



# Jeremy's North East LHIN Blog

## Remembering 2018

December 21, 2018

Dear Northerners,

It's been almost a year since I've taken on the role of Chief Executive Officer at the North East Local Health Integration Network (North East LHIN).

Since becoming Chief Executive Officer, our organization has refreshed its values, mission, and vision and also developed a new strategic plan - Integrated Health Service Plan - which will guide our work over the next three years. We'll be unveiling this plan in the early part of 2019 so stayed tuned!

Going back to our values, after extensive consultation with staff, we landed on a long list and at the top of this list was the most important one – **People ... People are what really matter**. The people who work in health care and the people who are the clients, patients, families, and, caregivers. While we, as a LHIN, are working to ensure Northeastern Ontario's health care system is more efficient, less fragmented and focused on the needs of Northerners, we can't forget that it's a system made up of **people**.

Looking back at 2018 makes me consider some of the people who have changed the way I view the work we do.

- 1) Shortly after starting at the LHIN, I travelled to Timmins where I met **Clark MacFarlane** and **Mark Lionello** from the Canadian Mental Health Association – Cochrane-Timiskaming Branch, who offered me a tour of **Living Space**. This community hub is being developed by numerous community agencies including the municipality, District Social Service Administration Board (DSSAB), police services, and health and social services among others. As a LHIN, we are funding part of this hub (the other half is being funded by District Social Service Administration Board) to support vulnerable individuals. All partners are working together with the laudable goal of eradicating homelessness in Timmins by 2025.
- 2) **Chelsea Gauthier**, a 28-year-old mother, spoke to our Board this year about her journey trying to access help for her depression, anxiety disorder, and panic attacks. She told us about the difficulties she experienced trying to get help, the need for more supports when a person in crisis presents themselves to an Emergency Department, and the benefits of a more holistic approach to mental health and alternative therapies made available to people in need. Besides providing a first-hand account of her experience with mental health services, Chelsea later came to work for us as a summer intern on a project that we will be announcing in the New Year. Thank you Chelsea!
- 3) At a workshop for our One Client One Plan project, which brought together 70 home and community care providers in the North East LHIN, I met **Greta Barazutti**. She told me her story of trying to access home and community care following shoulder surgery as well as the difficulties her husband experienced. With the One Client One Plan project we are working to make it easier for clients to access services through a central point of contact, as well as removing duplication in the assessments so that they only have to tell their story once and add to it as it changes.
- 4) I met with the Chief Administrative Officers of all eight of Northeastern Ontario's District Social Service Administration Boards. The boards deliver social services within the community, including Ontario Works, social housing programs, and the coordination of land ambulance services. Meeting with them was a reminder of the important role the social determinants of health play in a person's life, especially access to stable housing. I was later given a tour by **Debbie Mills** and

other staff members from the Nipissing Board, of the Edgewater Apartments in North Bay. It was eye-opening and these system partners are doing great work, providing vulnerable residents with a stable home while helping to connect tenants with services in the community.

- 5) Meeting with Finlandia's Chief Executive Officer **David Munch** and touring this facility in Sudbury also highlighted the need to support people as they age with different housing models. Finlandia provides quality aging in place through a full continuum of care – seniors' apartments, assisted living, shared seniors' supportive housing, and a long-term care home – all on one site.
- 6) This spring I spoke with **Canadore College's 2018 Graduating Class**, meeting many of their young, bright minds. Being surrounded by their optimism and youthful energy, reminded me that change is possible and why we need to transform the system, not only for those who need it now but for the future generation as well. My advice to them was to make sure the things that matter most aren't at the mercy of the things that matter least.
- 7) I am thankful to have delivered **Meals on Wheels** and met Northerners like **Athalinda Tait** who benefits from this service. With hundreds of volunteers, this program is helping people live independently by providing a meal, and volunteers also take the time to check in with clients and have a chat while providing some often needed socialization.
- 8) Spending time with **Diane Quintas**, the Executive Director of Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario, strengthened our organizational relationship as we both work towards engaging Francophones in health care planning. Later, I had the opportunity of presenting certificates to two health services recently designated under the French Language Services Act to offer French Language services - **Minto Counselling Centre** and **North Cochrane Addiction Services**.
- 9) In July, I met with members of our Local Aboriginal Health Committee for a Think Tank session as part of the development of our strategic plan. I'm thankful for the insight provided by **Gloria Daybutch, Pamela Williamson, Tyler Twarowski, Shane Tabobondung, and Janice Soltys** on, among other matters, the need for more land-based and cultural programming, the importance of using the Indigenous lens, the value of traditional health services, and the need to be flexible.
- 10) In November, I visited 13 communities in 10 days along the Highway 11 corridor. Meeting with people highlighted the ingenuity and health care innovation taking place in some of our smaller and more remote communities. It also gave me a glimpse into the work that we need to do to bring the system closer together so people don't fall through the cracks as they navigate along the continuum of care. My tour of Constance Lake was one of the highlights and I am grateful for the good work of **Bobby Rosevear**, First Nation Health Promoter and Patient Liaison with the Nord-Aski Family Health Team in Hearst and **Diane Wesley**, a National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program Councillor.

Thank you to all the Northerners who took time to talk health care with me in 2018 as well as other members of our staff. We are taking your comments to heart and working on our mission of "Integrating locally-tailored, high quality, timely care for Northerners."

Wishing you a healthy 2019,

*Jeremy Stevenson*

North East LHIN Chief Executive Officer

