

HealthAchieve

Remarks

By

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Check against delivery.

I am very pleased to be here today to share some of my thoughts with you.

Over the last four years, that I have been CEO of the OHA, the health system has undergone significant changes. Many of them have contributed to OHA's vision of achieving a high-performing health system.

Hospital leaders have worked hard to improve quality of care, from making quality improvement a top priority for their boards, to aggressively promoting, province-wide, leading patient safety and quality of care practices.

Hospital leaders have also led efforts to increase transparency and accountability by publicly reporting on a growing number of patient safety and quality indicators.

Beyond this, hospital leaders called on the Government of Ontario to extend the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to apply to our sector.

And, as Janet mentioned, hospitals have reached out extensively to health system partners to find solutions to long-standing system issues.

A top priority was to ensure that patients receive the most appropriate care, at the right time and in the right place.

For example, hospital leaders, along with other health system leaders, recognize that discharged hospital patients would be best cared for in their homes whenever possible, and have supported establishing safe and timely transitions for patients.

We have strongly supported increased funding for services delivered in the community, to expand health system capacity outside of hospitals.

Increasing the capacity of community based care is essential for the future as the health system moves into a very, very difficult economic period.

Given the economic situation, it is essential for the Government of Ontario to lead bold health system reform efforts. We as hospital leaders are there to support those bold efforts.

Hospitals are certain of the need to do things differently.

We need to take full advantage of evidence-based health care on a consistent province-wide basis across all sectors.

We need to use new technologies to enhance our ability to deliver safe, quality care at a lower cost outside of hospitals and, to the extent possible, within patient's homes.

We need to improve system integration by funding doctors, public health and paramedic services along with other providers through regional structures and holding them accountable through those structures, to create a true continuum of care.

We need comprehensive electronic health records.

We need performance measures publically reported on all aspects of health care including areas that are currently opaque such as primary care.

We need changes to the *Health Labour Disputes Arbitration Act* to help constrain labour costs.

We need a payment commission to establish aligned and evidence-based provincial funding rates for hospitals, doctors and other providers.

We need to engage in strategic planning so that we are all clear on the goals we are trying to achieve and the directions we will follow to achieve these goals.

These are the things that the government must lead and which the providers must support. These are the things that will help ensure quality and affordability of care for patients.

I emphasized earlier that one of the reasons for the progress made to date is the strong, experienced, professional leaders working for Ontario's hospitals.

Ontario has some of the best hospital leaders in the world.

Our hospitals are the most efficient in Canada, and save our provincial government \$4.1 billion per year, compared to hospitals in the other provinces calculated on a per capita funding basis.

Our hospitals are early adopters of new techniques and technologies, and are constantly finding new ways to provide Ontarians with some of the safest, best care anywhere – with the fewest hospital beds per capita of almost any jurisdiction in the world.

Ontario hospitals have the shortest wait times for key surgical procedures of hospitals in any other province in Canada.

And, our hospitals are Global leaders in medical teaching and research.

Each year, across Ontario, hospitals carry out over \$1 billion in research.

And they also educate more than 4,000 Medical Residents as well as many thousands of students in all healthcare professions.

I won't claim that hospital leaders are the only ones responsible for this high level of performance. However, I will say that their effective leadership is absolutely a prerequisite for it.

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Beyond their day jobs, of leading 151 hospital corporations, hospital leaders play central roles in making our entire health system function more effectively. Let me give you just a few examples from the past few years where the Ontario Government has relied on hospital leaders to lead change.

- Hal Fjeldsted, then-CEO of Kirkland and District Hospital, chaired the government's Rural and Northern Health Panel. Kelly Isfan, then-CEO of Campbellford Memorial Hospital, served on the same panel.

- Murray Martin, CEO of Hamilton Health Sciences, served as Supervisor of Cambridge Memorial Hospital.
- Dr. Barry McLellan, CEO of Sunnybrook Health Sciences, led the work of provincially-appointed Investigators into surgical and pathology issues at three hospitals in Essex County.
- Janet Davidson, CEO of Trillium Health Centre, co-chaired the government's recent pathology review team.
- Dr. Kevin Smith, CEO of St. Joseph's Health System (Hamilton), is acting as the Supervisor of the Niagara Health System, and also co-chairs the ministry's panel on addressing access to emergency departments and alternate level of care.
- Rob Devitt, CEO of Toronto East General was Supervisor of the Scarborough Hospital and also acting CEO of eHealth Ontario steering that organization through a very turbulent period.

These are just a few examples of Health System leadership by hospital CEOs.

There are literally hundreds of hospital executives and managers engaged – voluntarily – in making local, regional and provincial health systems work better and doing this, over and above their everyday responsibilities within their own organization.

These individuals take on this extra work because they care deeply about the health care system, and they want to give their time and talent to make it better and stronger.

Unfortunately, hospital executives and managers have, for some time now, been made targets by some politicians, unions and interest groups in what I would call a “war on leadership.” We've all heard the inflammatory rhetoric, and the refusal to consider the facts.

Health care is an enormous, complex industry, not to mention our premier social program. I believe that we should all be devoting our time to make it better, not tearing people down.

Imagine the progress we would make if we were all pulling on the same rope – in the same direction.

That said, we should not be distracted by this. We have a responsibility to continue finding new and better ways of doing things; of being more transparent and accountable; and of ensuring that every visit to our ERs, ambulatory centres, and inpatient beds as well as our hand-offs to community health providers are fast and effective, smooth and safe.

I'm proud to serve as a health system leader, and I'm proud to work with all those present here. And you should be proud of the work you do. It matters.

Happily, we have a Minister in Deb Matthews who understands the importance of leadership – something she has proven many times over in her time as Minister of Health.

We have a great relationship with her. And while sometimes we disagree, we know that her door – and her mind – are always open, and that she, like us, is always looking to do the right thing for the people who need our health care system.

Minister, simply, thank you for your continued leadership.

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Please join me now in welcoming Health and Long-Term Care Minister Deb Matthews to the podium.

(Deb Matthews speaks)

Thank you Minister. I would now like to call Deputy Minister Saäd Rafi to the podium.

Saäd Rafi was appointed Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, effective February 16, 2010. Most recently, Saad was Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure.

Previously, he was National Infrastructure Advisory and Project Finance Practice Leader at Deloitte & Touche LLP.

Saad formerly served the Ontario Government as the Deputy Minister of Transportation and the Deputy Minister of Community Safety. He was seconded to the Ontario SuperBuild Corporation, Ministry of Finance, as Vice President, Public/Private Partnerships.

He has held a number of senior management positions in the Ministry of Transportation, Cabinet Office, and the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Tourism.

Please join me in welcoming Saad Rafi.

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