



ANNUAL REPORT

April 1st, 2021 – March 31st, 2022

As President and Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Health Partners Inc. (Catholic Health International), I am very pleased to present the Annual Report of Corporation activities over the past year.

This year we celebrated twenty years of service providing guidance, governance, and mission driven education to all of our facilities throughout Canada and the United States of America. Over the past twenty years, each year was one of challenge and growth. The past two years were particularly challenging and difficult due to the world wide pandemic. We trust that the actions and support we have given during this period, and the lessons we learned will benefit all in the future. It should be noted that the staff in all of our facilities went above and beyond their duties to ensure the safety care, respect, compassion and dignity of all those who touched out lives in keeping with our mission ***Perpetuating the Health Ministry of Jesus in the Spirit of the Founding Sisters.***

CENTRE FOR EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP

This Centre consists of five (5) Pillars: Catholic Leadership Formation Program, Values Integration Program, Ethics, Spiritual and Religious Care, Mission, and Alumni. Over the past year, due again to the pandemic, regular meetings of the various pillars was placed on hold; however, the work within the Pillars continued:

Ethics

Covid-19 and *Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD)* continued to be the two topics that dominated conversation and efforts in Catholic healthcare ethics during the year. The strain on all resources, but especially staff, was overwhelming at times. All staff, our leadership and our Boards/Advisory Committees deserve a great deal of praise for their constant focus on the mission and caring for those most in need at this time. As Pope Francis said, “more than ever we feel gratitude for the doctors, nurses and all health care workers, on the front line as they carried out an arduous and sometimes heroic service.”

One specific issue that drew a good deal of attention was that of Catholic staff seeking “religious exemptions” from needing vaccination against *Covid-19*. This issue has come up at a number of

our facilities. There is disagreement amongst the Bishops regarding the validity of religious exemptions and this has led to some confusion and difficulty.

In light of *Covid-19*, and after serious discussion at the Senior Team level of CHI, it was decided to curtail the work of several of our pillars. This was done in order to avoid putting additional strain on our already overworked CHI partners. Most of our pillar groups were able to have one meeting in the Spring of 2021. It is our hope that the pillars may be able to resume their work in the Fall of 2022.

The Catholic Health Alliance of Canada (CHAC) Ethicists Network continued to explore the impact of Canadian *Bill C-7*, which became law in March of 2021. Of particular concern is the expanded access to *MAiD* for mental health patients without pre-existing conditions. This provision is slated to come into effect in March 2023. Dr. Hazel Markwell, as the CHAC ethicist, has been organizing conversations with Medical Chiefs of Staff and Ethicists across the country. These conversations have looked at the how *Bill C-7* might affect transfers of patients for assessments for eligibility for *MAiD*.

Another significant ethical issue that occupied the CHAC Ethicists Network, those in Communications at Catholic sponsored facilities and the CHAC Governing Council was an article in the *Walrus*, a Canadian interest magazine, which explored the role of Catholic Healthcare in Canada. It was very critical of Catholic healthcare in general and of specific hospitals across the country. It was expected that other media outlets might pick up the article and give it a wider distribution which did not happen. CHI took this event as an opportunity to explore Catholic Identity in our facilities. We have asked Dr. Christopher De Bono, Executive Director of Mission, Values and Spiritual Care at Unity Health Toronto to lead a workshop with our CEOs on this issue. He has chosen “Talking about Catholic Health Care: And why it matters” as his theme and this workshop will be held in the Spring of 2022.

Catholic Health International continues to sponsor an employee in her studies at St Paul University for the Diploma in Catholic Bioethics. She will have completed the third of five courses in the Spring of 2022.

The Ethics Pillar did meet in May and the meeting was highlighted by an excellent presentation by Leesa McNally, part of the Executive Team at St. Joseph's Continuing Care Centre. She shared with the committee a recent workshop by Karima Kanani, a Partner with the law firm of Miller Thomson to the Board and Senior Team at SJCCC. The presentation on “Advancing Diversity and Inclusion: A Governance Perspective” was well received and shared with other CHI facilities.

The CHI office continues to offer consult service to our facilities and this year we have worked on several including Research Ethics Board policies and procedures, *Covid-19* religious exemptions, religious symbols in hospitals and the *Principle of Cooperation*, among others.

Spiritual and Religious Care

The main focus of those involved in Spiritual and Religious Care in our CHI facilities, once again, was *Covid-19*. Our Department heads, our denominationally sponsored Chaplains, our Spiritual Care Specialists, as well as those who support them through their volunteer work, were on the front line of caring for patients, residents, clients, their loved ones and the staff. When the CHI Spiritual Care Pillar met in May there was a lengthy discussion of the challenges and changes that health care staff in their facilities face each day. It is clear that this time has been especially difficult for families who have seriously ill loved ones in hospitals and nursing homes. Visitor restrictions on patients/residents is very difficult and often the spiritual care staff, along with other staff, end up having the role of liaison between family/loved ones and the patients/residents. The required facility restrictions and policies with regard to Sacraments, in particular Mass and Communion, have been an additional burden.

Rev. Dr. Neil Elford, the Director of Spiritual Health, Mission and Ethics for Kingston Health Sciences Centre and Hotel Dieu Hospital in Kingston, Ontario retired in June. Neil's contribution to formation of spiritual care leaders and his work in ethics will be missed. His contributions to our discussions at the CHI Spiritual Care pillar were always insightful and helped us explore the leading edge of spiritual health. Kingston Health Sciences Centre, along with Hotel Dieu Hospital were pleased to announce the hiring of Kelly Collins, MDiv, MA, CASC Certified Educator as a replacement for Neil. We welcome her to the CHI family and look forward to working with her. In New Brunswick, the Spiritual Health Network did its best to remain active during these pandemic times. Our representative on the Network reports back to the CHI Board on a regular basis. The province of New Brunswick did wide spread consultations on their planed new Health Plan during the year. The Minister of Health asked the Spiritual Health Network to gather spiritual and religious leaders from across the province to be part of those consultations in the Fall of 2021. The issue of funding for spiritual health was the main point of discussion with the Minister.

The Network also completed work on a series of short videos explaining different aspects of Spiritual Health and Clinical Pastoral Education. These videos have been shared with our CHI facilities and are available in both French (www.vitalitenb.ca/fr/points-de-service/soins-spirituels) and English (<https://horizonnb.ca/patients-visitors/spiritual-and-religious-services/>). With funding from the province of New Brunswick the Network also organized a virtual conference in November. The webinar, featuring Mario Drouin (from Switzerland), was entitled "The Spiritual Gifts of Aging" and was offered in French with English interpretation. A group of approximately 35 participants joined in, including volunteers, community clergy, and members of the Network. It was very informative for the participants. The Network plans to host similar events in 2022-2023.

CHI also celebrated *World Day of the Sick* in February and *World Earth Day* in April. For *World Day of the Sick* celebration CHI, once again, commissioned our own poster that was used as part of celebrations in our facilities.

Mission

The Mission Pillar met in the Spring of 2021 taking an in depth look at the Catholic Health Association of the United States' *Mission Leader Competency Model*. In this model, the Mission leader competencies are outlined under seven categories (advocacy, catholic identity, strategy, operations, formation, spirituality and ethics). Components of the model are similar to the core elements of CHI's leadership formation model. The Mission Pillar will use this document for possible future education sessions for those working in mission at our facilities.

One of the CHAC Governing Council's strategic goals is to develop strong regional programs for mission, ethics and leadership formation. A national collaborative was established representing the 14 sponsors in Canada. This will provide opportunity to share expertise and resources. The collaborative is called "A Pan Canadian Collaborative for Catholic Health Ethics, Formation & Mission Integration" and Heather Oakley, CHI Director of Education Services and David Levangie, V.P Professional Development and Communications are to be part of this initiative. With *Covid-19* the work of this group has been put on hold for now by the CHAC.

During the year, the Senior Management Team developed a new resource for our Sponsored Boards of Directors/Trustees and Advisory Committees *Understanding your Sponsor: Catholic Health International - Orientation Guide*. This resource will help Boards and Advisory Committees to understand the history and structure of Catholic Health International and the relationship between the Sponsor and the Sponsored organizations. It is an in depth look at Catholic culture and mission in healthcare. The guide will be distributed in the coming months to our different sponsored organizations and will be accompanied by an education session with the CHI Leadership Team.

Each year Catholic Health International recognizes the tremendous dedication of volunteers through our *Annual Volunteer Excellence Awards*. This annual award is presented during *National Catholic Healthcare Week* at many of our facilities. Each facility chooses a volunteer who demonstrates the spirit of volunteerism, reflects the organization's mission and values, promotes the facility and educates others to volunteer. We congratulate all the 2021 winners. Also this year, CHI looked for a way to celebrate and honour all the staff, physicians and volunteers in our facilities who have done so much to live the mission during these difficult times in the pandemic. A banner was created for each of our facilities that stated "To the staff. We thank you! We appreciate you! God Bless You." A letter was sent to each facility with the banner indicating "as caregivers you have dedicated yourselves to providing exceptional care for your patients and residents. Your hard work and commitment has not gone unnoticed. You need to know that you are constantly in our thoughts and are being supported by your Sponsor, Catholic Health International."

In October CHI facilities joined other Catholic healthcare providers to celebrate the 3rd annual *National Catholic Healthcare Week*. The theme this year was "The Courageous Gift of Catholic Health Care" and was highlighted by four basic principles: inspired to serve, passion for justice, together in care, courage to lead. Our facilities celebrated during these *Covid-19* times in creative ways. They engaged in activities that ranged from emailing and posting the daily reflections

throughout their facilities to special meditation workshops held for staff. Several facilities had events where staff were given small gifts in recognition of the week including at Aspirus Langlade Hospital in Wisconsin who gave pocket crosses and prayer cards. Staff were also encouraged to look beyond their own facility to the greater community during the week. CHI Volunteer Award presentations were held at many facilities. Several dioceses also participated in the week by sharing information on their websites, in their bulletins and by using the special prayers prepared for use during the week.

In May 2021 the virtual CHAC annual conference was held. The theme of the conference was *Rise Up and Reach Out: The Pandemic Calls for the Compassionate Healing Ministry of Jesus*. Although a virtual session, the conference was very well attended, with excellent speakers and content. Also in May the CHAC's Governing Council issued a statement on the disclosure about the remains of children being discovered at Residential schools across the country. With this in mind the CHAC sought ways to encourage our sponsors and facilities to reflect and act on the *Truth and Reconciliation Commissions* report on the treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada during the year. The 2022 National CHAC conference is to explore these issues in a deeper fashion with the theme to be "Looking Within: Creating Culturally Safe Environments of Care for Indigenous Peoples."

Values Integration Assessment

Once again, due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, all site visits for the Values Integration Assessment process were put on hold. Once these restrictions are lifted our next visit will be to New London, Wisconsin (St. Joseph Residence & The Washington Center) which will then complete the first VIA visits for all our facilities. We will then begin to visit our facilities for the second time. It is our hope that we can restart this process in the Fall of 2022.

Leadership and the Formation Program

The Leadership Pillar, like the other pillars, only met once during the year. Heather Oakley, Director of Education Services, kept the committee updated on the Catholic Leadership Formation Program plans during the ongoing pandemic. During the year, one of CHI's focuses was to host the second module of the English program, and complete the 1st module of the French program which began in the Fall of 2021. Unfortunately, these plans had to be modified a few times over the year. Planning is now in place to hold Module 2 of the English Program from September 13-15, 2022 in Guelph, Ontario at Loyola House. In this session Sr. Bonnie MacLellan will speak on Canon Law and Sponsorship, Sr. Nuala Kenny will present on Ethics and health care during these challenging times, and Sr. Annelie Fitzpatrick will talk on diversity, social justice and world religions. The first module of the 2021 French Leadership Program was held September 14 – 16, 2021 at the Villegiature Deux Rivieres Resort in Tracadie-Sheila New Brunswick. The three-day session featured Jean Marie Dionne speaking on Heritage and Tradition as well as Mission Leadership, Father Denis Belliveau on Vocation and Spirituality and Michel Drisdelle on Leadership, Care for the Self and Resiliency during these challenging times in health care. The 2nd session of this program will be held September 27-29, 2022.

On November 29th the Leadership of facilities sponsored by Catholic Health International gathered virtually to hold a session on the theme "Meeting the Challenge-Uncovering the Opportunity." The session was facilitated by two members of the CHI leadership, Gizanne Lafrance Allaire, Executive Director of St. Joseph's Continuing Care in Cornwall, Ontario and Charles Holland, CEO of St. Bernard Hospital in Chicago, Illinois. The session was an important opportunity to share experiences and knowledge gained over the past year and a half as we struggle with *Covid-19*. This session was very inspirational and led to deep reflection and conversation for those involved.

During the year, Heather Oakley, Director of Education Services, completed classes in the Catholic Health Association of the United States "Foundations of Catholic Health Care Leadership Program: An Online Course for Formation and Development." Heather found it to be a good program but noted that without a face-to-face retreat component it lacks the same impact as the CHI Formation program does. The retreat like atmosphere of the CHI program offers the students and presenters and opportunity to explore topics in greater depth and to have a greater impact at the personal and professional levels.

During the year, Eileen Bowes, V.P. Governance and Operations completed the Canadian College of Health Leaders, Leads Inspired Leadership Program, and is presently enrolled in the Chartered Directors Program at McMaster University, DeGroote School of Management.

There is an inherent need within our organization to remain true to the legacy of the founding Sisters by encouraging collaboration to make the needs of those most vulnerable an integral part of our works. Our booklet "*Priority One – Serving the Vulnerable*" will be upgraded in the Fall/Winter of 2022-23. Programs of support for the vulnerable continue to be a major focus of our operations.

Integration has been a constant in many locations over the past few years. We continue to study opportunities for integration, partnership or alliance in various areas generated in some cases by financial opportunities while always with a focus on the patient/resident and how we can best serve the population of the area.

A major Strategic Planning session scheduled for the Fall of 2020 had to be delayed until the Fall of 2022, again due to the pandemic. In the meantime, the Board held two virtual mini retreats to prepare for the major face-to-face retreat indicating a number of programs and services they would like to address. The Senior Executive Team prepared background materials for the board in the subject areas they requested. Included in the material will be proposals for restructuring the Board of Directors, Spiritual Care initiatives, new and innovating ideas thinking outside the box while at the same time honoring and enhancing the legacy of the Founding Sisters and in keeping with our mission. The documentation was sent to the Board in the March.

Our monthly newsletter "The Torch" continues to be published under the direction of David Levangie, Vice-President Communications/Professional Development. As well new

communications plans are being developed to address the new reality of virtual meetings, leadership development and board connectedness.

As with any organization of this magnitude there are expected changes in leadership from time to time. A number of CEO's, Executive Directors, Facility Managers have indicated they would be retiring in the coming months, so we can expect a number of changes over the next year which means our orientation plans will be upgraded and enhanced for management personnel.

The Board of Directors of Catholic Health International continues to meet regularly throughout the year, as required by the By-Laws, to address requests, issues and/or concerns of the various sponsored corporations. The format of the meetings has been changed to make the meeting more efficient and effective enabling a faster return to the Corporations. Under the guidance of Eileen Bowes, CHI Vice-President, Governance and Operations, many of our Accountability documents were or are being revised for ease of completion by the facilities and contribute to a much better understanding of our purpose while at the same time adhering to the mission and sound moral principles and teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

At each meeting of the Board of Directors, an environmental scan is presented which outlines for the Board members a clear picture of activities related to governance and operations in each of our Sponsored facilities across the system as well as current issues being addressed by head office.

Policies were reviewed and where required revised in keeping with our Strategic Plan.

The "***Volunteer Excellence Award***" continues to be available to each facility as mentioned previously in this report. An Awards Committee under the Director of Education Services has been appointed and has been reviewing all awards to ensure they are effective and promoted.

Catholic Health International continues to be a full partner in the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada (CHAC) including representation on the Board of Governors. CHI also financially supports the national ethics program along with the other Sponsors in Canada and the CHAC. CHI in partnership with our Religious Institutes continues to be a Gold sponsor of the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada National Conference.

Catholic Health International continues to be a partner in the Ontario Alliance of Sponsors (OAS). Meetings are held on a monthly basis to deal with issues involving Catholic Health care in the Province of Ontario and issues arising across Canada which could impact the delivery of Catholic Healthcare in Ontario.

Nothing gets accomplished in an organization of our size without the complete dedication, commitment, and tireless energy of our staff. They simply are exceptional and devote all of their time and energy to ensure that the demands of their individual positions and the direction of the

organization is in keeping with our mission. A very special thank you to each and every one of them.

Catholic Health care administrators continue to work in an immense challenging operational and financial environment. COVID-19 has presented all of our facilities including managers and front line staff with extreme challenges. The work of these people and first responders is truly amazing always respecting and driven by the mission of the facility. They are all to be congratulated. They are Heroes.

Catholic healthcare continues to be an essential ministry of the Catholic Church. We must emphasize human dignity and social justice as we create healthier communities across our system addressing the needs of the vulnerable and marginalized. We are more than caretakers of this wonderful ministry – we are bearers of a tradition of service and ethical reflection. We are Church!

Respectfully

Robert B. Stewart, PhD
President and Chief Executive Officer.