

TO: Chair Kearney and Members of the Board of Directors
FROM: Lance Thurston, President and CEO
MEETING: December 12, 2018
SUBJECT: Notable Issues Update

Purpose

This report is for information. There are a number of issues we are tracking that merit the Board's attention and consideration.

Discussion

GBIN (Georgian Bay Information Network)

All but one of the GBIN organizations has approved proceeding to migrate our shared Health Information System (HIS) to the Cerner Remote Hosted Option (RHO). At its meeting on December 5, 2018 the Board of South Bruce Grey Health Centre (SBGHC) acknowledged that options outside of the Cerner RHO chosen by GBIN are limited. The Board, however, wants to understand the liabilities SBGHC has as part of the GBIN partnership, particularly future financial commitments should SBGHC terminate its participation in the GBIN partnership and/or transfer to another Cerner instance like London.

SBGHC will be formalizing its position in writing shortly. Upon receipt of the SBGHC formal letter, we will prepare a response in consultation with our solicitor. We will ensure all partner are aware of what the implications would be if SBGHC signals its intent to leave the partnership. In the meantime, we are proceeding ahead with the Cerner RHO initiative. Over the next couple of weeks, negotiations with Cerner Canada and GBHS (on behalf of GBIN) will be finalized and the master service agreement with Cerner amended accordingly. A team of HIS leaders from GBIN partners, led by Rob Lee our interim CIO, is completing this important work.

The RHO project is expected to take 12-16 months to implement fully. A readiness assessment is being undertaken by all partners to ensure that systems and components are in place to support the successful migration to RHO. This includes, in the case of GBHS, such things as upgrading our wireless network (Wi-Fi), our wired network and desk top/lap top computer refresh, among other things.

This project is the largest and single most important planned IT capital project that GBHS and its GBIN partners will undertake in 2018-2020. A functional, stable, reliable, secure and efficient HIS is fundamental to the provision of quality patient care at the hospitals within the GBIN network. It is going to be the primary focus of IT and will consume considerable time and energy of many departments at different times through the implementation process. Every effort is being made therefore to clear the path of a number of current IT projects so that sufficient attention and energies will be applied to this project.

We are developing detailed readiness plan and project plan that will be shared with the organization and stakeholders in the coming weeks to level-set expectations and ensure that everyone is aware of the initiatives related to the RHO project.

Operating Budget Action Plan

Implementation of the Operating Budget Action Plan that was endorsed by the Board in October, continues on pace. A number of initiatives are underway as we strive to find opportunities to reduce operating costs to within available funding limits.

A small group of directors and managers from across the organization were invited to form a reference group to support the Executive Team. The group has identified a number of key areas for exploration of ideas and opportunities to reduce costs, including:

- standardization of care across sites and care settings
- evidence-based order set advancement
- expanding on *Choosing Wisely*
- strategies to reduce overall lengths of stay where possible
- patient movement and flow improvements
- decentralization of scheduling processes (early trials underway in Diagnostic Imaging, Orthopaedic Clinics, rural site appointments)
- Ambulatory Care Clinic usage at Owen Sound
- premium staffing costs / attendance management program (overtime, sick time)
- system-wide thinking and changes, such as the surgical services review / consolidation

Work will now begin within each of these identified 'buckets' to flesh out any identified opportunities for savings.

In addition, front line staff and physicians are being asked to get involved and offer ideas for cost savings initiatives. We will be asking them to offer ideas and suggestions and acknowledging and celebrating those initiatives that prove workable. The hospital foundations and auxiliaries will also be engaged through this process.

Third Party Review

As part of our Operating Budget Action Plan, GBHS will be seeking the services of an experienced third party expert(s) to conduct an in-depth operational and clinical efficiency review of the organization. The purpose of the review is to identify potential opportunities for improved efficiencies and cost reductions. The review findings may also serve as a foundational document in refreshing the GBHS corporate Strategic Plan.

We are seeking consultants who demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Grey Bruce region and have experience in addressing the unique challenges of rural healthcare from a public policy development and service/program delivery perspective. It is critically important for this review to be undertaken through this rural lens to ensure that findings and recommendations are appropriate to our context and meaningful.

This operational and clinical review will:

- Reflect a strategic and systematic planning process with quality patient care and the long-term sustainability of the organization as critical priorities

- Be informed by our corporate Vision, Mission and Values; our ethical decision-making framework; and the Strategic Directions laid out in the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan
- Be inclusive, transparent and respectful in engaging stakeholders
- Foster systems thinking, encouraging the development of enhanced collaborations, new partnerships and integrated care models within and across care settings
- Be evidenced-influenced within the context of rural healthcare
- Identify and leverage creative opportunities and innovations that advance the health and well-being of our communities, align services & resources with community needs, and foster excellence in high quality, patient-centred care.
- Be consistent with the SW LHIN's Integrated Health Service Plan

Mindful of the unique determinants of population health in Grey and Bruce counties and the largely rural context within which GBHS operates, the selected consultants will examine financial, operational and clinical processes and identify strategies to enable the hospital to:

- Provide accessible, high quality and safe care that aligns with population needs
- Manage its operations within its fiscal means, and
- Strive towards long-term sustainability

The scope of the review will encompass:

- Operations
- Finance
- Factors Affecting the Provision of Quality Clinical Care
- Governance

More specifically, the review will:

- Identify cost drivers, including emergent and ambulatory pressures, within the organization
- Examine and evaluate the Hospital's current financial position and the financial sustainability of the Hospital's current service provision
- Examine and make recommendations with respect to workload measures, scope of current services compared to the mandate of the hospital, cost of services provided, efficiency of services provided and clinical outcomes, that will address the current and projected population health requirements and service demands in Grey Bruce, and make recommendations to expand or realign services where appropriate
- Outline where the hospital is performing well and efficiencies are being made; and assess where there are particular inefficiencies in the delivery of care and recommend strategies for improvement
- Examine the resources currently provided and highlight areas of clear deficiency

- Examine and make recommendations with respect to the internal work environment, organizational structures and relationships, including the appropriateness and effectiveness of the leadership and governance structures, management practices, communication strategies and physician leadership and practice
- Engage internal and external stakeholders of GBHS to seek their perspectives on issues facing the hospital and opportunities for the hospital to secure a balanced budget position
- Identify and quantify barriers preventing the hospital from achieving a balanced financial operating position and identify mitigation measures in response to these barriers

A Steering Committee will oversee the work of the consulting team and monitor the progress of the project. Initial thinking is that the committee will consist of the Executive Team, Board Chair, Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee of the Board, Chair of the Quality Committee of the Board and representatives of the urban and rural physicians groups within GBHS.

We are hopeful to formally launch the process in very early January 2019 with the issuance of a Request for Proposals. The review is expected to take 6-8 months to complete. A final report will be received by the Steering Committee for consideration and will be presented to the full Board by the consultants.

Mental Health and Addictions Crisis Stabilization Lounge

Planning continues for the creation of a Mental Health and Addictions Crisis Stabilization Lounge in close proximity to the Emergency Department at the Owen Sound Regional Hospital. The idea is to create a quiet and therapeutic outpatient environment to observe and assess up to 6 qualifying patients in crisis, for a period of up to 48 hours. Experience shows us that in many instances, such patients are able to return home or go to a more appropriate care setting once they have been stabilized. This will provide a much more patient-centred care experience for these patients, improve the flow of patients within the ER and through the hospital, and reduce unnecessary admissions to our psychiatry unit – the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

The preferred plan involves relocating a portion of the medical records paper file storage area adjoining the ER and renovating that space. This will also be an excellent opportunity to accelerate our efforts to digitize archival patient records and free up valuable space within our hospital facilities. We are in discussions with the LHIN for funding of the capital and operating costs associated with this service.

This is a key element of our plan to optimize our bedded capacity within GBHS, improve the patient experience and maintain quality care, in response to ever growing demands on our hospital resources.

LHIN Interim CEO

The South West LHIN has hired Renato Discenza as its Interim CEO, effective December 3, 2018. Renato is an experienced senior executive with over 30 years' experience in public and private sector enterprises, including Executive Vice President, Strategy and Innovation at Hamilton Health Sciences,

President & CEO at Invest Toronto, Senior Vice President, IT Delivery at Infrastructure Ontario and Senior Vice President, Enterprise Sales at Bell Canada.

Paeds/OB/GYN

GBHS submitted proposals to the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care seeking approval for an additional Pediatrician and an additional Obstetrics/Gynecologist specialist. These are regional services based at the Owen Sound Regional hospital serving all of Grey and Bruce counties and large parts of Simcoe County and beyond. The demand for this additional specialized support continues to grow as several communities within the region experience an influx of young families and significant population growth (Saugeen Shores, Meaford, Blue Mountains, Collingwood, Wasaga Beach, Dundalk).

We have contacted MPP Bill Walker's office to assist in advocating on our behalf.

Five Foundations Committee

The Five Foundations Committee continues to work well towards strengthening the capacity of our hospital foundations to raise money on behalf of GBHS. There is a wonderful spirit of cooperation as the members work through the recommendations of Offord Philanthropic Report and develop an implementation action plan to guide work over the next two or three years.

The Committee is chaired by Brian Shannon, and the new Vice-Chair is Al White. Two very strong and capable leaders.

The five hospital foundations support continuing with the Charitable Giving Advisor position. This position has been converted from a two year contracted pilot initiative to full time permanent status. The foundations and GBHS share in funding this vital position. The goal of the Charitable Giving Advisor is to increase revenues from legacy gifts for all, and lower related expenses through this cost-sharing model. It is one of the key elements of our strategy to increase the level of fund raising among the foundations to support the ever growing equipment needs of GBHS.

Engagement with Indigenous Peoples

Health equity is a core value in Ontario's health care system. Every person, no matter who they are, where they live or how much money they make, deserves equitable access to health care. The SW LHIN has embedded this value in its Integrated Health Services Plan (IHSP) and it underpins a number of policies of the LHIN.

The IHSP places considerable emphasis on improving the access to and availability of services to Indigenous Peoples in the region. Health service providers are expected to develop services and programs that are consistent with and advance the policies of the IHSP. This is underscored by performance criteria within the Service Accountability Agreements that health care providers enter into with the LHIN.

The IHSP has a number of policy thrusts aimed at improving service to Indigenous Peoples, including:

- Building capacity for primary health care
- Advancing culturally-safe chronic disease care for the Aboriginal populations, including availability of tools, resources and workshops.

- Improving collaboration between Aboriginal mental health and addiction services and other LHIN-funded services to better respond to crises such as suicide, addictions and opiate responses
- Planning and implementing an Aboriginal approach to hospice palliative care

GBHS is also committed to health equity and consequently has been shaping stronger relationships with the Indigenous communities in the region for a number of years. Much work has been and continues to be done at the clinical level to improve our service responses. There is still much to do.

In 2017 the Saugeen First Nation (SFN) expressed the desire to work with GBHS to improve our service delivery to its communities. That led to meetings between leadership of the SFN and GBHS over the course of several months in the Spring and Fall, and a commitment to continue regular dialogue. Early work has begun on drafting terms of reference for an Indigenous Advisory Panel that would report periodically to the Board of GBHS and the Band Council of SFN on:

- Health needs and priorities within the Indigenous communities
- Opportunities for the integration, coordination and alignment of health care services where ever in the interest of improved patient care
- Gathering relevant health system information and data, where available and appropriate

The aim of this effort would be to:

- Increase cross-cultural understanding
- Increase culturally-safe care
- Improve equitable access to care
- Improve the patient experience
- Improve the quality of care
- Improve the quality and availability of reliable health information and data for the purposes of health planning

These are just a few of the many important and exciting initiatives underway in GBHS.

Respectfully,

Lance Thurston, President and CEO