

**PEMBROKE REGIONAL HOSPITAL**  
**Report from the President and CEO and Chief of Staff**  
**November, 2025**

**Board Education Session**

At this month's meeting, we will welcome Laurie Menard, *Epic* Site Lead, who, along with Scott Coombes, will provide a high level status update on the progress that has been made to date in preparation for the Fall 2026 go-live of our new health information system.

**President and CEO Report to Board**

**Amalgamation Proposal Submitted to Minister of Health**

As you know, the Phoenix Centre reached out to us a number of months ago to see if there would be an interest in amalgamating their services in order to strengthen delivery, support their staff with competitive compensation and benefits and ensure the continuity of care for children, youth and families in our region.

Subsequently, a tremendous amount of work took place in order to ensure that such an initiative would be beneficial to all involved and, more importantly, that there would be no disruption in service to clients.

With the support of both Boards and following an extensive stakeholder engagement process that did not expose any concerns or risks, the final proposal was submitted to the Minister of Health on October 30<sup>th</sup>. Review of the proposal could take up to 150 days.

Assuming we get approval, the Phoenix Centre's services will become part of Mental Health Services of Renfrew County under the new designation "The Phoenix Centre for Children and Families of Pembroke Regional Hospital" in the spring of 2026.

All services will continue to be offered in their current locations, with no changes to contact numbers or registration processes. We are hopeful that this will go forward.

**Grand Opening of Our Chemotherapy and Medical Daycare Space**

On October 29<sup>th</sup> we officially opened the newly renovated and expanded Chemotherapy and Medical Daycare space on the 1st floor of Tower D. This ceremony was attended by approximately 60 guests including some of you, our donors, staff, physicians, municipal leaders, and community partners and marked the completion of Phase 2 for our Cancer Care Project.

It was a wonderful opportunity to showcase this space which has been thoughtfully designed and completely transformed to better serve our patients and their families during some of the most vulnerable moments in their lives.

I want to take a moment to sincerely thank our incredible staff who work in this unit. Their feedback, their insights, and their compassion were instrumental in shaping this space. From choosing the paint colours to selecting the therapy chairs, their voices were heard — and the result is a space that truly reflects the care and empathy that they bring to work every day.

Local resident Michael Blackmore who is one of our chemotherapy patients also praised the staff in some emotional remarks.

He shared how beneficial it is to be able to receive treatment close to home and praised the collaboration between his Ottawa-based oncologists and the health care professionals here at PRH.

His remarks were moving and validated that the work our team is doing for local cancer patients is top-notch.

### **Take Our Kids To Work Day**

On November 5<sup>th</sup> we welcomed 16 local Grade 9 students as part of this annual informative and educational program that provides a snapshot of careers in health care.

Events like this are part of our broader recruitment strategy and certainly help plant the seed for those in our community who may wish to join our team down the road.

Thanks to all members of our team who each had a hand in supporting the health professionals of tomorrow!

### **Construction Update**

Unfortunately, our Tower C Main Entrance Project has experienced a few recent setbacks. This is the part of the project that involves the Auxiliary's relocated Gift Shop space. As a result, we are now looking at a move-in date sometime in February. While disappointing, we know that the end result will be quite exciting and our Auxiliary members can't wait.

### **Operation Of Complex Continuing Care Beds Will Return To PRH In 2026**

For many years, Marianhill has housed and provided care for those of our patients who require admission to Complex Continuing Care beds. This includes patients who no longer have significant acute care medical needs but are still medically complex and could require care for up to 90 days on average versus being discharged to home.

Now, in light of Marianhill's redevelopment and our ability to do so, we are making plans to take back our eight Complex Continuing Care beds and co-locate them on Medical 2A with other Medical patients effective April 1st, 2026.

We are currently in the process of developing a plan to do this that includes staffing patterns and other aspects of care that will be required in order to meet the needs of these patients. You can anticipate hearing some updates on this in the coming months.

### **Regional Cancer Care Representatives Share Their Future Vision Of Care Closer To Home**

On October 7<sup>th</sup>, we welcomed a delegation of regional cancer care partners who met with a number of our team members around the future of cancer care for our patients.

Our visitors had some great things to say about our organization, our staff and our physicians including a shout out to our Surgical team for being "high performers" and they acknowledged how we consistently do well in a variety of indicators including timing between cancer diagnosis and surgery.

Their vision continues to align with ours – finding ways to bring more cancer care closer to home and we intend to do all we can within budget to explore new opportunities and ways that we can help to achieve this.

### **Ontario Medical Association (OMA) President Visits PRH**

On October 9<sup>th</sup>, we welcomed OMA President Dr. Zainab Abdurrahman. This was the first visit we've had from a sitting OMA President and it was a great opportunity for Dr. Rowan and I to share with her some of our challenges around the recruitment of ED docs, their payment structure and similar issues that we are having in some of our specialty fields.

In addition to touring her through a number of areas in our hospital including the ED where she was impressed by details of our patient volume, we also stopped in at the Pembroke Family Medicine Teaching Unit where she met with Dr. Richard Johnson and some of his team to hear about the success they have had in retaining graduating Residents.

### **PRH Welcomed Ontario Health's Chief Regional Officer**

On October 29<sup>th</sup> our Senior Leadership Team welcomed Scott Ovenden, Ontario Health's Chief Regional Officer for Toronto and East regions. This was his first visit to PRH and we took the opportunity to tour him around and provide a comprehensive overview of the great programs and services we provide as well as where some of our challenges lie.

### **Exploring More Ways To Partner With Garrison Petawawa**

On October 30<sup>th</sup>, Beth, Dr. Rowan and I had the pleasure of meeting with Base Surgeon Major Megan St-Aubin and Major Didier Edoukoi, Commanding Officer of the Garrison's Medical Clinic. This was an opportunity to tour them through some of the areas used by our military personnel while discussing ways in which we might be able to support and enhance our partnership in the future. Our guests were very open to new opportunities and had great things to say about aspects of our existing relationship including the support their personnel receive from our Diagnostic Imaging team.

### **Bishop Brehl Tours PRH**

On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, Beth and I were very pleased to welcome in Bishop Michael Brehl and Father Ryan Holly for a tour and overview of our hospital services. This was also an opportunity for the Bishop to meet Dan Cuddy, our new Spiritual Care Coordinator.

### **CHEO CEO Celebrates Surgical Partnership With PRH**

On November 14<sup>th</sup> we welcomed in CHEO President and CEO Dr. Vera Etches who was on hand to personally thank members of our Surgical team for their hospitality and the great partnership that has been formed between their team and ours in order to bring pediatric surgery closer to home for local patients.

She expressed how important it is to families in our area to be able to receive the same level of care and compassion without the added drive to Ottawa and said that her team has appreciated how friendly and welcoming the environment has been since the partnership was initiated.

## **Cheryl Gallant Visits PRH**

Our MP recently came to meet with me to discuss our emergency preparedness protocols. As part of the visit, I invited her to tour the hospital. She was impressed with the size and scope of services we are providing at PRH and thanked us for the care we are providing for the community.

## **Family Flu Shot Clinic**

Thanks to all who have already taken the opportunity to get their flu and COVID vaccination for the current Respiratory Illness season. We are pleased to share that we will be offering a family flu shot clinic on November 30th for those interested. We will share details of this when they have been finalized in case any of you wish to take advantage of the opportunity.

## **For Your Information**

Lastly, we are including below, as resource material, a link to the Strategy Corp Ontario *CEO Survey* for 2025.

<https://strategycorp.com/2025/09/ontario-hospital-ceo-survey-2025/>

## **Chief of Staff Report to Board**

### **PRH Welcomes New Physician Recruits**

Following a successful site visit in October, Dr. Emeka Orie has officially signed on as a full-time member of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department. This recruitment addresses staffing challenges that arose after the departure of Dr. Fadare and will help stabilize the on-call schedule while reducing Surgical wait times for patients. Pending completion of immigration requirements, Dr. Orie is expected to begin his practice at PRH in early 2026.

### **Enhanced Recruitment Through Social Media Initiatives**

In October, Medical Affairs launched new social media platforms on Facebook and Instagram to strengthen physician recruitment efforts and highlight the benefits of rural healthcare and living in the Ottawa Valley. These channels showcase PRH physicians in their professional environments, emphasizing the critical work they perform and the collaborative culture at our hospital.

The initiative has been well received by our medical staff, who are enthusiastic about being featured and sharing their experiences. Since the launch, Medical Affairs has observed a notable increase in self-referring physicians expressing interest in opportunities at PRH, indicating early success in expanding our recruitment reach and engagement.

### **Medical Affairs Attends CSIM 2025 Conference in Halifax**

In October, representatives from Medical Affairs, Katie Hollahan and Terra Bouliane, along with Internist/Intensivist Dr. Natalie Needham Nethercott, exhibited at the Canadian Society of Internal Medicine (CSIM) Conference held in Halifax, Nova Scotia. This three-day event provided an excellent opportunity to network and promote PRH as a destination for medical careers.

The conference was highly successful, resulting in multiple new connections, primarily with fifth-year Internal Medicine residents who are in their final year of training and will be seeking practice opportunities in the summer of 2026. Notably, many of these residents are originally from the Ottawa region and have expressed interest in returning to practice close to home, positioning PRH as an attractive option.

### **MAC Physician Leadership Program**

The hospital is funding complexity leadership training for MAC members starting in the new year. This isn't theory; it's about developing skills to deliver measurable improvements in three critical areas; Quality of Care Improvements, Physician Joy and Engagement, and Process and Collaboration Changes. We anticipate having good uptake.

### **Renfrew County Medical Society / Professional Staff gathering at Dobbs House**

On Friday, November 14th, PRH Professional Staff joined the Renfrew County Medical Society for a joint networking event at the Dobbs House. The purpose of the gathering was to strengthen collaboration between hospital-based and community physicians, fostering relationships that support continuity of care and enhance patient outcomes.

This informal event provided an opportunity for physicians across specialties to connect, share experiences, and reinforce the shared commitment to quality care within Renfrew County. Strengthening these relationships is essential for integrated care and a sustainable medical community.

Sabine Mersmann and Dr. Declan Rowan, November 20, 2025

### **Actions Taken by the Board at its November 26, 2025 Board Meeting**

Approved the revised Terms of Reference for the Resource and Audit Committee

Approved the revised policy "Community Representatives on Board Committees"