

## Headwaters Health Care Centre CEO Kim Delahunt shares message with community

Kim Delahunt, President & CEO of Headwaters Health Care Centre shared a message with the community, one year after the pandemic first began.

?As I reflect to one year ago, our team at Headwaters was moving quickly to respond to the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Little did we know what was in store, and how much would be required from all of us to continually adapt and respond as the year continued.

In 2020, we went to great lengths to strengthen our infection prevention and control protocols to ensure that our staff and patients remained safe, we mobilized with our health care partners to coordinate the accumulation and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE), and we worked hard to continue to provide our programs and services in the best way possible.

The year certainly presented us with challenges. With many of our outpatient programs and clinics closed for a number of months, volunteers not being able to provide the support they usually give to the hospital and the challenges our staff faced like everyone else as parents, children of elderly parents and community members, we have all certainly felt the pinch and impacts of this pandemic. Not to mention that several of our staff contracted COVID-19 themselves, we have cared for several seriously ill patients and we deployed to local long-term care homes to support their efforts to care for their elderly residents with COVID-19. These are but a few of the realities we encountered.

Yet, there were some bright spots too. One of the most heartwarming and gratifying to all of us at Headwaters has been the outpouring of support from our community. When we put out a call for PPE, our local businesses and individuals really came through. In addition, donations of food, money and other incredible gestures of generosity like art from local school children helped boost morale and lighten our hearts immensely. We are so grateful for all of that, and for the kind messages posted on social media that have helped bolster spirits during some of the toughest times we have encountered as an organization.

We are also very proud of our COVID-19 Assessment Centre and how we were able to effectively set it up so quickly and to pivot to bring it inside after several months outdoors under tents. And, despite the turmoil of the pandemic, we continued to challenge ourselves to fulfill many initiatives that had been planned prior to COVID-19; construction continued in our main entrance and throughout the hospital, we forged ahead with the development of a new integrated Health Information System with three partner hospitals that will launch later this year and we are heading into accreditation this Fall.

Today, while we are still managing through the pandemic, there is a clear sense of hope and optimism that is starting to surface with the distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccines. Many of our staff have received either their first or even second dose of a vaccine, and community roll-out is underway. While this won't make COVID-19 go away, it provides us all with some reassurance and protection against the most devastating potential of the virus. I encourage everyone to make an appointment when it is appropriate to do so, to help protect yourselves and your families and to help curb the spread of COVID-19. It is safe. It is effective. It will save lives.

I also want to let you know that the staff and physicians at Headwaters continue to be here for you. The majority of our programs and services are fully operational and we continue to be a safe place for you to access health care. We have so many everyday heroes across all departments who continue to show up each and every day. I am immensely proud of the work they do and to be part of the Headwaters team. I also want to extend my sincere gratitude. As I mentioned, over the past year the incredible generosity and spirit of the community has sustained us. It has reinforced our stated purpose that we are One Community, Caring Together. Thank you.?