hybrid virtual and in-person events highlighted so many of the wonderful staff and physicians at the health centre along with the patient stories. Such an uplifting experience. Thank you to our partners for the hard work it takes to raise the money that takes IWK care and research to the next level and for raising the spirits of the staff and physicians after two long years of the pandemic.

We look forward to our ongoing work with the Foundation as we continue the exciting journey of re-development of the emergency department, support emerging research and innovation and focus on accelerating the agenda in women and gender diverse health.

I want to express our gratitude for all that has been done by so many to ensure that care has been provided, research and teaching have continued, our facilities been updated and maintained and our operations well managed. Once again despite everything thrown our way this year IWK teams have delivered a myriad of accomplishments, so although at times the burden was heavy and obstacles seemed insurmountable, the resolve of our people got us through again this year. This is a shining example of the words of American poet Ella Wheeler Wilcox who wrote "There is no chance, no destiny, no fate, that can circumvent or hinder or control the firm resolve of a determined soul." We've seen the power of 3000 determined souls!

Respectfully submitted,

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