



BLANCHE
RIVER HEALTH

SANTÉ RIVIÈRE
BLANCHE

Annual Report

2022-2023



Kirkland Lake site



Englehart site

Report from the Board Chair, Chester Jobson



Creating our new identity as Blanche River Health (BRH) following the amalgamation of Englehart and District and Kirkland and District Hospitals in 2020 was a huge endeavor for the organization and for our communities.

We responded to the call to create seamless programs and share resources to better serve our communities.

The amalgamation was just the beginning. Every year, we face enormous changes and this year was no exception.

We continue to face the aftershocks of the pandemic, specifically around our human resources, finances, and ongoing risks of service discontinuance including closing our ER.

This year, we also went through significant transitions in executive leadership with Sean Conroy's resignation and having Joan Brazeau as our interim CEO. I would like to thank them both for their leadership and welcome our new CEO, Jorge VanSlyke, who joined BRH in April 2023.

Jorge brings with her a wide array of health care experience and we look forward to the renewed direction and strategy for BRH under her leadership.

Our VP of Clinical Services and Chief Nursing Officer, Martha Cope, and our VP of Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer, Barbara Effenberger, are also new to BRH. Dr. Mark Spiller continues to serve BRH in his Chief of Staff capacity.

Despite all the changes and challenges, our BRH team remains strong in its service to our communities. We thank the employees, leadership, foundation board members and last but not least, the dedicated volunteer board members from Englehart and Kirkland Lake who provide governance leadership for BRH. I look forward to what the future will bring!

Interested in becoming a volunteer
Board Member?

Call (705) 567-5251 ext. 2144 or email
barb.cook@blancheriverhealth.ca

Report from the Chief Executive Officer, Jorge VanSlyke



“Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity – not a threat.”

-Steve Jobs-

I have to admit that this quote from Steve Jobs made me want to laugh and cry at the same time. The challenges in health care that we face today seem impossible to fix. Staffing shortages everywhere, burnout, not having enough dollars to stretch, and frankly, not having enough energy at times to go on. Dealing with the pandemic in the last three years has forced people to re-evaluate life's choices and the decisions that the health sector had to make divided people so much. We were hailed heroes one day and public enemy number one the next. I may be new to Kirkland Lake and Englehart, but I faced

similar situations in the Northwest as a hospital CEO. The challenges in health care are similar everywhere.

How then, can we move past the “threat” zone towards looking at our current situation as a golden opportunity?

In my first 30 days as the new President and Chief Executive Officer of Blanche River Health (BRH), I spent my time meeting with people. I met with department heads, staff, physicians, patient and family partners. I started attending meetings with partners outside BRH. The answer to my question lies herein. Our people.

Despite the challenges around us, I continue to feel inspired seeing the unbelievable courage and staunch commitment of our staff and physician partners to continue serving our communities. We also have very supportive governance and foundation board members who are dedicated volunteers who tirelessly support BRH.

In the last year, BRH spent \$2,223,718 on renovations and equipment to improve the quality of patient care. The amalgamation of the Kirkland Lake and Englehart sites continued with successful integration of collective agreements and payroll now under one organization. We also started ambitious projects such as the Meditech Expanse (improving our health documentation system), and the ICU / ER renovation projects, the latter's initiation was made possible through the astounding support from Agnico Eagle, who committed over \$4 million to the project!

As a health care organization, we know that we still have room to grow. BRH plans to launch community-wide engagement sessions as we prepare our strategic plan for the next five years. We also re-ignited the Patient Partners Committee and we look forward to re-connecting to our communities and partners especially now that COVID-19 is no longer considered a public health emergency. We anticipate that recruitment and retention will continue to be a priority along with continuous quality improvement.

So do I think that BRH will rise above our challenges and emerge as an innovative, world class health care organization? One hundred per cent yes! Because we have people who care for the communities that we serve.

We Got You. We Got This.



Frame-worthy smiles from BRH Team!

Hospital Administration

Human Resources

The Human Resources department negotiated new combined collective agreements with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Ontario Nurses Association (ONA) and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU). The effort reduced the number of collective agreements in place at both Hospital sites from 14 to eight. It also reduced the number of unions from four to three.

The department also leveraged government programs, including the Rural Northern Immigrant Pilot program, the Community Commitment Program for Nurses, the Supervised Employment Practice program, and the Labour Market Impact Assessment to broaden recruitment nationally and internationally.

To further support recruitment, the team increased the online presence of BRH on Indeed.com to include an enhanced employer profile.



Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee

The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) continues to perform monthly inspections across sites, have joint site meetings and perform policy reviews annually. Safety in the work place is top priority. The committee provides education to all employees and their roles through our Learning Management Software, Safety Blitz information and keeping everyone informed of regulation changes.

Public Relations

Public Relations efforts focus on supporting immediate and long-term strategic objectives by increasing communication about BRH employees, successes and community alerts.

Increased media relations activities resulted in positive stories in the Northern News, Temiskaming Speaker and CJKL-FM, generating awareness about hospital news such as program enhancements, protocol changes, employee successes and corporate announcements.

Twenty news releases were distributed to media over the last fiscal year, compared to four in 2021-2022. Promotional activities also resulted in 14,191 visits to our Facebook page, a 114% increase from the previous fiscal year.

To stay informed about BRH initiatives and announcements, like us on Facebook!

Quality and Risk Management

Annually, a Quality Improvement Plan and Balanced Score Cards guide the work of Blanche River Health. Balanced Scorecards monitor the performance in areas of Employee Safety Incidents, Worklife Health, Employee Satisfaction, Labour Relations, Patient Access, Patient Safety, Patient Satisfaction and Integration and Partner Collaboration. The BRH Board oversees the Governance, Resource & Audit and the Quality and Strategic Planning Committees. Planning for the 2024-2029 Strategic Plan is now underway.

The Patient Experience

The voices of patients and families are key to improving the patient experience. In early 2023, we reconvened our Patient and Family Advisory Committee to help support our ongoing quality improvement goals. The committee, now called Patient Experience Partners (PEPs), aims to provide valuable feedback by participating in meaningful initiatives and integrating the patients' and families' voices throughout both hospital sites. BRH is encouraging more patients, families, and others with lived experience to become PEPs. We know we can be better together.

For more information, or to apply to be a volunteer Patient Experience Partner, please contact Cindy Honeyborne at 705-567-5251 ext. 3202 or email her at cindy.honeyborne@blancheriverhealth.ca

Report from the Chief of Staff, Dr. Mark Spiller



The medical staff is pleased to see a continued reduction in COVID cases in the region and a gradual return towards normal.

There is definitely renewed energy and drive towards improvement fueled by the new administration of BRH. In the past year, we welcomed our new Chief Nursing Officer, Martha Cope, our new Chief Financial Officer, Barbara Effenberger, and more recently our new Chief Executive Officer, Jorge VanSlyke.

Over the 2022-23 fiscal year, we experienced more significant physician shortages than ever before. I thank our small group of dedicated physicians for working longer hours than ever, and appreciate the support

we have received from the hospital administration.

We were sad to see our Physician Recruitment and Medical Affairs Manager, Crystal Burns move on to another job. We are thankful Jennifer Forrest was able to assume responsibility for coordinating physician coverage for both sites, with the assistance of the Emergency Department Locum Program.

We also wish to welcome Dr. Lasha Gorecki to the medical staff.

My hope is that there is an increased focus within the communities of Englehart and Kirkland Lake on physician recruitment in the coming year.

Finally, I wish to thank the Board of BRH for their time and commitment to guide the organization through challenging times.



Physician Recruitment and Retention

Despite being affected by the physician recruitment challenges experienced throughout Ontario and beyond, BRH has not had to close the Emergency Department at either of its two sites.

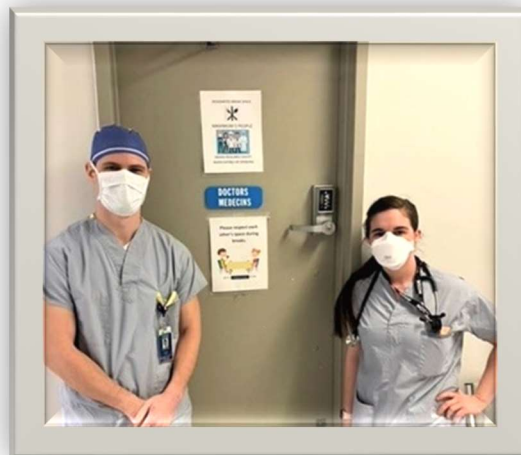
While this good news is the result of a lot of hard work and long hours, we remain at risk of closure due to lack of physicians.

Our Physician Recruitment and Medical Affairs Coordinator's focus on mitigating this risk includes attending recruitment events,

promoting opportunities to physicians, collaborating with Ontario Health and liaising with neighbouring hospitals located in Northeastern Ontario.

Two physicians left the community last year, and one permanent physician was recruited to the area.

This year, we have been successful in recruiting new locums who have been returning regularly at both the Englehart and Kirkland Lake sites.



Report from the Foundation Board Chair, John Sullivan



BRH Foundation Board members would like to thank our communities for the generous support it has received through its charitable fundraising efforts.

We wish to acknowledge the individuals, families, employers, employees, organizations and corporations for generously contributing to the modernization of both the Englehart and Kirkland Lake sites of Blanche River Health.

The community purchased \$99,000 worth of Blanche River Health 50/50 tickets, and the proceeds have been allocated to the construction of new healing gardens at our Englehart and Kirkland Lake sites.

Moving forward, the 50/50 draw will support the procurement of various medical devices starting with cardiac equipment.

Please consider purchasing 50/50 tickets monthly to help us acquire modern, new equipment by visiting www.blancheriverhealth5050.ca

The Foundation Board gives special recognition to Agnico Eagle Mines, Limited (Kirkland Lake Gold) for their continued support towards major equipment and renovation projects, including a commitment of more than \$4.6 million towards the renovation of the Emergency Department and Intensive Care Unit at the Kirkland Lake site.

We also thank McDonald's in Kirkland Lake for making a generous commitment to donate 10% of the sales from the last Wednesday of every month to our foundation.

Community partnerships like these help keep local hospitals operating with the modernized equipment whose costs extend beyond government funding. We look forward to developing more partnerships with local businesses and organizations to help fund a long list of needed improvements.

Supporting your hospital

The Foundation is also very grateful to those who make personal donations and have participated in our Foundation 50/50 draw. Donations can be made by calling 705-567-5251 ext. 2156 or by visiting www.blancheriverhealth.ca and clicking the “donate” button on the home page. The Foundation issues charitable receipts for all donations made.

Here are some of our lucky winners!



Report from the Hospital Auxiliary President, Carolyn Lenardon



The former Kirkland and District Hospital and Englehart and District Hospital Auxiliaries are in the process of merging into one Auxiliary that raises money for new medical equipment for both sites of Blanche River Health.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation for the former volunteers from the Englehart site, who dedicated decades to ensuring locals were cared for with modern, new medical equipment.

The Kirkland and District Hospital (Kirkland Lake site) Auxiliary is still active and sells

Nevada Tickets, snacks, giftware, fashionwear and household items through its gift shop, located in the main lobby of the Kirkland Lake site. The funds it raises help purchase much-needed medical equipment for both sites.

The gift shop is actively recruiting new volunteers in order to extend its operating hours in the upcoming fiscal year.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please call the gift shop at 705-567-5251 ext. 3239 or 3202

Report from the Vice President, Clinical Services and Chief Nursing Officer, Martha Cope



As I reflect on my time here at BRH I am reminded that the essence, the heart, of any community lies with its people. I started with BRH back in August 2022 and moved my family from the city to the Temiskaming District and never looked back!! What has struck me most upon arriving here is the sense of community that permeates not only the towns of both Kirkland Lake and Englehart but the employees of BRH.

BRH's response to servicing the community has been nothing short of amazing during a time when health care delivery has never been more challenging. As Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President of Clinical Services it is of utmost importance that programs and services here at BRH not only continue but grow. The clinical team must be able to respond to changing health care trends, population growth and resource scarcity. By leveraging technology and efficiencies, clinical care has the capacity to not only meet the demands, but exceed them.

Quality care and safe care is at the centre of all we do. To ensure quality and safety is built into the daily happenings at both of our hospital sites, the clinical teams prioritize:

- Daily patient rounding
- Weekly interdisciplinary care coordinator meetings
- Weekly employee and leader safety huddles
- Complaint and incident management committees
- Emergency planning
- Education and clinical skill building

Expansion of services and programs is a constant challenge given the health human resource issues all hospitals and health care entities are facing. In spite of this, the BRH clinical team has been able to achieve innovation and improvements across both hospital sites, such as:

- Expansion of locum physician providers in Emergency Departments and inpatient areas
- Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID)
- State of the art equipment purchased for patients requiring surgery and acute care
- Partnering with the Timiskaming Health Unit for the distribution of naloxone kits via BRH emergency departments

We continue to support and participate in the Northern Ontario School of Medicine teaching programs for medical learners. Of those learners who spend time at BRH, the feedback is positive. Recruitment and retention is always a challenge at any hospital but it is particularly difficult with COVID-19, our rural and remote location and the state of health care today.

In spite of these difficulties, BRH is well-positioned to respond to the communities' needs and pull together as I have seen over and over again during my time here.

Clinical Services

Diabetes Education Program

BRH operates the Timiskaming Diabetes Program, which provides services to adults with diabetes, including education regarding healthy eating, self-monitoring of glucose, insulin administration, foot care, stress management and physical activity.

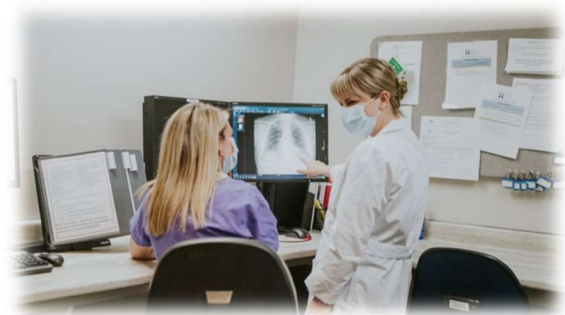
Each location is staffed with one Registered Nurse, one Registered Dietician and one clerical support person.

The North Program is located at the Kirkland Lake site of Blanche River Health, while the South Program is located at 280 Armstrong Street North (Collège Boréal) in New Liskeard.



Diagnostic Imaging

The BRH Diagnostic Imaging Department handles requests for medical imaging including x-rays, ultrasounds, bone density tests and CT scans. Despite experiencing staffing challenges that led to longer wait times than usual, the Diagnostic Imaging team completed 20,965 exams in fiscal 2022-2023 (15,582 in Kirkland Lake, 5,383 in Englehart).



Emergency Department

While Ontario experienced hundreds of Emergency Department (ED) closures last year due to staffing shortages, there were no ED closures at either of our sites. We are grateful to have physicians who work at both sites. Despite this achievement, we remain vulnerable to a closure at any time.

BRH responded to 20,245 ED visits during fiscal 2022-2023, including 13,808 in Kirkland Lake, and 6,437 in Englehart. This compares to 11,256 visits in Kirkland Lake and 5,043 in Englehart during fiscal 2021-2022.

New medical equipment was purchased for the EDs at both sites, including new cardiac monitors, stretchers with weight scales, point of care testing equipment that ensures lab test results remain available 24 hours a day, and a new kit system to help support more efficient care for our critical pediatric patients.

The former Englehart Hospital Auxiliary generously donated funding for the purchase of new equipment at our Englehart site including a Tono pen and a Slit lamp, both used for eye care.



Infection Prevention and Control

COVID-19

COVID-19 measures at BRH have continually evolved over fiscal 2022-2023 to keep in step with provincial guidelines. Visiting restrictions have eased up, masking for employees in non-clinical areas has decreased, and masks continue to be required for all patient interactions.

There were three outbreaks at the Kirkland Lake site, and three at the Englehart site over the course of fiscal 2022-23. By comparison, no COVID-19 outbreaks occurred at either site during fiscal 2021-2022.

No other outbreaks occurred during the fiscal year.

Our COVID Assessment Center will be moving indoors effective June 30, 2023.



Our outdoor tent will be coming down and our portable office will move from the front of our facility. Our Kirkland Lake site will continue to provide testing and assessments for our district until March 31, 2024.



COVID guidelines change. For the latest information, visit our web site at www.blancheriverhealth.ca

Influenza

Influenza immunization rates for our employees during the 2022-2023 fiscal year was 52.8%.



Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene compliance before contact with a patient saw a slight improvement from

74% in 2021-2022 to 77% in 2022-2023. Hand hygiene remained at 85% after patient contact both fiscal years. We are working on a strategy to further improve compliance.

In-Patient Services

In-patient services are provided to those who have been admitted to the hospital to receive care from our team of physicians and Nurse Practitioners.

Kirkland Lake site highlights

A newly-implemented Automatic Dispensing Unit designed to increase patient safety and reduce medication errors is now in place.

Eight new Smart beds were purchased in the 2022-2023 fiscal year, with a further eight beds expected to arrive in June 2023 as part of fiscal 2023-2024 plans. This will bring to

32 the total number of Smart beds at our Kirkland Lake site.

Smart beds increase patient safety and help reduce falls. They provide valuable information such as patient movement, side rail and head of bed positions, setting of all brakes, bed alarm, and track the length of time it takes to respond to a call.

A Hill-rom status board at the nurses' station allows clinicians to see which bed the patients are in, as well as the bed status as noted above. Patients at risk of falls are easily identifiable, and clinicians are able to see in real time in which room their colleagues are located.



Englehart site highlights

The former Englehart Hospital Auxiliary generously donated funds to purchase a new Vital Signs machine. In addition, four new pressure releasing mattresses designed to reduce pressure ulcers and wounds were purchased. A new tub and chair lift was purchased and installed in a remodeled bathroom.



Intensive Care Unit (Kirkland Lake site)

Our ICU provides closely monitors those patients who require critical medical care. Below, our ICU RNs and Manager accept an award from Trillium Gift of Life for achieving 100% compliance for notification.

The ICU/ED renovation project is well underway, and the team is actively involved in the planning.

A new central cardiac monitoring system allows for ICU and ED monitoring to be interchangeable and ensure uninterrupted monitoring for our patients requiring high levels of care. This upgraded system has larger monitors with additional monitoring capabilities.



Laboratory Services

Laboratory services are at the heart of the health care team making decisions for your care. The results from bloodwork help guide physicians and staff in which medications to prescribe and give and how much.

The BRH Laboratory team includes phlebotomists, medical laboratory assistants and medical laboratory technologists.

After-hours support from the ED means laboratory results are available 24/7 at both the Kirkland Lake and Englehart hospital sites.

We are grateful that the Kirkland and District Family Health Team provided laboratory services to the community when our outpatient laboratory service had to temporarily close due to staffing shortages.



The laboratory team is part of a Regional Cluster under direction from University Health Network. The team conducts tests on blood and other fluids to diagnose heart attacks, infections and the response of certain treatments, such as antibiotics.

The laboratory also oversees all blood products at BRH, ensuring that there is enough supply to support patients at both sites.

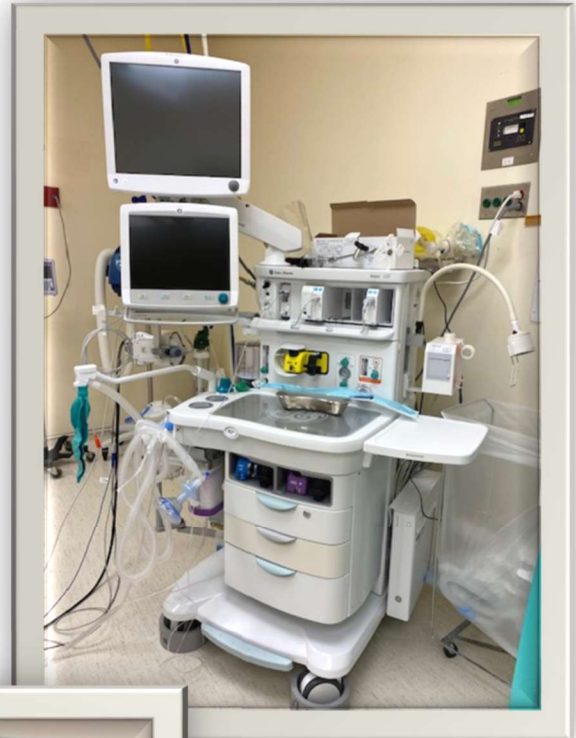
Over the last fiscal year, our Laboratory team processed test results for 2,531 patients, including 534 at our Englehart site and 1,997 at our Kirkland Lake site.

Surgical Services (Kirkland Lake site)

Dr. Visbal, our surgeon, and Dr. Ek, our anesthesiologist, collaborated with nurses, nurse practitioners and physicians to provide 1,764 surgical services in 2022-2023.

Procedures included colonoscopies, hernia repairs and gall bladder surgery.

A new anesthetic machine and cart, and a new bladder scanner, were generously donated through the Blanche River Health Foundation.



Oncology (Kirkland Lake site)

The Oncology team provides patients with access to chemotherapy, infusions and phlebotomy (blood removal) for those living with a variety of conditions such as Crohn's Disease, Cholitis, iron surpluses and deficiencies.

We hired a part time Registered Nurse who is now qualified to administer chemotherapy, bringing our staffing complement to one full time, one part time and one casual RN in the department.

Ensuring our patients are relaxed and comfortable during their lengthy appointments is key to the patient experience. A new oncology chair was added to the department, providing a comfortable treatment experience. We now have a full complement of four new chairs, generously paid for by the community through its support of the Blanche River Health Foundation.

The department is looking ahead to renovations to revitalize the space. Construction is set to occur over fiscal 2023-2024.



BRH Patient Brenda Todd receives Oncology services at Blanche River Health's Kirkland Lake site in one of four new chairs donated by local residents through their support of Blanche River Health Foundation. The chairs are designed to promote a more comfortable patient experience.



Patient Engagement and Relations

The Patient Experience Partners (PEPs) committee aims to provide valuable feedback by participating in meaningful initiatives and integrating the patients' and families' voices throughout both hospital sites. BRH is encouraging more patients, families, and others with lived experience to become PEPs.

For more information, or to apply to be a volunteer, contact Cindy Honeyborne at 705-567-5251 ext. 3202 or by email at: cindy.honeyborne@blancheriverhealth.ca

Your Feedback Matters!

Feedback in the form of complaints, compliments, suggestions or questions is a valuable source of information that can lead to improved quality of care, patient safety and health outcomes, overall patient and family experience and risk reduction. For more information, or to provide feedback, email us at: patientexperience@blancheriverhealth.ca

There are several other ways to share feedback:

- Participate in our 48 hour post-discharge survey calls for in-patients
- Call us at 705-567-5251 ext. 3202 or 705-544-2301 ext. 3202
- Fill out comment cards and leave them in the boxes located at the Emergency Department in Kirkland Lake and in the main entrance lobby at the Englehart site
- Visit our web site: www.blancheriverhealth.ca
- Scan the QR code with your smart phone



Emergency Department Survey QR Code

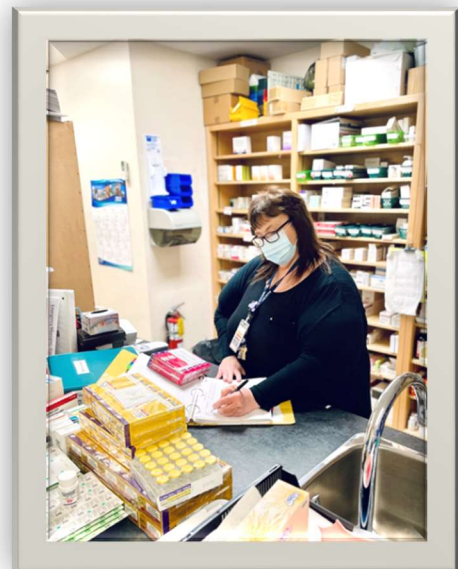
Pharmacy

Our team of pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy assistants provide services 24/7 to BRH operations by overseeing medications for the ED, OR, inpatient care areas, ICU and the oncology suite.

Accredited by the Ontario College of Pharmacists, the Pharmacy team supports patients receiving Medical Assistance in

Dying, chemotherapy treatments, dialysis, surgery, and are part of a team that educates employees, physicians and patients and their families related to how to handle medication safely.

While staffing shortages have created challenges, the team has been pulling together, with the help of remote support, to continue to provide quality services.



Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy

The BRH Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy team includes physiotherapists (PTs), occupational therapists (OTs) and physiotherapy assistants who provide inpatient services.

Outpatient services are provided to those recovering from specific hip, knee and shoulder surgeries. OTs and PTs can measure the right fit for wheelchairs, walkers and canes.

The team focusses on patients remaining active and mobile while admitted to hospital. It also teaches patients and their families exercises to continue at home once discharged following a stroke, heart attack, surgery or fall.

Services were provided for patients at 579 appointments in the last fiscal year including 356 in Kirkland Lake and 223 in Englehart.

Appointments are arranged through your health care provider at BRH.



Respiratory Therapy (Kirkland Lake site)

Our Respiratory Therapy (RT) team provided 483 therapy appointments to local patients over the last fiscal year.

Their efforts were supported by an efficient, new Pulmonary Function Test machine, which replaced an older version



Telemedicine

Digital Health has eliminated travel as a barrier to care for many locals. Our partnership with The Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN) resulted in 667 secure appointments with specialists, physicians and allied health professionals over the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

Appointments for the 546 sessions held at our Kirkland Lake site, and 121 at our Englehart site are made through care providers.



Remember!

You can send us your feedback by:

- Calling us at 705-567-5251 ext. 3202 or 705-544-2301 ext. 3202
- Fill out comment cards and leave them in the boxes located at the Emergency Department in Kirkland Lake and in the main entrance lobby at the Englehart site
- Visit our web site: www.blancheriverhealth.ca
- Email patientexperience@blancheriverhealth.ca

Report from the Vice-President, Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer, Barbara Effenberger



This year we have seen many changes throughout the business office department. I started with BRH in June 2022 and was welcomed with open arms. The team has been doing extremely well considering all the additional reporting requirements with respect to COVID reporting, Bill 124 reporting requirements, and Health Human Resources data requirements (working closely with the HR department).

Maintenance projects completed or started during 2022-2023 fiscal year include:

- Englehart site
 - Renovations (including new tub) to the tub room
 - Painting and flooring updates to the Boardroom at the Englehart Clinic's Building
 - Replacement of outside Emergency door
 - Camera System Upgrade

- Kirkland Lake site
 - Replacement of Heating Coils
 - Started the renovations to the Admin bathroom on the 2nd floor

There have been many updates to equipment at both sites due to age, despite the challenges of replacing parts, and contractor availability for support.

We are grateful to have been able to purchase many items funded through various external donors during the year including the Hospital Auxiliary (both Kirkland Lake and Englehart) and through the BRH Foundation.

Generous donations have also been made by Agnico Eagle (previously Kirkland Lake Gold) for a variety of items including a new ultrasound machine, and work is underway on moving the Physiotherapy and Respiratory Therapy departments from the first floor to the third floor at Kirkland Lake (with anticipated completion in Summer 2023). Donated funds were also provided to update our ED and ICU. Drawings have been approved and planning for this project is proceeding well.

During the year we have seen our cash flow reserves decreasing, but we have not had to rely on lines of credits or loans. We continued to receive surge bed capacity funding during the year, and also received funding through the COVID-19 Temporary Summer Locum Program Expansion which assisted us with the recruitment of physicians to our area to fill vacant shifts both in the EDs and for the Hospitalist role.

Another impact on our organization will be Bill 124 that requires retroactive wage increases across the organization. Additional areas that have experienced challenges

include contractor availability (both for projects and maintenance areas), cost increases when renewing contracts, increase in food costs and packaging.



Corporate Services

Central Registration

Both sites have central registration teams that help ensure patients who visit the hospital are properly registered before services are provided.

The Kirkland Lake Department operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Englehart Department is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday to Friday.



Over the last fiscal year, both teams processed registration for 20,245 Emergency Department visits, registered 412 oncology patients, 1,764 patients who came in for same day surgery, 6,892 COVID assessment center visits and 1,500 inpatient discharges.

Environmental Services

The BRH Environmental services team is highly trained to clean and disinfect medical equipment, patient rooms and the

common areas within both of our hospital sites.



Infection control rates remained low in fiscal 2022-2023, thanks in part to our Environmental Services team, who works hard to help prevent infections from spreading and help reduce hospital-acquired infections by regularly disinfecting surfaces that are touched frequently such as handrails, elevator buttons and door handles.

The team also handles laundry services. Over the course of fiscal 2022-2023, the team washed, dried and folded 286 tons of linens, scrubs, gowns, aprons and more for both the Kirkland Lake and Englehart sites. Discussions are underway with our community partners to increase output and generate revenue by providing laundry services.



Finance

The finance team has had a very productive year transitioning to one system. This is a vital component of the amalgamation of the former Kirkland and District Hospital and Englehart and

District Hospital into Blanche River Health. The payroll department has successfully transitioned to one payroll combining all payroll records from the Englehart and Kirkland Lake sites into one payroll for BRH. Our payroll team processes payments to approximately 330 employees every 2 weeks.

The procurement team created 2,121 purchase orders during fiscal year 2022-2023, representing an increase of almost 20% compared to fiscal 2022-2023.

Accounts payable processed 10,376 invoices during the year, creating 3,247 cheques or Electronic Fund Transfers for distribution. More than \$7.8 million in payments from insurance companies, Ministries and patients were processed by accounts receivable.

The Finance team also successfully fulfilled increased reporting requirements that resulted from COVID-related and various funding pockets.



Food Services

The food services department prepares nutritious, balanced patient meals at both hospital sites. Over the 2022-2023 fiscal year, 174,706 meals were prepared by our food services team for patients at both sites.

The Kirkland Lake team also prepares meals for Teck Pioneer Residence, the Long-Term Care Home adjacent to the hospital, as well as for Meals on Wheels, internal catering and the café.

In addition, the internal catering service and café sold 3,286 meals.



Health Records

Health Records has had a successful year meeting targets with the release of patient information, managing all patient information, data submissions to the Ministry, deficiency management, and fulfilling requests from our community partners.

Health Records processed approximately 4,000 requests for information in 2022-2023. The team also offers transcription services to partner hospitals within our region, providing some revenue to our department.



Staff are participating in our Meditech Expanse Project, preparing for our new electronic platform.

Patients who wish to access their medical information can call the Health Records Department at (705) 567-5251 ext. 2125.

Information Technology

The BRH IT Help Desk team oversees audio/visual and information technology needs at both hospital sites. Over the last fiscal year, the team responded to 4,266 requests from employees.



Maintenance and Plant Operations

Our Maintenance and Plant Operations team processed 401 work orders at our Englehart site and 1,428 at our Kirkland Lake site. Approximately 25% of the team's time has been spent on projects, either directly renovating, repairing or working with contractors on projects.

Some projects we are working on or have just finished include a new tub room, wall repairs and the implementation of a new access control system at our Englehart site.

In Kirkland Lake, the team installed new equipment guarding for the elevator control room, in addition to working on renovations on the third floor, and the construction of a



new accessible washroom on the second floor. Emerging issues include bringing our buildings up to the 2023 building and fire codes, and ensuring they are in compliance with the Canadian Standards Association. Fire stopping, sewer piping, rain drainage, safe asbestos removal and maintenance of heating and cooling systems are also issues the team is responding to.



Medical Device Reprocessing

The Medical Device Reprocessing Department (MDRD) disinfects, re-assembles and sterilizes the re-usable medical devices used at both of our hospital sites.

The department serves as back-up to Temiskaming Hospital if their equipment were to break down.



The department also provides patient portering services for admissions, testing and other needs.

During the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the MDRD team autoclaved and processed 9,790 pieces of medical instruments, and sterilized 472 probes, 104 cystoscopes and 49 rhinoscopes.



Non-Urgent Patient Transfers

Non-Urgent Patient Transfers are much-needed services for our patients. There is an urgent need to acquire new vehicles for our facility so we can continue to transport patients across our northern region to our care partners in a timely fashion. The Non-Urgent Transfer Team completed 540 transfers in 2022-2023 spanning north to Timmins and south to North Bay and Sudbury on a daily basis.

We also provide transportation of laundry across sites four times a week.

This is a great program, however, we continue to face challenges in operating non-urgent transfers due to the increasing demand, staffing shortage, and fiscal pressures for this unfunded program. The team is working hard with other partners to figure out a long-term solution to be able to sustain this service.



The ONE Project

BRH is part of a new digital health project called the ONE (one person, one record, one system). This project will enable 23 Northeastern Ontario hospitals to instantly

access an individual patient's medical information using a shared system.

Once implemented, the ONE initiative will foster improved, more efficient delivery of health care.

