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A healthy discussion about hospitals

**RICK
DRENNAN**

EDITOR'S DESK



In early April, William Osler hired a new CEO.

Matt Anderson is young, energetic, scary smart, and personable. He's also a bit of an IT geek, which is a good thing in this digital world.

He was part of the White team that did a forensic cleansing of Brampton Civic. He quickly learned about the frustrations of trying to establish a new hospital in a city that still looked fondly at its old one.

He could see all the scar tissue that had built up in the community over the past few years.

Changes on the way

But Anderson has a plan to revamp hospital care in this community, and his main goal is both ironic and maybe even controversial: he wants to keep you from using the Brampton Civic.

Anderson says acute (or hospital) care has to be the last stop in the healthcare journey.

If a hospital is needed, then Brampton Civic, and a new PMH facility, will be there with state-of-the-art care.

But the fate of the healthcare system in this province, and around the world, is based on sustainability.

With healthcare costs climbing through the roof, and things like gaps in the primary care model, the old ways of doing business are over, says Anderson.

Last month Anderson invited the Times'

assistant editor, Jan Dean, and myself into his office at the Civic for a chat.

It was a get-to-know-each-other session – very informal and lighthearted. But his core message was deadly serious.

Anderson said “connecting” or reconnecting to the community is one of his first goals as CEO. A visit with local journalists is just one of the more transparent elements of the re-do.

He understands that some people might be a little startled by his assertion that hospitals should engage in the process of managing disease proactively – so people don't get sick in the first place.

He says Brampton Civic and its state-of-the-art facility is there for chronic illness.

But even then, he wants people with chronic illness not to show up at emergency.

If that means following non-traditional means of care – chiropractic or naturopathy – so be it.

What Anderson wants to see, and will do his utmost to see implemented, is “connected care.”

Connecting all care starts with a patient's family doctor (GP).

“It's no different than if you're coming in to the hospital to see a specialist and your GP doesn't know about it,” he told us.

This breakdown in care has to stop. It's inefficient and costly, and there's no need for it in a world where technology can help the process.

“My own personal bias is that some of these alternative therapies work,” he adds.

Anderson says all the players in the healthcare system – GPs, lab companies, pharma firms, and hospitals – have to create a situation for healing.

Anderson says even the name change from William Osler Health “Centre” to “System,” is telling.

“They [the Osler board who hired him] didn't ask me to run a hospital. I came because they asked me to develop and run a healthcare system.”

This, in effect, is a whole new business model. Osler has embraced the concept of systems. Meaning: a cardiology department might include social workers and everyone connected with cardiac care.

Anderson runs Brampton Civic like any other business – except that most revenues come from the Ministry of Health.

There's a P&L statement, a finance committee, and an annual operating budget of \$500 million. It's all about balancing the books – and being “customer oriented.”

That also means being engaged with the community. Heck, why not invite the press in for a chat, instead of shunning them – the pre-White/Anderson practice.

Anderson is proud of the Civics' safety record these days, and compares it favourably with any other hospital in Canada.

As for competing against a history of community goodwill, built up over decades at PMH, he has an ace in his pocket.

The Civic is an amazing facility. The technology is world class. Every department has state-of-the-art facilities.

“To me, when I look at that history, it is unfortunate because the focus shifted to what was being lost in the community rather than what was being gained,” he says.

Even the argument that Brampton deserves two fully-fledged hospitals, not an ambulatory facility on the old PMH grounds, doesn't make sense to Anderson.

“The point is not whether we have more than one hospital. It's that we should have a full spectrum of services and those services have to have a critical mass that actually services this population.”

That's his goal: a healthcare system made up of partners, all the stakeholders – from volunteers to the highly qualified nurse in the maternity ward.

Hospital care is not about throwing up bricks and mortar and putting in some beds, he says. Osler is big enough to give the best in acute care. It's hoping to up its capacity to deal with more outpatient care.

In essence, Anderson thinks the citizens of Brampton have to look at healthcare from a different perspective, a modern-day view.

“I've heard there is some concern that we haven't been opening beds at the same rate that was originally forecast,” he said, referring back to the Civics' original mandate. “The irony for me is that that should be seen as a victory, not a loss.”

Outpatient care is growing. Emergency wait times are hopefully going to be reduced over the coming months. Wait times for elective procedures are better than the provincial average.

Anderson says there's a ton of work to do. But the sea changes being implemented today could make Brampton a medical place to be over the next generation, says Anderson.

It's all about removing the scar tissue from a city still smarting from past mistakes.

Heck, Anderson is optimistic that Brampton Civic will even be revered some day, just like its predecessor – the soul of a great city.

Businesses have to be ready for Bill 186

**ANDY
BALAURA**

BUSINESS LAW



five employees, the policies must be written and posted in a conspicuous location.

Workplace Violence and Workplace Harassment Programs

Bill 186 requires that employers put their policies into practice by developing and

maintaining programs which set procedures to: summon immediate assistance; limit risks of harm; and report, investigate and deal with incidents, threats or complaints.

Training

Once the policies and programs have been established, employers are required to provide workers with appropriate information and training regarding the workplace harassment policy and program.

Workplace Violence Assessments

Bill 186 obligates employers to assess the potential for workplace violence that could arise from the nature of the workplace, the type of work or the conditions of work, and implement controls to address such hazards.

Protection of Workers in Situations of Domestic Violence

Under Bill 186, if an employer is aware, or should reasonably be aware, that an act of domestic violence is likely to endanger a worker at the workplace, the employer must take reasonable precautions to protect the worker.

Disclosure of Persons with a History of Violence

Bill 186 requires employers to provide workers with information, including personal information, pertaining to a person with a history of violent behaviour. The duty is

triggered if a fellow worker or workers can be expected to encounter a person with a history of violence in the course of work, and if the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose workers to physical injury.

Employee Refuse Unsafe Work

Under Bill 186, workers will have the right to refuse or stop work when they feel endangered by workplace violence. The usual work refusal process would be initiated, which includes an investigation by the employer and, potentially, a Ministry of Labour inspector.

What does this mean for employers?

Employers should be prepared to deal with incidents, complaints or threats of workplace violence and harassment in the same serious manner as accident investigations or complaints under the Ontario Human Rights Code. Prudent employers ensured that they complied with Bill 186 by June 15, 2010, to avoid fines and other consequences, such as reduced workplace morale, productivity, and company reputation.

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