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One mission, one vision

The Ottawa Hospital's Cameron Love gives Jenn Monroe a glimpse of the organization's past, present and future

Cameron Love is vice president of planning, support services and clinical programs at The Ottawa Hospital (TOH), and his title is just a small indication of how busy he's been since becoming part of the organization a decade ago.

TOH was created in 1998 with the merger of four hospitals and now operates across three campuses: Civic, General and Riverside. With approximately 12,000 staff and 2,000 physicians, TOH provides a full range of services to approximately 1.2 million people in greater Ottawa and Western Quebec.

TOH is the region's principal tertiary/quaternary service provider, and during the first five years of the merger the organization focused on redistributing and consolidating those services. This resulted in an efficient and effective service distribution, which included consolidating Trauma, Neurosciences, Vascular Surgery and Cardiac Care to the Civic Campus and Thoracic Surgery, Medical/Radiation Oncology, Transplant Services and Neonatal Intensive Care to the General Campus.

In addition, the Riverside Campus was transformed from an inpatient facility to a freestanding ambulatory care center focusing on academic outpatient services. "We created centers

of excellence at all three campuses through the consolidation of the clinical programs," Love explains. "By integrating and consolidating a program's clinical and medical experts on one campus and in a newly developed setting, TOH was able to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the services and enhance the level of service being provided to the patients."

A key component to the implementation of TOH's service distribution plan was the implementation of a Master Plan, which outlined the required capital projects at each campus. As one of the first objectives in the merger, TOH developed and received government approval of the Master Plan by year 2000 and began implementation of the \$450 million redevelopment plan, which will be completed in 2010.

The plan included new expansions at both the Civic and General campuses and the transformation of Riverside into an Ambulatory Care Center. At the Civic Campus, a new, 35,000-square-foot Emergency Department was developed, the Intensive Care Unit was doubled in size to accommodate 33 beds, and new units for Nuclear Medicine, Mental Health and Neurosciences were developed.

Additions at the General Campus were even more impressive. Two years ago the newly developed 60,000-square-foot Eastern Ontario Regional Laboratory began providing lab services for all the hospitals in the region, and the Ottawa Health Research Institute added two new research centers, one dedicated to stem cell research and the other focusing on vision research. These things, however, were not at the center of development at General. "Our main focus at the General Campus was rebuilding our critical care services," Love says. "The current environments at the merger were significantly outdated and were the cornerstone to the development plan at the General Campus."

As such, TOH constructed a new 200,000-square-foot Critical Care Wing that included the development of 17 new state-of-the-art operating rooms, 32 ICU beds, a 32-bed recovery room, a 24-bed Surgical Day Care Unit, an Instrument Processing Unit, and a Minor Procedures Unit. The Critical Care Wing opened in January 2008 and is fully operational. "We're operating approximately 85 percent of the full capacity of the Critical Care Wing, and it has allowed us to manage the growth in services that is being experienced in the region. The CCW is a great success story and is the cornerstone to our entire development project."

As the organization initiated the critical care development projects at the Civic and General campuses, the massive renovation project to the seven-story, 250,000-square-foot Riverside building was also beginning. "The Riverside development plan included a complete renovation of almost 90 percent of the building," Love says. The Riverside Campus underwent not only a complete renovation but also a re-visioning of its services.

Today it offers service-oriented academic outpatient care to approximately 500,000 patients annually. Each floor was developed as a specialty center of excellence, including the Eye Care Center, Women's Health Center, Kidney Center, Diabetes and Endocrinology Center and Arthritis Center. In conjunction with the creation of the Kidney Center, which included building a 30-station dialysis unit, TOH also partnered with four other regional hospitals to provide dialysis services to their respective communities. "With our assistance, the smaller regional hospitals constructed satellite dialysis units that we would operate, which allows the patients from

their communities to receive their dialysis treatments closer to home."

This regional model also served as the framework for TOH's Cancer Center development plan. Partnering with Queensway Carleton Hospital, TOH began construction of a two-site Cancer Center development project in January 2008, which included a \$76 million expansion project at the General Campus and a \$90 million project at Queensway Carleton Hospital. The General Campus project is the expansion to the existing regional Cancer Center, and the Queensway Carleton site will see the development of a satellite site, which TOH will staff and operate to provide cancer treatments and services to the patients in the region's west end.

In parallel with the construction of the Cancer Center at the General Campus, TOH will round out this final phase of the development plan with the expansion of General's Emergency Department. This \$30 million project is under way and will be completed by 2010.

To manage all these changes, Love has turned to a nine-member team responsible for project management. He says the team has employed traditional planning and project management methods, only recently utilizing Web tools for managing information flow. Technologically, TOH has developed a comprehensive information system strategic plan that will move them fully onto an electronic platform. Currently, laboratory results, pharmacy orders, diagnostic imaging scans, financial, supply chain information and a large portion of clinical results are supported through an integrated electronic solution. "We're not operating a full electronic health record currently, but we have a plan to achieve this goal over the next two to three years as we start to implement further regional initiatives."

Not able to rest on its current achievement because

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Medicana was an integral element to the success of this world-class project. It presented a unique fusion of experience, innovative design and technology to the hospital's ICU design team. The company's team members provided substantial, thought-provoking contributions from design to commissioning. Ultimately, the synthesis of expertise between hospital planners, architects and Medicana led to this great success.

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of growth patterns, TOH is already setting its sights on the next 20 years and has developed a long-term Master Plan, which outlines the next phases of expansion and development at all three campuses. The focus of this plan is the redevelopment of the Civic Campus, which rests on an extremely confined site and has buildings ranging in age from 30 to 85 years. Unable to expand up or out any farther on the Civic Campus, the organization faced a tremendous decision as part of its Master Planning: “tear down and rebuild the Civic Campus on site or recommend the development of a new site,” Love says. “From a financial and operational standpoint, it was clear we needed to build a new Civic Campus, and this will be the key component to our capital development plan for the next couple of decades.”

What Love believes will make the new master plan a success is the growth of TOH as a culture, not simply

an organization. “When we started, we had three very different hospitals,” he says. “It takes a decade to become one organization culturally, to merge the organization into one mission and one vision.”

As the projects in the current capital plan achieve or near completion, Love notes that the organization has come a long way toward integrating into a single hospital since the four distinct hospitals merged in April 1998. “That is a key success factor to our redevelopment plan and future,” he says. “You can build all you want, but if your organization isn’t integrated around the CEO’s vision, you won’t be successful. We have achieved incredible success to date and have fully merged and integrated across the three campuses. This is a critical achievement as we continue to move forward in advancing and improving the healthcare services we provide over the next decade.” ■

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