

Our Family of Catholic Healthcare Providers

These last few months have been a time of endings and beginnings for facility leaders in Gravelbourg, Radville, Melville and St. Paul's Hospital, Saskatoon. In order to welcome these new leaders, and provide a name and face of other facility leaders, we thought this Spring issue of the Communiqué was an ideal time to highlight the entire family of Catholic health-care providers.

We invited Therese Jelinski to interview each facility leader to capture their story of who they are, what makes them 'tick', and what are some of their successes and challenges.

We hope you enjoy getting to know and hearing from our family of health care providers.

Therese Jelinski is a freelance writer and former communications officer for the Diocese of Prince Albert. Her work has appeared in the Prairie Messenger, Prince Albert Daily Herald, Long Term Care magazine, and Catholic Missions in Canada magazine. She has a journalism degree from Carleton University. Therese and her husband Tim live in Prince Albert and have four adult children.

Esterhazy

St. Anthony's Hospital

22 acute care beds

Sunrise Health Region

Carol Unchulenko – Facility Administrator since 2001



People often tell Carol Unchulenko that St. Anthony's Hospital "feels different."

She gives credit to Sister Cecile Richard, the pastoral care director whose work is a reminder that

the hospital is faith-based. "We treat people with that extra bit of caring."

Carol joined St. Anthony's in the early '70s as a staff nurse, moving to Director of Nursing before becoming Administrator.

She considers herself approachable, she aims to be positive, and she admits to disappointment in people who fail to treat others with respect.



She values the community group that raises funds every year through a highly successful golf tournament.

She also appreciates the hospital foundation and the "excellent working relationship" with Sunrise Health Region, which has three affiliates (two Catholic hospitals and a Lutheran care home).

She also notes the hospital's sense of community. The colleagues of a nurse whose father was gravely ill gave up their own Christmas plans to cover her shifts so she could spend precious time with him.

For Catholic health care affiliates, Carol believes the main challenges are staff shortages and working within health region agreements "without losing the fact that we are faith-based."

Her wish list includes more storage and office space – lost when other health services moved in – and major renovations to the '60s-era facility.

Carol is Lutheran, married, with four adult children and four grandchildren.

St. Anthony's was established in 1940 by the Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of Peterborough. It is owned by the Saskatchewan Catholic Health Corporation.

Estevan

St. Joseph's Hospital

53 acute, 38 long-term beds
Sun Country Health Region

Normand Poirier - Executive Director since 2007



Poised to become a regional hospital, St. Joseph's has much to celebrate, says Normand Poirier.

The hospital recruited a gynecologist, and with the health region established a satellite dialysis unit, reducing patients' travel time. The Foundation also raised money to



build the adjacent clinic to attract and retain specialists such as a surgeon and podiatrist.

"This is a lovely facility," says Normand, who was attracted to the job 18 months ago while working for a non-profit disabilities network, previously in long-term care and management.

"Every facility has a soul or lack of it. I'm truly impressed with the quality and dedication of staff and what they've achieved."

From the friendly greeting at the front desk to the Catholic symbols throughout and the quality of care, the hospital practices what it preaches, he says. The Spiritual Care Director is funded by the Lifelines program the hospital operates for the community's elderly.

Normand considers himself quiet and reserved and describes his leadership style as "open and supportive, a team approach, not top-down but bottom-up."

His wish list includes funding for medical equipment, substantial upgrades, and an aging-in-place facility for independent and assisted living and long-term care. In a rapidly-changing world, the scattered faith-based affiliates are challenged just to survive, he notes.

Normand, who is Catholic, is married with one grown son. He enjoys fishing and being involved in community organizations.

St. Joseph's Hospital was established in 1938 by the Sisters of St. Joseph's of Peterborough. The current facility, opened in 1991, belongs to the Saskatchewan Catholic Health Corporation.

Gravelbourg

St. Joseph's Hospital/Foyer d'Youville

50 long-term, 9 acute beds
Five Hills Health Region

John Kelly - CEO since December 2008



Only a few months into the job, John Kelly has been impressed by the community's confidence in the care they will receive at St. Joseph's Hospital/Foyer d'Youville. "And that's historical, embedded in the community. It's very nice to see.

The bottom line in living the



mission "is how we deliver the care - it's in the smiles on our faces and the way we treat residents or patients. We try to build our decision-making based on ethical principles, not just the most expedient manner."

John came to Gravelbourg from consulting work at Caritas in Edmonton, preceded by a CEO position at the Catholic hospital in Camrose.

He calls his leadership style participative and "very hands-on" as necessitated by small management teams.

The facility might be small, but it had 5,000 outpatient/emergency visits last year and it owns a two-ambulance service that fielded 400 calls. A successful yearly event is the Festival of Trees auction that raises close to \$30,000.

John would love to develop a palliative care area, a day care, and community health space.

The challenge for Catholic health care is "understanding that health care is a ministry of the church and not just a commodity or another service that government provides."

John, who is Catholic, is the father of two adolescent boys with whom he spends much of his leisure time. He also golfs, and enjoys movies and plays.

Established in 1928 by the Grey Nuns (the Foyer in 1961), the 1996 facility is owned by the Saskatchewan Catholic Health Corporation.

Macklin

St. Joseph's Integrated Health Centre

22 long-term plus

4 palliative/respite/observation/convalescence beds

Heartland Health Region

Fenton Yeo – Executive Director since 1996



Fenton Yeo admits being a bit apprehensive when he applied to manage the new St. Joseph's Integrated Health Centre in 1996.

Being United, with more than 30 years in government-sector health care, he was drawn by "the anticipation and the uniqueness of working in a Catholic facility."

Today, he is very dedicated to St. Joseph's and to the Sisters of St. Elizabeth who operated a hospital in Macklin for 70



years and who own the Health Centre, "and I'll continue to be even when I'm retired."

What makes St. Joseph's different from most health care facilities, Fenton says, is Grace before every meal, weekly masses, spiritual or palliative care provided as needed by a nun volunteer, and missioning services for staff.

The annual golf tournament and steak supper is highly anticipated, raising money for St. Joseph's and other health services in Macklin district. "The people that really support it well know that the money is going to a worthwhile cause. We just have a great day."

His wish list includes an ethicist for the health region and a chapel at St. Joseph's. He believes the biggest challenge facing Catholic health care in Saskatchewan is maintaining Catholic identity and ownership.

He has an open-door policy for staff, and considers himself a fair person who aims to treat everyone equally and as his equal. A "fun-loving guy," he also likes to contribute to his community through involvement on other boards.

Fenton is married and has three grown children. He loves golfing, reading, and being outdoors.

Melville

St. Peter's Hospital

30 acute care beds

Sunrise Health Region

Kim Bucsis – Manager since February 2009



St. Peter's Hospital – under the same roof as public health, mental health, and a Lutheran Home – is Kim Bucsis' introduction to faith-based affiliates, having previously worked in home care.

"There's a lot to learn – the

uniqueness and inclusion of Catholic values into health care," says the Catholic woman after only a few



weeks on the job. Observing that all patients are treated with compassion and respect, she believes that, "If patients feel spiritually at peace, it will affect their physical as well as their mental status."

Kim acknowledges that it's a challenge to offer faith-based care as an affiliate working within the constraints of regional policies and hiring practices.

She describes her leadership style as open, honest and approachable, aiming to treat staff and patients with respect. She also notes that she is never late because she considers that a sign of disrespect.

Her wish list for St. Peter's includes boosting the hospital's spiritual care position to full time, publishing a newsletter, and updating the phone and computer systems.

One of the hospital's most successful events is a Foundation fundraiser that sells paper Christmas Angels for display on a giant Christmas tree.

Kim is married and has two teens, two adult step-children, and a young step-granddaughter. She keeps busy with her sons' sports and enjoys reading, cross-stitch, and traveling.

St. Peter's was established in 1940 by the Sisters of St. Martha from Antigonish, N.S. Now in a building approximately seven years old, the hospital belongs to the Saskatchewan Catholic Health Corporation.

Moose Jaw

Providence Place for Holistic Care

160 long-term beds, 14 geriatric & rehabilitation
Five Hills Health Region

Rick Schindel – CEO since 2006



Rick Schindel, an accountant by profession, jumped at the chance to work for Providence Place, a financially sound facility that enjoys a good relationship with the health region and has a well-established understanding of mission.

Rick considers his work a calling, and he is proud of the extra services Providence Place provides, including an Adult Day Centre, Geriatric Assessment and Rehabilitation



Unit (GARU), and outpatient programs.

Future goals include increasing spaces and hiring a nurse practitioner at the day centre, and establishing an outreach program to enhance the GARU.

Staffing issues can be challenging, Rick says, especially recruiting frontline staff and trying to maintain a sense of mission or “calling” among newer employees who have never heard of the Sisters.

Special events are organized by the spiritual care department, and residents especially enjoy the Christmas celebration held on each unit, he says.

Rick encourages department heads to enhance their skills and make decisions they feel are best. Calling himself productive and goal-orientated, he says, “My goal is to make Providence Place a better place for residents and clients. Achievement of our goals is done through support of the board and very capable staff.”

Rick, who comes from an Evangelical faith tradition, has three adult children and three grandchildren. He enjoys golfing, riding motorcycles and watching WHL hockey.

The new Providence Place opened in 1995 and is owned by the Saskatchewan Catholic Health Corporation. It was originally established by the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul as a hospital in 1912 and St. Anthony’s long term care home in 1939.

North Battleford

Villa Pascal

38 long-term beds
Prairie North Health Region

Therese (Terrie) Michaud – Administrator since 1998



Terrie Michaud has high expectations of her staff. After 11 years as Administrator, preceded by 15 or so as a nurse there, she considers herself fair and she promotes respect for all people regardless of back-

ground.

Villa Pascal receives Christmas cards from grateful families every year.



The family of a resident who died several years ago still makes an annual donation to the home.

One of the most anticipated events is Christmas dinner with entertainment for residents and family members. Extra staff come in to help with hair and makeup. “Everyone looks very nice and it’s very festive and family-oriented.” The home also honours the memory of residents with a memorial after each death.

Terrie describes Villa Pascal as a well-maintained facility with lots of natural light and “a “home feeling.” With more funds, she would love to add more resident rooms, “a real chapel”, a quiet room for families of a dying resident, and more recreation staff for one-on-one time.

For Terrie, one of the main challenges is human resources – especially a shortage of nurses.

The Catholic, married mother of three grown children is “very protective” of summer students for whom she professes a special fondness. “The staff know they have to treat them really good, to share their knowledge with them!”

Villa Pascal was built in 1976 by St. André Church in North Battleford and sister parishes in Vawn, Jackfish and Delmas. It is owned by the corporation they formed, Société Joseph Breton Inc.

Ponteix

Foyer St. Joseph Nursing Home

30 long-term, 2 respite/palliative/convalescent beds
Cypress Hills Health Region

Roxanne Stringer - Executive Director/Director of Client Services since 2003



When the Norwalk virus isolated residents at Foyer St. Joseph for six weeks a couple of years ago, staff decided it was a good time to organize a “Hawaiian Week.”

“We needed something to bring us out of our funk,” recalls Roxanne Stringer, “so we had a good party!”



When her current position came open, she was working at the Home as a

casual nurse and in Swift Current in intensive care. She had previously managed a personal care home.

“People say when they walk in, there’s just something different about our Home,” Roxanne says. “We’ve got a very caring, affectionate, hard-working team.”

The Home enjoys solid community support at the annual Foyer Golf Tournament, and residents especially appreciate the Feast of St. Joseph – mass followed by pancakes and entertainment.

The main challenge, Roxanne believes, is the lack of support and direction for spiritual care in the health region. At the Home, an elderly Sister voluntarily provides spiritual care.

Also on Roxanne’s wish list is the completion of a safe garden area for residents who have dementia – for which the Home has been fundraising for more than three years – and more storage space.

This is the first faith-based facility this Catholic, married woman has worked in. An avid football fan who loves curling, skating and playing hockey, Roxanne considers herself dedicated, organized, fair and “resident-first-orientated.”

Foyer St. Joseph was established in 1959 by The Sisters of Notre Dame d’Auvergne. It belongs to the Saskatchewan Catholic Health Corporation.

Prince Albert

Mont St. Joseph Home

120 long-term beds, incl. 1 respite
Prince Albert Parkland Health Region

Brian Martin – Executive Director since 1998



It was a comment made by Prince Albert’s former bishop that clarified for Brian Martin how faith-based health care is different. Blaise Morand said staff and volunteers at the Home were “doing God’s work.”

Brian, who is Lutheran, recalls his initial reluctance to come to Mont St. Joseph, at a time when he was dis-



illusioned with the health care system. He is grateful now for “the blessing” that Mont St. Joseph has become.

The Home, he says, tries to live its mission of giving *and* receiving care and compassion by emphasizing “that this place is about living.”

Brian is proud of Special Care Home Week, initiated by the Home, and the Grandparents Day Stroll-a-thon, a Foundation fundraiser that is well supported by the community. He also notes how special the Christmas Eve pageant is, and the support that employees recently provided to a staff member facing breast cancer for the second time.

He aims to build consensus, make consistent decisions, treat others with respect, and lead by example by working hard.

The challenge of faith-based health care “is understanding why we’re here and knowing what we are committing to.” It can be difficult to live the mission with little control over factors such as policies and staffing. He says more funds would be welcome to meet infrastructure needs and improve learning opportunities.

Married, with two grown children, Brian loves fishing, hunting, curling, and hosting family and friends.

Mont St. Joseph was established in 1956 by the Sisters of Our Lady of the Cross, who transferred ownership to the diocese in 1990.

Radville

Radville Marian Health Centre

49 long-term, 3 observation beds
Sun Country Health Region

Debbie Donald - Executive director since
September 2008



Debbie Donald receiving donation cheque

Radville Marian Health Centre is thrilled to be on the government's list of facilities to be rebuilt in the next year or two.

Even better if the new building includes a chapel, says Debbie Donald, adding that having spiritual



care recognized as integral is an issue for faith-based affiliates, as is sufficient funding.

The Centre has a pastoral care committee, a spiritual care director funded by the home's foundation, and regular masses.

The respect the staff has earned is evident in gestures such as the note of appreciation from the family of a man who died, who included money for staff for their own enjoyment.

"That's the kind of thing that keeps me here," says Debbie, who used to be a long-term care nursing supervisor. "(This old building) may not look like much but I came from a brand new facility and this is hands-down a lot more favourable environment to work in."

Special events to honour people who have died include donations toward the Lights of Love and a Blue Christmas service.

Debbie, who is Catholic, married, and has a four-year-old son, likes to garden and read novels. She loves to laugh and 'not take things so seriously that you can't have a good time in your work.' She encourages her staff to do the best they can and build on each other's strengths.

The Marian Health Centre, established as a hospital in 1948 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Pembroke, is owned by the Saskatchewan Catholic Health Corporation.

Regina

Santa Maria Senior Citizens Home

147 long-term beds, incl. 4 respite
Regina-Qu'Appelle Health Region

Beverly (Olineck) Smith – Executive Director
since 1991



When Santa Maria first went looking for donations for pastoral care, people were surprised to hear it wasn't government funded.

Today, says Beverly Smith, there is regular support from the Knights of Columbus and others because,

"People are aware of the need."

She also notes how the community rallied several years ago to raise money to replace all the manual-crank beds.



Still, her wish list includes an endowment fund for pastoral care to cover any shortfall, as well as funds for capital projects and staff education.

She calls it a challenge to live out the tradition of Catholic health ministry with "a new generation of staff who has no memory or experience of the Sisters' work." Staff do recognize, however, that spiritual care is integral in health care.

Beverly is proud of the management team, with leaders respecting each other's skills. With her lengthy experience in long-term, acute and home care, she jokes that she has become a "well-respected old-timer" in the region.

Staff appreciate the long-term service awards, the appreciation barbecue hosted by management, and the annual pancake breakfast hosted by the board. Residents especially enjoy the summer carnival – musical entertainment, beer gardens, and children's games.

Beverly, who came to Catholicism from another faith tradition, is married and has seven-year-old twins. Her family enjoys camping, fishing, cycling and cross-country skiing.

Santa Maria was established in 1968 by the Archdiocese and Knights of Columbus. Operated for years by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Pembroke, Ont., it has been diocesan-owned since 1985.

Saskatoon: St. Anne's

St. Ann's Senior Citizens Village

80 long-term, 60 assisted living beds,
60 seniors' apartments

Saskatoon Health Region

Rae Sveinbjornson – Executive Director since 2002



It is the most elderly residents of St. Ann's, those who are "gracious with life and with everybody," who inspire Rae Sveinbjornson. With fondness, he recalls Mary MacIsaac, a retired teacher who was Saskatchewan's oldest person and Canada's second oldest when she died in 2006 at age 112.



Rae loves working in a faith-based

facility after managing home care for years. "It's different; you're not a number here. You can actually see the difference in the caring aspect of things."

St. Ann's mission is lived out through daily masses, communion taken to residents' rooms, prayers for the sick, Catholic symbols throughout the facility, and so on. Residents anticipate monthly birthday parties and other recreational activities as well as special services in the chapel.

An annual spring gala – brunch, entertainment, silent auction – enjoys good support, as does the auxiliary's twice-yearly tea and bazaar. Despite St. Ann's successful fundraising efforts, Rae's wish list includes "more realistic support from government" for operational funding and capital costs. He would also like to see spiritual care regarded as an integral part of health care.

Rae, who is Catholic and married with three children between one and 14, says he is considered "a joker" but also committed and caring. His leadership style is "open and honest, non-confrontational." He aims to be a good listener, and prefers delegating authority over a top-down management style.

St. Ann's (Home) was established by Saskatoon's bishop in 1953 (1979 Residence, 1988 Place) and operated by the Franciscan Sisters of St. Elizabeth. It joined the Saskatchewan Catholic Health Corporation in 2007.

Saskatoon: St. Paul's

St. Paul's Hospital

192 acute beds

Saskatoon Health Region

Jean Morrison - President & CEO since Feb 2009



The newest CEO was drawn to St. Paul's values-based approach that she observed in her previous posting.

As a Vice-President for the Saskatchewan Health Region, Jean Morrison was impressed with the strong



partnership between the region and St. Paul's Hospital, and with the hospital's spiritual and ethical foundation.

Hospital staff said St. Paul's felt "different."

Along with Christian symbols and celebrations, the mission is lived out "in the way staff stop in the hallways to help someone, the way they smile and acknowledge each other, the real sense of community."

Last year, when a patient was ready to leave hospital on a Friday but his medication services could not be set up for a few days, two nurses went to his home several times that weekend, on their own time, to attend to his medical needs.

Jean, who is United, says she has a participatory, open-door style grounded in principle-based leadership and focused on "doing the things that we know are right."

Her wish list includes a hospice for the city, upgrades to the hospital, and expansion of spiritual care. The main challenge for faith-based health care is "demonstrating and articulating our value to the system" and promoting an understanding that "the spiritual needs of people are critical to their healing."

Married, with three children ages 15 to 21, Jean describes herself as friendly, honest, and tuned to people's feelings. She enjoys crafts, gardening, reading, and helping with her children's sports.

St. Paul's, established by the Grey Nuns of Montreal in 1907, is owned by the Saskatchewan Catholic Health Corporation.

World Day of the Sick

World Day of the Sick, February 11th, is a time to reflect on the Christian meaning of suffering and to recall God's health-giving presence. We are also reminded that God often heals and restores life in unexpected ways.

This day is also meant to recognize the importance of those who care for the sick and elderly, whether in a health care facility or at home.

CHAS had the privilege of joining the Saskatoon Diocesan Pastoral Care Recognition Night, held on the same evening, at St. Anne's Parish in Saskatoon. Bishop Albert LeGatt led the Liturgy of the Word, followed by Nestor Trach, Board Chair of the Catholic Health Ministry of Saskatchewan, presenting on behalf of the Catholic Connections Committee. Please take a minute to read the enclosed brochure to find out more about this important work.

66th Annual Convention

October 26 - 27, 2009
St. Mary High School
Prince Albert

Circles of Care:
People Caring for People

Keynote Presenter:
Archbishop Sylvain Lavoie

Inspirational Speaker:
Dan Jelinski

Other Presenters:

Joy Mendel, Bioethicist for St. Paul's Hospital and CHAS

David Sax, Catholic Family Services, Regina
Leann Keach & Gwen Knoll, Providence Place, MJ
CHAS Parish Ministry of Care Project Team

CHAC Highlights

Below is an excerpt from the March 2009 CHAC Board Highlights. Please visit www.chac.ca for the full article.

In September 2008, at a strategic planning session held in Ottawa, the CHAC Board of Directors concluded that sound stewardship of the association's mission requires that all partners be open to the possibility of fundamental shifts in terms of the structures that exist at the national level to support the mission and ministry of Catholic health care in Canada. The direction subsequently adopted by the board represents such a shift.

The CHAC Board established a Task Group in early January with a mandate to study and make recommendations concerning the establishment of a national secretariat.

Structurally, it proposed that the network of sponsors of Catholic health care, with representation from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB), and with input from the provincial associations, serve as the body to direct and provide oversight for the work that is undertaken at the national level in support of Catholic health care. As such, the network of sponsors would constitute the "members" of the incorporated body, which is currently the CHAC. The shift also represents a change *operationally*. It envisages replacement of the current *association* model in which the work of the national office is understood as "representing" the interests and concerns of a wide range of member categories, with what has been referred to as a *national secretariat* model. In this model the focus would not be on representation but on the undertaking of a limited number of projects discerned as priorities by the sponsors.

Later in March a detailed communiqué will be provided to all CHAC members. This document will present an overview of the work that has been completed over the past 6 months, as well as a fuller description of the rationale and the forces that have prompted the proposed change. It will also attempt to describe what would be different in this new structure.

The CHAC Board will be bringing these proposed changes to the floor of the Annual Assembly on April 24 in Vancouver.