



ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021

We are pleased to submit the annual report on behalf of the St. Joseph's Health Care Society (The Society) for the 2020-21 year.

During the year, the Society maintained strong relationships with the Catholic organizations we proudly sponsor, the Sisters of St. Joseph, and our local ecclesial authority. It was an important year for our sponsorship as we charted a course for the next three years through the development of our new strategic plan. Moreover, we also completed our first sponsor self-assessment with the assistance of the *Sponsor Roles, Relationships, and Accountabilities* tool developed by the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada.

History of the St. Joseph's Health Care Society

The Society was founded in 1993 and provides sponsorship to health care organizations in 3 cities spanning across southwestern Ontario. Consistent with hopes emanating from Vatican II, the Society is governed by a Board of Directors comprised largely of lay individuals, all committed to accepting responsibility to further the legacy and vitality of Catholic health care today and helping the four organizations sponsored by the Society make decisions through the lens of Catholic health care tradition.

The mission of the Society is to strengthen Catholic health care by continuing the healing ministry of Jesus and building on the legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph and their commitment to care for the vulnerable and those most in need, while remaining true to our shared values. As Sponsor of a group of organizations, the Society helps ensure that each organization demonstrates the distinct value of Catholic health care.

We wish to draw your attention to several high priority initiatives, as summarized in the themes below.

Mission

The Society Board held a retreat in the fall of 2020. The purpose was to pray together, reflect on our history since being founded in 1993, review governance and succession planning, and begin to identify the challenges and opportunities of the years ahead.

The Society's new strategic plan 2021-2023 is enclosed. The plan for the future builds on a solid foundation and a sponsorship model informed by recent governance review work. The Society will explore with increased intentionality what role it can directly play in identifying and responding to community need. The strategy will also increase the emphasis the Society will place on helping to animate Catholic identity within our sponsored organizations and helping those organizations profile and articulate their Catholic mission within the communities they serve.

The Society encourages each organization it sponsors to have dialogue with the Bishop, and currently we are engaged in a focused effort to help foster and support these relationships. The Society maintains its own direct relationship with the Bishop and communicates as specific topics arise, as well as participating actively in the annual Bishops' forum organized by the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada. At these national forums there is valuable dialogue, information sharing, the establishment of national approaches to the most important issues for Catholic health care and the building of trust between sponsors and Bishops. We wish to congratulate Bishop Fabbro on his recent appointment as the representative of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops to CHAC.

The Society's relationship with its founding congregation, the Sisters of St. Joseph, remains strong. The Society Board continues to have a Sister as a Director – Sr. Jacqueline Janisse. Our link with the Sisters will remain strong into the future, and we greatly appreciate the various forms of support received from the congregation.

The Society continues to refine and expand its orientation materials. This is a strategic priority. These resources are meant to provide clear expectations of the Boards and senior leaders we appoint, as related to the Society's reserved responsibilities, as well as provide useful information and leading practices to help our member organizations do their work.

Animating Catholic Identity

Across Canada, there continues to be increasing government expectations for health care organizations to look for integration opportunities to improve the client care experience in local communities. In Ontario specifically, the government has launched the transition to Ontario Health Teams. Catholic health care is supportive of identifying and acting upon opportunities to improve high quality and integrated local health care systems, including establishing stronger working relationships with secular organizations. At the same time, such opportunities also present some risk for Catholic health care that needs to be appropriately mitigated. The Society is working with partners in Catholic health care to identify and enact mechanisms to preserve Catholic identity and Chain of Mission, while, at the same time, benefit the health of the communities we serve.

The Society continues to participate in Catholic health care's response to new euthanasia legislation in Canada, and supporting development of Catholic policy to assist our organizations in talking about physician assisted death with patients, families, Board members, staff, physicians, volunteers, and external stakeholders. Most recently, Canadian law has been revised as such to no longer require a person's natural death to be reasonably foreseeable as an eligibility criterion for MAID. This will increase the pressure from secular society for Catholic health organizations to revise our position to not provide

euthanasia or directly refer for the procedure of medical assistance in dying. This certainly presents a real risk to Catholic health care in Canada.

The Society's Chief Executive Officer has begun a two-year term as Vice-Chair of the Governing Council of the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada, a collaborative group of all Catholic health sponsors in the country. He also currently serves as the Chair of the Ontario Sponsors Group, which meets bi-monthly under the auspices of the Catholic Health Association of Ontario.

Supporting Ongoing Formation

Ongoing formation priorities for the next three years following from our new strategic plan include:

- supporting sponsored organizations in the development an ongoing Board formation programming
- supporting sponsored organizations in the development of ethical discernment, and the importance of ensuring adequate capacity of ethicists and ethical consultation for all our organizations
- continuing to participate in formation events to deepen the Society board's own formation, but to also develop relationships with other sponsors and look for collaboration opportunities

Sponsored Organizations

It has been a year of great challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, and though it all our sponsored organizations continued to deliver excellence in service with compassion. The leaders, staff and board directors of these organizations deserve our deepest gratitude for how they managed under unprecedented circumstances to respond with resilience and nimbleness. More detail on these activities can be found in each organization's current annual report, which can be accessed below. Here we wish to note in a special way the retirement of Gillian Kernaghan, MD, after serving as President and CEO of St. Joseph's Health Care, London, for the past nine years. We are confident that her successor, Roy Butler, PhD, will continue to lead with great integrity the hospital's chain of mission.

St. Joseph's Health Care, London

<https://annualreport.sjhc.london.on.ca/>

St. Joseph's Hospice, Sarnia-Lambton

<https://www.stjosephshospice.ca/about-hospice/impact-reports>

St. Joseph's Hospice, London

<https://www.sjhospicelondon.com/annualreport>

Hospice of Elgin

<https://www.elginhospice.com/>

Conclusion

The Society is blessed to have an excellent Board, comprised of individuals with a diverse set of skills and experience, all committed to furthering the mission of Catholic health care. Its focus is governance, and over the coming year will dedicate itself to refreshing policies and developing a robust succession plan and skills-based recruitment process that aligns with the Society's new strategic plan.

The Society has also established a monitoring system to measure progress on both CEO and Board priorities. Our financial position is strong and allows us to discern a response to studied needs that align with our mission.

The Society is proud of our achievements and our journey to continue the healing ministry of Jesus, preserve the legacy of our founding congregation, extend our mission, and develop our future together. Thank you for the trust and confidence you have in our organization.

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Marcella Grail

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Marcella Grail
President, Board of Directors

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RICHARD CORNEIL

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Richard Corneil
Chief Executive Officer