



## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 – March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023**

The Annual Report of activities of Catholic Health Partners Inc. (Catholic Health International) is presented for the past year.

Having completed twenty-one (21) years of service of providing guidance, governance, and mission driven education to all our facilities throughout Canada and the United States of America we take pride in our ability to overcome challenges and see the corporation grow. This past year saw a return to some normal practices after having suffered a challenging and difficult period due to the worldwide pandemic. As a result of working through this time of uncertainty we saw many opportunities for future development. All staff in all our facilities in both countries continue to go above and beyond their calling to ensure the safety, care, respect, compassion and dignity of the patients, residents, and clients is maintained or enhanced in keeping with our mission of Perpetuating the Health Ministry of Jesus in the Spirit of the Founding Sisters.

A major accomplishment this year was the development of a five (5) year strategic Plan Vision '23. The plan had been in the works over the past three (3) years; however, the Board of Directors was unable to gather in retreat until the Fall of 2022. The Board spent three days in retreat finalizing the work originally started in 2019. The result was an operational plan for the next five years. Prior to approval, the document was presented to the Leadership Team across the entire system for their input. Catholic Health International has grown to become a large Catholic Health organization with significant presence in Canada and the United States. It carries out its civil and canonical responsibilities, as a Sponsor, while providing support, guidance and oversight to the over forty-five (45) corporations it serves while adhering to the moral teachings of the Catholic Church. CHI provides opportunities for people to achieve purpose and meaning. During the past year, the Board of Directors and the Leadership Team have dedicated significant time and thought to the development of our new strategic visions for the next five years. Vision '23 establishes key strategic actions, which will provide the organization direction, inform resource allocation efforts and guide annual objective setting while, at the same time, assisting Catholic Health International to identify and respond to unmet needs. Key action points in the plan include: Improve the governance of the Catholic Health International Board of Directors and CHI's sponsored facilities boards of directors, boards of trustees and advisory committees; professionalize the delivery of spiritual health services; celebrate our legacy; strengthen our connection to our sponsored organizations, and strive to improve the current health care environment. We have organized our main initiative into

the categories of perform and transform. It is exciting to plan our future by aligning these categories utilizing the talent and creativity of our people.

During the year, a new and revised orientation guide was published. "Understanding Your Sponsor: Catholic Health International – Orientation Guide". Its purpose is to provide key facts about CHI, to help to build upon the powerful legacy entrusted to us by the Sisters who founded our healthcare facilities and social service organizations. It also provides information on governance policies and the procedures required by the corporate by-laws and relevant legislation as it pertains to their involvement with the facility. The CHI Senior Management Team began the process of introducing this new document to all of our sponsored communities of Care. This will continue over the next year as well.

The Board of directors of Catholic Health International meets regularly throughout the year, as required by the By-Laws, to address requests, issues and/or concerns of the various Sponsored corporations. Changes have been made to the format of these meetings to provide more efficient and effective service to our many Sponsored facilities. In addition, the Board of Directors of CHI hold special meetings dealing with issues, upcoming events, and general planning in accordance with the new Strategic Plan. Eileen Bowes, CHI Vice-President, Governance and Operations, in consultation with the CHI Management Team, has revised the accountability reporting document together with other pertinent documents including facility by-laws. This provides a greater understanding of the purpose of the documents and enable Board members and staff to operate with ease while at the same time adhering to the mission and sound moral principles and teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

In the fiscal year 2022, the Board of Catholic Health International met in person for strategic planning in St. Andrews New Brunswick from September 26 to September 28. The Board met virtually on September 14, December 14, and March 8 and on April 5 for regular Board of Directors meetings and corporate meetings for the sponsored corporations. Annual Meetings were held on June 23, 2022. We utilize our secure platform "Board Effect" for distribution of board packages and information.

Committees of the Board met as necessary and membership of these committees were reviewed in preparation for the annual meeting.

Corporate Annual Returns were filed for our Corporations and remittances for the Canada Revenue Agency were filed appropriately.

Financial records were maintained and kept current and financial statements were prepared monthly and included a comparison to the budget. Assistance was provided in the preparation of the annual budget. Assistance was provided to our sponsored organizations in many areas, including board recruitment, governance and by laws. Over the past 12 months, support and resources were provided to facilities where operational concerns were exhibited.

This year has seen a number of changes in the Leadership Team due to retirement or promotion within the individual organization mainly in the hospital sector in Eastern Canada. A successful orientation session was held in New Brunswick on February 7 – 8 at the Rodd River Inn for new leadership in our sponsored corporations. During the year, site visits were made with some in-person and some virtually. The visits to roll out this important resource will continue in the coming year. Board Orientation for our sponsored organizations was "on hold" due to COVID is now a priority. To date orientation has been held

for two facilities in Ontario and one in New Brunswick. Scheduling is underway to provide orientation for the boards of all of our facilities.

Board membership of our facilities were reviewed including the mandate, terms and skills mix. Included in our strategic plan is the priority of diversity, equity and inclusion and we communicate this to our organizations as well.

A revision of the by-laws for Catholic Health Partners were completed and the new bylaws were approved at the Annual Meeting in June 2022. The new bylaws met the requirements for both civil and canon law. As a result of reorganization, four new members were appointed to the Board of Directors of CHI. We are very pleased with these appointments, thank them sincerely for their willingness to serve and look forward to their sharing their knowledge and expertise.

Support and coordination of the evaluations for both CEO's and Administrators and Board of Directors self-evaluations were conducted throughout the year.

Five registrations for each facility was provided for the Annual Conference for the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada. Promotion of the conference and registrations were facilitated through the CHI office. Applications were submitted in January for a Summer Student through the Federal Canada Summer Student program and the Provincial Seed Program. We were successful in the Federal program but did not received the Seed Program.

All submissions for the Annual Report to the Sponsor were completed on time by our organizations. Requests for the Annual Meeting requirements for our organizations were distributed and assistance is provided as needed to ensure that all necessary items requiring approval are received.

The education scholarship at CHI continues to provide support to staff within our system furthering their education: Eileen Bowes continued her professional development by completing the CHA Learning Leads Inspired Leadership program and Module 1 of the Chartered Directors program through McMaster University/DeGroot School of Business. David Ceglie completed his Doctor of Philosophy degree in leadership and policy; and Jean Marie Dionne completed the certificate the St. Paul University Diploma in Catholic Bioethics program.

The Catholic Healthcare International's Centre for Excellence in Leadership is once again in full operation with each pillar meeting on a regular basis following reduced activity during the pandemic. The following is a brief outline of the work of the pillars:

### **Ethics**

It was another busy year for those involved in healthcare ethics in CHI facilities. Covid-19 and MAiD (in Canada) were the two main topics of discussion and concern. The CHAC Ethicists Network continued to meet monthly for most of the year to discuss ethical issues in Catholic healthcare.

Religious exemptions for Covid-19 vaccinations continued to be an issue. Ethics consults were provided by CHI. With many provincial and state jurisdictions removing vaccination mandates our facilities were faced with a new dilemma; some jurisdictions were requiring that staff who were not vaccinated be

allowed back to work. This caused a great deal of concern from vaccinated staff, patients and their loved ones. Teams worked to reintroduce these staff in the least disruptive fashion possible

MAiD continued to be a topic of discussion at the CHAC Ethicists Network as well as in CHI facilities. As the deadline for changes to the law regarding eligibility for MAiD in circumstances where a person's sole underlying medical condition is a mental illness approached, concerns grew. On February 2, 2023, the Government of Canada introduced Bill C-39 that postponed this change until March 17, 2024. There was an acknowledgment, by the government, that the process for implementing this change was not in place in all the provinces at this time, hence the extension. The Government made it clear that this was a "pause" and not a cancellation of this change. An Angus Reid poll in February found that only 31% of Canadians say they support the concept of offering MAiD for irremediable mental illness.

Advance Care Planning Canada also offered vocal opposition to the proposed changes to MAiD. Their concern was that with increased access to MAiD, patients are pursuing fewer other treatment options, such as hospice/palliative care. They noted that as patients decide that they will seek MAiD they feel like an Advance Care Plan is unnecessary. This raises the concern that hospice/palliative care will be underutilized.

The Director of Mission at St. Joseph Hospital and Rocmaura, in Saint John NB, has completed the course requirements for the St. Paul University Diploma in Catholic Bioethics. This is an excellent program for those who have some responsibility for ethics in their facilities and other staff from CHI sponsored facilities have completed the program in previous years.

The CHI Ethics pillar continued to meet during the year and two new members were added to the committee: Sandra Carlton, Executive Vice-President & Chief Human Resources Officer at Kingston Health Sciences Centre and Sean Joyce Whipp, formerly of Aspirus Langlade Hospital and now the Mission Leader at Trinity Health Oakland Hospital in Detroit MI. We want to thank the two members who left the committee, Margaret Melanson, acting CEO of Horizon Health Network in New Brunswick and Kim Roberts, former Chair of Rocmaura Nursing Home and St. Joseph's Hospital in Saint John NB, for their contribution to this committee.

During the year, the CHAC Ethicists Network completed work on a compendium document to the Health Ethics Guide titled "The Prominence of Religious Art, Signs and Symbols in Catholic Health Organizations." This document was shared with our Boards of Directors and Advisory Committees and we have offered to help those groups explore the document in more detail, should they wish. We did have a virtual consult on a related issue during the year that led to a very in depth conversation for the Boards of one of our facilities.

### **Spiritual and Religious Care**

The CHI Spiritual Care pillar welcomed three new members this year.

The pillar's focus continues to be on spiritual care education and its availability in the communities that we serve. The group discussed the availability of specialty training in spiritual care, Clinical Psycho-Spiritual Education (C.P.E.) in Canada and the United States. It was noted that there are fewer units of

training available as well as fewer students in these programs. Some spiritual care practitioners, from CHI sponsored facilities, either have to travel long distance, or join virtually, to access this type of education. This concerns the committee as they have already noticed that it is difficult to find C.P.E. trained spiritual care providers to work in our facilities when there is a vacancy.

The New Brunswick Spiritual Health Network, which has formed by CHI/CHANB and the New Brunswick government, continues to meet regularly to improve the level of spiritual care in NB hospitals.

CHI/CHANB continues to have representation on the Network. During the year "Mindfulness Self-Compassion for Healthcare Professionals", training was offered to all spiritual care practitioners in the province. The Canadian Association for Spiritual Care held its annual conference virtually in early May, and NBSHN members were sponsored to attend. The theme this year was "Moral Injury." The Network sponsored a virtual half-day retreat. Work continues on forming or joining a College for registered professionals, as well as developing the survey on scope of practice for clinical spiritual care practitioners in the province.

### **Mission**

The Mission Pillar met twice during the year. The pillar has initiated a Journal club as a regular part of the meeting. The pillar members also began the process of reviewing the results of CHI's 2022 Annual Report to the Sponsor. It is made up of survey responses from each of the facilities and it explores mission, ethics, values, orientation, formation, commitment to serving the underserved, and governance. Each of the pillars will be reviewing this document in their meetings with the plan to explore what areas need follow up and possible new programming or education.

The Governing Council of the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada, with the support and approval of the Canadian Catholic Bishops, has chosen to move the dates of National Catholic Healthcare Week. Traditionally held the first full week of October, going forward it will be celebrated the first full week of February. This will align the celebration with World Day of the Sick, on February 11th.

### **Values Integration Assessment**

Once again, due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, all site visits for the Values Integration Assessment process were placed on hold this year. During the year, the pillar members reviewed the survey process including a detailed look at the survey that is sent to facilities as part of the Values Integration Assessment process. The VIA visitation schedule was also reviewed and discussions have begun with the administrators of the facilities that will be visited later this year. In the coming year second visits to our CHI facilities will begin. Recently the VIA pillar members reviewed CHI's Annual Report to the Sponsor to find areas that might be addressed during site visits. This process will continue in the coming year.

### **Leadership and the Formation Program**

The Leadership Pillar met twice during the year. Heather Oakley, Director of Education Services, kept the committee updated on the Catholic Leadership Formation Program going forward. The second module of the English program was held September 13-15, 2022, in Guelph Ontario at Loyola House The second module of the French Leadership Program was also held in September 2022, at the Villegiature Deux Rivieres Resort in Tracadie New Brunswick. Evaluations from both sessions were very positive. The

participants stated they enjoyed the content, the networking, and the new relationships formed over the 3 days.

The 2023 English Formation Program will be held June 20th-22nd in Mississauga Ontario at Queen of Apostles Retreat Centre. The same presentations will be given at the French Leadership Formation Program to be held September 26-28th, 2023 at the Villegiature Deux Rivieres Resort in Tracadie, New Brunswick. As part of the Formation Program, (mission, spirituality, diversity, and reconciliation) participants will take part in the Kairos Blanket Exercise (KBE). The KBE is a participatory exercise that centers on the stories of Indigenous Peoples that will walk us through Indigenous history, legacy and traditions, and the struggles, harm and injustices arising from colonization.

On April 26, 2022, the Leadership of the facilities sponsored by Catholic Health International gathered virtually to hold a session on the theme "Talking About Catholic Health Care: And why it matters". Christopher De Bono Ph.D. led the Leadership team in a deep discussion of Catholic Identity. Participants were given the opportunity to share their experiences through small group discussions and in plenary session.

Throughout the year CHI staff and Leaders of CHI sponsored facilities participated in several educational sessions. Over 55 people participated from Catholic Health International sponsored facilities in the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada's (CHAC) annual conference. The theme of "Looking Within: Creating Culturally Safe Environments of Care for Indigenous Peoples" challenged the participants to look at how we, in Catholic healthcare, can further our understanding of Indigenous Peoples. During the year, CHI staff also participated in a series of Catholic Health Association of United States (CHAUS) webinars with topics including Catholic Health Care Ethics, Mission, Palliative Care, and Climate Change and Health. CHI staff and leaders from CHI sponsored facilities were invited to participate in the Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario webinar titled "Care for All". The focus of the session was on climate change, how it affects our health and how our very systems that advance health care are adversely affecting our climate.

Our monthly newsletter "The Torch" was published on a monthly basis under the direction of our Vice-President of Professional Development and Communication, David Levangie. The newsletter has been well received with distribution beyond the geographic footprint of Catholic Health International. This also assists in the new reality of virtual meetings and the lack of in person workshops and gatherings by keeping people informed of our activities.

Catholic Health International is 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 Sponsors in Canada and the CHAC. CHI in partnership with our Religious Institutes continues to be a major Sponsor of the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada National conference.

In addition to the aforementioned, Catholic Health International continues to be a partner with the Ontario Alliance of Sponsors (OAS). Meetings are held regularly 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.

The Catholic Health Association of New Brunswick (CHANB), being a full partner in Catholic Health Partners Inc. houses the education committee for both CHI and for CHANB. This provides additional educational opportunities for Leaders within CHI.

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

Catholic Health International continues to recognize 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.

A number of scholarships are awarded each year in honour of our Founders. These are awarded to students entering their second year of studies in a health field and are awarded to catholic students based on set criteria. Up to eight (8) one thousand dollar (\$1,000.00) scholarships are awarded each year. The Director of Education Services, Heather Oakley has been reviewing all awards to ensure they are effective and promoted. External committees recommend the recipients.

In the past year, through the kindness of Saint Joseph's Continuing Care Centre in Cornwall, Ontario, we were able to increase the security on our computer system and electronic network. We appreciate their dedication and support for this major undertaking.

An organization of our size is very busy and it takes a number of people to make it all happen. We make it happen because of the complete dedication, commitment, and tireless energy of all our staff. They 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 and mandate. A very special thank you to each of them.

Respectfully,

Robert B. Stewart, PhD  
President and Chief Executive Officer