

Funding Challenges *for medium-sized hospitals*

The way government funds programs is never simple and health care funding is particularly well-known for its complexity. Some medium-sized hospitals - and Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare is classed as such - face the additional challenge of being a round peg in a square hole when it comes to the province's criteria for funding.

Funding is based on three elements, says Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare's Chief Financial Officer Terry Shields. One is called global funding, which is a base amount to cover hydro, building costs, etc. The second, called "hospital-based allocation methodology" is simply a tally of weighted cases from our hospital's historical data. Each patient treatment, called a case, is not only counted, but weighted. For example, a patient with a broken finger has a lower weight than a patient with an aneurysm. More hospital resources (staffing, supplies and equipment) are required for the latter, so it's weighted higher.

“Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare operates two emergency rooms but this can be particularly expensive. The funding criteria do not recognize this structural reality.”



The third element is the number of "quality-based procedures" which are specific courses of treatment where the care is consistently predictable. Usually these are procedures where the process is routine and requires the exact same (or very similar) hospital resources each time. These procedures are funded at a specified rate that is multiplied by volume to generate the funds the hospital receives for the procedure. We have historically exceeded the volumes the Ministry is prepared to fund, which causes shortfalls.

Simply put, Shields says, "The funding model doesn't work for us. We're classed as one medium-sized hospital in terms of funding and our volumes are spread across two sites with two sets of staff." Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare operates two emergency rooms but this can be particularly expensive, given they're both open 24/7, says Shields. The funding criteria do not recognize this structural reality.

In eight of the last nine years, the hospital administration and Board of Directors has been able to make a case to the province and, as a result, receive one-time stop-gap funding from the Ministry. It would be preferable, says Shields, if the model could be adapted to better fit the situation rather than having to advocate each year to prove that the hospital has done everything it can to operate efficiently to earn an exception to the rule.

The situation is further complicated by a lack of working capital. Having shortfalls every year creates a situation where the hospital is constantly borrowing to continue to operate. Servicing the interest on those loans sets budgets back even further. This issue is symptomatic of many medium-size Ontario hospitals. In an advocacy document by the Ontario Hospital Association, it states that, "This means [medium-sized hospitals] carry large debts which makes it difficult to pay expenses and invest in areas such as new equipment, patient safety measures and information technology - all of which benefit patients."

The province's proposed transition away from Local Health Integration Networks to a centralized "Ontario Health" system and the creation of Ontario Health Teams will change the provision of care in the future. In the meantime, at our hospital, the Board and leadership continue to work to maintain services for patients while meeting the province's criteria, as best as possible.



New things *great and small*

COLIN MILLER, Executive Director, South Muskoka Hospital Foundation

“With expectation and hope,
we eagerly look to the future.”



As we glide into fall, I'm very aware that there are a lot of new events, new people, and new ideas all around me.

The most prominent is the recent recommendation from the Capital Planning Task Force to ensure that we have modern and updated health care facilities in South Muskoka for future generations. Although still requiring multiple approvals and many years down the road, this is an exciting proposition that will allow our community to flourish and be well-served in a modern and highly functional building. Although there are many unknowns at this point, our donors understand that we can't stop investing in this hospital just because another one is years away.

On the home front, we have a new foundation executive, comprised of Jodie Evans as our chair, Kevin Smith as the vice-chair and David Smith as our treasurer. We're fortunate to have these dedicated volunteers to guide the Foundation over the next several years. Interestingly, all three are executives or business owners in our community of South Muskoka. They bring an innovative perspective to our

focus and I'm happy to announce our board is working on developing new and fun ways for donors to support the hospital. Two of these new initiatives are the Night Out and the Health Care Charity Raffle.

Our Night Out event, presented by Scotiabank on November 8, was a culinary adventure, with cuisines from around the world. Pairings with local craft brews complemented the menu. Live music was provided by the very talented Stacy Renee, Toronto singer, songwriter and performer. Our other new initiative, the Health Care Charity Raffle will be held on December 16. We have 11 outstanding prizes from local businesses (see back flap of this newsletter for details). Please consider purchasing a ticket for \$20 or three for \$50.

As I reflect on all these happenings, I find there's an excitement in the air. Perhaps we've been mired in the unknown for so long that the expectation of the new and of what's to come has captured our imagination. With expectation and hope, we eagerly look to the future.

2019-2020

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Keeping **Northern** doctors in the **North**

After 12 years of South Muskoka Memorial Hospital's participation with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM), the partnership is a resounding success.

"The whole focus was to populate the north with physicians," said Sue Featherston, NOSM's local administrative coordinator, "since all of northern Ontario is so under-served."

NOSM is operated through a collaboration of two northern universities, Laurentian University in Sudbury and Lakehead University in Thunder Bay. Third year medical students from these two campuses come to northern Ontario communities - such as Muskoka - for eight months for what's called a comprehensive community clerkship.



The 2019-2020 Community Clerkship students include from left: Zachary Turgeon, Matthew Prisk, Yue Sun, Emily Aleksa, Cale Lesson, Cole Anderson, Meghan Beals and Jennifer Hammell.

By admitting mostly students from rural and remote communities and educating them almost entirely in northern Ontario, they are more likely to choose to stay and locate their practice in the north. The numbers speak for themselves with over 90 percent of students who do both their medical school and residency at NOSM, practicing in the north. And Muskoka has the graduates to prove it - with five NOSM doctors currently completing their residency or practicing medicine in our area.

During their clerkship, students have the opportunity to put what they've learned in school into practice through submersion in clinical settings in the community - both at the hospital and in doctor's offices. They spend

about half their time in each setting, overseen by local physicians.

"The medical students," Featherston said, "go from having limited hands-on clinical skills to having a strong medical foundation - it's a highly formative year for them. They are exposed to family medicine, emergency, and all of the medical specialty areas as well as some allied health areas, such as physiotherapy and paramedic medicine."

After her undergraduate degree in kinesiology at Laurier and two years of medical school at Lakehead University, Dr. Jessica Nairn came home to Muskoka for her third year clerkship. With her parents living in Huntsville and her partner in Port Sydney, Nairn was thrilled to be located back home.

"As a clerk, I shadowed family doctors in various settings: clinic, long term care, hospital and in patients' homes. In rural communities, general practitioners get to wear many hats." After graduation, she returned to Muskoka for her residency at South Muskoka Memorial Hospital.

"I was fortunate and matched to Bracebridge," Nairn said. "It was a good fit." She also worked in other Muskoka locations for one-month placements, including Wahta and Burk's Falls.

"You become very versatile," said Nairn. "By learning in so many different environments, by the time you near completion, you know what you like and don't like. Doctors spend a lot of time at work, so you must enjoy your workplace."

During the upcoming fall and winter months, Muskoka residents will see Dr. Nairn filling in for various physicians in Bracebridge and Gravenhurst. She'll also serve as a hospitalist - a physician who cares for those without a family doctor during their stay in the hospital.

Bracebridge and Gravenhurst residents and visitors may also encounter two medical residents currently training at South Muskoka and, for the next eight months, a whole new crop of third year medical students. Strong partnerships like these support the physicians of tomorrow and strengthen the local health care system for us all.

Thank You for your gift.

South Muskoka Hospital Foundation is grateful for every donation it receives. The following individuals, businesses, and organizations made gifts of \$500 or more between **July 1, 2018 and October 1, 2019.**

We make every attempt to ensure the accuracy of this list. If we have accidentally omitted or misspelled your name, please contact us at the Foundation office.



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“Anyone can be a hero.”

If you would like to give the gift of life, please contact
the Foundation office or visit our website at
healthmuskoka.ca

Thank you.





Two new hospitals in the distant future

NATALIE BUBELA, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare

I am delighted that the Board of Directors has unanimously supported the recommendation from the Capital Plan Development Task Force to build two new hospitals - one on the current land in Huntsville and one on new land in Bracebridge. With the Board's endorsement, we will submit this plan for two new hospitals with a service delivery model that includes emergency departments and inpatient services like obstetrics and surgical services at each site, 61 more inpatient beds across both sites by the year 2032 including a new stroke rehabilitation unit, and the addition of MRI technology to the Ministry of Health for its approval.

Across Ontario, the Ministry is responsible for 90% of the construction cost of redevelopment while the community is expected to contribute 10%, plus any furniture, fixtures and equipment required. For our plan, it's a project estimated in today's dollars of approximately \$560 million, of which the Ministry would be responsible for about \$430 million of that cost. The resulting local share is approximately \$130M.

We want you to know that we have studied the life span of some of our furniture, fixtures and equipment, much of which you, our donors, have supported over the years. We are encouraged that upon the opening of the new future hospitals about \$35 million of assets will be able to be transferred. We are also grateful that each of our Foundations is committed to a \$10 million capital campaign to support redevelopment.

That leaves an outstanding balance of \$74 million as the community's share, which the municipalities have agreed in principal to support. This is still a big number for our region and represents the single largest investment in Muskoka. But we have 15 years to get there. We hope you will continue to be part of this legacy and give our future generations the best in hospital care.

“These are very exciting times for Muskoka and area to shape the future redevelopment of hospital care.”

NATALIE BUBELA



Giving back community highlights



A new ER Stretcher will be purchased thanks to the **Royal Canadian Legion Ontario Provincial Command and Ladies' Auxiliaries Charitable Foundation**. Pictured from left: Branch 161 (Bracebridge) President Shirley Ruttan, Foundation Executive Director Colin Miller and Ladies Auxiliary President Marion Altman.



Dave Ellis Pro-Am celebrated its 33rd consecutive year in support of the Foundation. Ron Doty (at back), representing the Foundation, accepts \$20,000 from organizers (from left), Jen Stephen, Neil Paton, professional Jordan Nathan, Adam Wallace, Leslie Cleveland and Dave Bacon from the 2019 Dave Ellis Pro-Am held on September 23.

our community



McDonald's Gravenhurst celebrated its grand re-opening on June 1 with a \$5,000 donation toward the hospital's secure rooms in the emergency department. From left, Al Cumber, franchise owner of McDonald's Muskoka, Penny Varney, Town of Gravenhurst Ward 1 councillor and Foundation Executive Director Colin Miller.



The Muskoka Spare Tires were at it again with another donation of \$6,000 from their annual spring golf tournament. Over the past 20 years, this team has raised more than \$75,000 for the hospital. Pictured from left: Roger Schandlen, Colin Miller of the Foundation, John Cleator and Jamie Beardmore.



The Rotary Club of Bracebridge provided \$5,000 towards the safe rooms in our emergency department. This gift was doubled by the 2019 Brock Napier Matching Grant. Pictured from left: Colin Miller of the Foundation, Rotary Club President Andrew Smellie, and Natalie Bubela, MAHC CEO.

On Sept 22, 12-year-old Port Carling resident Cailan Punnewaert organized a **Kids Who Care Carwash** fundraiser in support of a new infant warmer for the South Muskoka hospital. Together, with support from the Rotary Club of Bracebridge, more than \$2,500 was raised. Encouraging cars to stop in for a wash are: Cailan Punnewaert with Violet Kane on her shoulders and Sophie Northey on left.



is our *foundation.*



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thank you.

Honouring and remembering friends and family

Often a donor will come to us, wanting to honour a special person in his or her life through a gift to the Foundation. This way of giving is increasingly being adopted to acknowledge those who are living in addition to those who have passed. Sometimes a donor will directly ask friends and family to give a gift to their favourite charity in lieu of a birthday gift or, when the friends and family already know their loved ones' preferences, they may arrange for the donation as a surprise.

The latter was the case this past summer for a tightly-knit neighbourhood on Lake Muskoka. The Beaumaris community gathered to surprise summer resident Billy Hitchcock for a milestone birthday. Hitchcock has been a stalwart and committed supporter of the Foundation for many years, so his friends knew that a donation in support of the hospital would be his wish in lieu of gifts.



The event went over so well that friends and family of another Beaumaris resident decided to recognize their loved one's birthday in a similar fashion. Only a few weeks after Hitchcock's celebrations, a second surprise birthday party was held for Robert McLeish - again, with gifts going to the Foundation. McLeish has been an active supporter of the hospital and served on several fundraising committees.

The Foundation received another generous donation to honour Christine Featherstone, a hospital board member who served from 2013 until her passing in 2018. In her honour, Featherstone's life partner Francois Tremblay donated \$25,000 to the hospital. "I was very proud of her dedication," said Tremblay. "I continue to be amazed at how many prior board colleagues and people in prominent positions across the country have reached out to me since she died to say how much she positively influenced them."

In each of these instances, the families were pleased to have the funds they raised go toward urgently needed equipment for the hospital.



**If you would like to honour
a family member or special person
in your life in a similar way,
please contact the Foundation office.**

The *Legacy* Society

welcomes new members

The South Muskoka Hospital Foundation (SMHF) is happy to recognize those who want to create a legacy of health care beyond their lifetime. By making arrangements in their will, trust or other deferred gift, the following donors have established their intentions through the new SMHF Legacy Society:

HELEN AND DON COATES
HENRY CURRIE
RON DOTY
PAUL HAMMOND
HARRY HILL
KAREN MARTIN
COLLETTE MCLEAN MORTENSEN
ROBERT MCLEISH

There are five other members who wish to remain anonymous at this time.

The members of the Legacy Society will be posted in a special section of the donor wall, prominently located in the lobby of the hospital. The unveiling of this new section is coming soon.

**For more information on how to become a Legacy Society member,
please contact the Foundation office.**





South Muskoka
Hospital *foundation*

75 Ann Street, Bracebridge, Ontario P1L 2E4

Health Care Charity Raffle

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- Muskoka Brewery: 1964 Muskoka Beach Rd. Bracebridge
- Canadian Tire Bracebridge, 450 Muskoka Rd. Bracebridge

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From time to time, we may use your contact information to keep you informed of other activities, events and/or fundraising opportunities in support of the Foundation.

We are pleased to send you our biannual newsletter.

The South Muskoka Hospital Foundation does not trade or sell donor lists. If at anytime you do not wish to be listed in our recognition programs or to receive our newsletter, please contact us at: (705) 645-4404, ext. 3193 or email at info@healthmuskoka.ca

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