



A Year to Remember



SAULT AREA
HOSPITAL
HÔPITAL DE
SAULT-SAINTE-MARIE

Annual Report 2011-2012



SAH 2011/2012 Annual Report

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Photos throughout by Neil MacEwan.

The hospital is grateful to the Sault Area Hospital Foundation as they are the only source of funding for much-needed medical equipment. To view a copy of the Foundation's Annual Report 2011/2012, please visit www.sahfoundation.on.ca.

2011-2012 was an extraordinary year filled with activity, excitement, renewed energy and promise for the future. Thank you to everyone at SAH for your hard work and to area residents for your patience in what was indeed, *A Year to Remember!*



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Message from the Board Chair

Our theme of “A Year to Remember” is really better captured as “Years to Remember” as I reflect on the many successes we have celebrated together at Sault Area Hospital. The achievements were not the result of quick fixes, but rather from years of developing strong foundational plans, working diligently and staying the course, even when it was difficult to do so. We have been through so much this past decade and have reached the point we are today through resiliency and teamwork.

This year we have celebrated two major milestones, including the first year anniversary in our new hospital. Many thought that dream was an impossible one...but we knew better. March 6, 2011 was a tremendously exciting and emotional day as we said goodbye to our old site and started a new chapter in SAH history. Not surprisingly, we faced some challenging days after the move as we adapted to a new environment. However, as we look back, the benefits of our beautifully spacious, state-of-the-art facility far outweigh the early adversities and we recognize how truly fortunate we are to have such an amazing facility in our community.

The second major success was our year-end surplus – our first in a decade! As with the new hospital, this achievement was not a quick magical fix, but rather the result of a tremendous amount of work and the embracing of change. We learned there are ways of doing things that are more efficient, less cumbersome, and most importantly, provide better results for patients.

It is imperative that these two high profile successes do not overshadow the other tremendous accomplishments within the walls of SAH.

Our financial success would not merit robust celebration if it came at the cost of patient care, so I am pleased that quality indicators in many categories have also improved this past year. For example, our Hospital Standardized Mortality Ratio, ED wait times and hand washing compliance rates have all improved significantly. We have demonstrated that fiscal accountability and quality patient care are not mutually exclusive.

As a Board, we recognize the importance of strong local governance and we have worked hard to ensure that we govern using best practices. We have continued our practice of assembling and utilizing a skills-based board with people who live in our communities making important decisions about the direction of our hospital. As I leave the board, I am confident that my successor, Jamie Melville, will be a tremendous leader as SAH starts a new chapter in its history.

On March 31, 2012, we said goodbye to Dr. Alan McLean as our hard working and dedicated Chief of Staff after almost six tremendously difficult years. Dr. McLean was constantly focused on quality care and during his tenure it was not uncommon for him to jump right in and roll up his sleeves to fill a void. His compassion for our



patients and staff was always evident. His resilience and dedication and the relationship that was forged early among the CEO, Board Chair and Chief, allowed us to tackle the difficulties together and to emerge as an even stronger organization.

We have welcomed Dr. Heather O'Brien as our interim Chief of Staff as our nationwide search for our next Chief continues. Dr. O'Brien's calm but determined demeanour will serve us well during her time in this position and we feel very fortunate to have her join our team.

As I conclude my tenure on the Board, there are many people to thank and

recognize. To my fellow Board members past and present, I wish to express my gratitude for their amazing dedication and commitment as volunteers, and for the support provided to me. The Senior Management Team always impressed me with their will to succeed, belief in what is possible and the hard work that has led to our success. To our CEO, Ron Gagnon, my thanks for being a most incredible partner on this remarkable journey. His leadership during many difficult days has been unwavering and I don't know of anyone who believes more strongly in our vision, what we are capable of and what our patients deserve. It has truly been a privilege to work with Ron.

To the entire SAH family of physicians, staff and volunteers, I say a very heartfelt thank you for the miracles they perform each and every day. It has been an honour to get to know so many of them during my time here and I am so very proud of all that we have accomplished together.

Our vision is “to be recognized as the best hospital in Canada and an active partner in the best community health care system in the country”. Many people think this is an unachievable goal. I disagree. Our vision calls for each of us to walk in the doors of SAH for each shift determined to do - and be - our best; to smile, acknowledge each other and our patients; to focus on our jobs without distraction; to work together; and to continually look for ways to improve.

Collectively, if we do this, there is no doubt we can and will be best. We have had big dreams in the past and we have proven that what was once thought to be impossible was absolutely possible. With a strong belief, steadfast determination and unwillingness to settle for anything less, dreams do come true!

My life has been incredibly enriched as a result of my time at SAH. And while that comes to an end in an official capacity, I will always be an amazingly proud member of the Sault Area Hospital family and the men and women of SAH will always be a treasured part of mine. For me, it's truly been a Decade to Remember!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Elaine Pitcher'.

Elaine Pitcher
Board Chair

Message from the President & CEO

This truly has been *a year to remember!* What makes this past year so very special is being able to witness the fruition of many years of very hard work by numerous people at all levels of our organization, both past and present.

Over the past year, we have dealt with the challenges of working in a new environment, including the implementation of new processes and the inevitable reality of some things just not working as anticipated. I am proud of the remarkable job done by everyone in successfully overcoming these growing pains.

As this report attests, we have many successes to celebrate. In addition to the patient care and service delivery benefits that came with our new hospital environment, we have been able to grow services in certain areas, continued to improve our quality of care and patient satisfaction results and significantly reduced Alternate Level of Care (ALC) days and emergency room waiting times.

For the first time in a decade, we have achieved a surplus from hospital operations! This significant turnaround has taken leadership and sacrifice at all levels as we safeguard the taxpayer dollars with which we are entrusted, while ensuring the services we provide to our patients are of the best quality.

As strong as we have grown in our own right, we are keenly aware that we can't do it alone. We have strengthened our key relationships and will continue to do so in order to make being "an active partner in the best community health care system in the country" a reality.

I am blessed to work with so many great people, committed to our vision of Best – from our senior management team to our Board of Directors, physician community, volunteers, front line managers, supervisors and staff, as well as external partners. Two individuals in particular have been singularly instrumental in getting us to where we are today - Elaine Pitcher and Dr. Alan McLean.

I have had the great pleasure of knowing Elaine for 10 years and working closely with her as our Board Chair for the last five. Given that the normal term of a hospital board Chair is two years, her five years are remarkable enough. That, however, pales in comparison to the passion, dedication and belief that Elaine has brought to SAH. She has been our leader, our champion - and critic when she needed to be. Her ability to strategize, provide encouragement and foster relationships, coupled with her incredible drive, has been an inspiration to us all.

When I think of thousands of hours of her time and energy that Elaine has taken away from her family and law practice to improve health care in her beloved community, I am truly humbled. Her contributions to the community and to the hospital are too many to list, but if I was to summarize



the legacy Elaine leaves behind, it would be "Always be willing to dream big, believe that you can make those dreams a reality, never settle and work with heart and passion knowing that you can and will make a positive difference in the lives of many."

Dr. Al McLean and I started working together over five years ago as we both assumed our new roles. Our first experience was in battling the C. Difficile outbreak that impacted the lives of our patients, their families and out staff alike. This experience had a profound impact on us and shaped how we subsequently

approached our jobs. As Al and I both developed in our respective roles, I learned so much from him that changed my perceptions and practices, and will continue to influence how I will see and do things in the future. He was an inspirational leader during his tenure as Chief of Staff, never hesitating to step in to fill a void whenever needed. Like Elaine, Al has an unwavering commitment to providing high quality care to our patients and doing whatever is necessary to honour that commitment.

There is no doubt in my mind that were it not for Elaine and Al, SAH would not have overcome the challenges we have and be so well-positioned for such an exciting future.

As we look to the future, we will continue to implement our strategic plan. We will invest in our leaders and in our organization's ability to solve problems and continuously improve. We will build a robust medical delivery team, strengthen our relationships and be leaders in integrating health care for the benefit of those we serve. We will continue to improve the quality of the care and services we provide and we will do so while ensuring that we achieve sustainable financial results.

We have weathered many challenges and are stronger for it. We are on the cusp of a new phase in the growth of SAH - one where we continuously look to the future and position our organization for ongoing success.

I am extremely proud of what our organization has accomplished. We have dared to dream, believed in our abilities and applied our passion for healing and caring to make a positive difference in people's lives. We have a vision of "being recognized as the best hospital in Canada and an active partner in the best community health care system in the country." This year we made great strides toward realizing that vision and I am excited about the years and successes ahead.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ron Gagnon". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ron Gagnon
President & CEO

Message from the Chief of Staff



The last year has been remarkable. The adjustment to a new place and the constant state of change has taken its toll on our people who work here. There have been many challenges to overcome and for the most part, they have been handled with caring and hard work.

This has been quite the ride and a very exciting way to end my term as Chief of Staff. Although there are far too many people to thank that have helped me through the last few years, I do need to thank Dr. Heather O'Brien for stepping up to take over the job on an interim basis. The last few years have certainly taught me the value of leadership and I know Heather is going to rise to the challenge.

A new building, a balanced budget and a quality framework will make for ongoing improvement as we go forward. I have witnessed these in the last few years and I believe that Sault Area Hospital is well positioned to excel in the future.

I thank my friends and colleagues who have helped get us through some difficult times. I look forward to working with all of them in a different capacity.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Al McLean".

Dr. Al McLean
Chief of Staff



[Read more about our Year to Remember ...](#)

Highlights From 2011-2012

Dr. Lam Receives Prestigious Dr. William Hutchinson Award



Anthony Marrato, Board member (left) presents Dr. William Hutchinson Award to Dr. Lam.

Dr. Lam is a well-known Pediatrician who has dedicated more than 30 years of his working life caring for fragile babies and children. He began working in Sault Ste. Marie in 1977 and his legacy has continued throughout the decades.

Dr. Lam was a pioneer in his field, establishing the neonatal intensive care unit at SAH, educating nursing staff in this area of expertise and purchasing the necessary equipment. He served as Chief of the Pediatrics Department, participated in a number of committees and worked tirelessly as an advocate for babies and children.

His expertise enabled families and newborn babies to receive care in Sault Ste. Marie instead of having to travel to other centres for care. Dr. Lam is known for having never refused a patient into his practice, always accepting out-of-town transfers and often personally going out on transport to retrieve critically ill newborns, including significantly premature babies.

SAH's Board, staff, physicians and volunteers wish to congratulate and thank Dr. Lam for his dedicated service to the residents of Sault Ste. Marie and the Algoma region.

SAH Clears the Smoke

The introduction of a Smoke-Free Property in 2006 at SAH marked the beginning of the facility's continuing efforts to become a role model for health promotion in the community.

The move to the new facility in 2011 was the catalyst for making a fresh start to enforcement of SAH's smoking policy. The first step began with amending the municipal by-law to formally prohibit smoking anywhere on the hospital's property. This, coupled with tobacco management and cessation supports, were key to the hospital's success in implementing a comprehensive smoke-free strategy. This immense task was greatly facilitated through the strong support of community partners such as Algoma Public Health (APH) and the Canadian Cancer Society.

"Implementation of a Smoke-Free property is not just about enforcing, it's about widespread education and evoking a social norm change," says Janet Allen, Tobacco Control Program Coordinator, APH. "SAH continues to put supports in place to help patients manage their tobacco dependency while in hospital," she adds. "SAH is seeking out best practices through local and provincial partnerships to advance tobacco management and cessation opportunities for both patients and staff."

Over the past year, SAH has strived to be an example among health care organizations in sending a clear message that tobacco smoke is a serious health concern. SAH and APH were recognized for their efforts in a number of health care publications including the Northern Ontario Medical Journal.



Janet Allen, Tobacco Control Program Coordinator, APH (left) and Kierston Miron, Clinical Educator Mat/Child and Surgical Services Programs, SAH at the hospital's west entrance.

SAH Enhances Patient Services

Despite dealing with growing pains resulting from the move to a new facility and an ongoing focus on finding efficiencies and achieving a balanced operating position, SAH advocated for and received support to grow some patient services in 2011/2012.

The most significant and well-known service enhancement was the opening of the new Cancer Radiation Treatment Suite, which began receiving patients on April 1, 2012. In fact, the radiation suite was operating at almost full capacity from the onset, meaning that approximately 450 patients (and their loved ones) did not have to make the long trip to Sudbury or elsewhere to receive this vital treatment.

At the same time, SAH also increased surgical capacity in 2011/12 with the opening of a fifth OR, enhanced the number of screening colonoscopies/gastroscopies and added capacity in clinics such as urology, minor procedures, plastic surgery and orthopaedics. These expansions, in light of an era of unprecedented change and fiscal prudence were truly remarkable.

Investments in Performance Improvement and “Lean”



Members of the Performance Improvement Team (left to right): Anna Dijkstra, Brenda Bruni, Kathy Greco, Sheilab Edgar, Anna Carcbidi, Marianne Cuglietta, Tracy Byron and Robin Joanisw.

In 2011, SAH launched a Performance Improvement Program (PIP) aimed at improving patient flow. PIP used Lean methodology which focused on examining processes with the goal of removing steps which do not add value for the patient and having those “doing the work” identify and drive the changes.

Improvements were made in three major categories - door to doctor wait time, transfer to inpatient bed wait time and discharge wait time.

The PIP initiative led to the implementation of a permanent improvement in the Emergency Department - a See and Treat area. The See and Treat process allows the stretcher/treatment space to be used more efficiently, allowing the patients to be seen by a doctor more quickly, sent for tests when necessary and waiting in an internal waiting room for results.

Overall, the PIP project at SAH proved successful, presenting a great learning experience and real opportunities for sustainable change across the organization. In year three of our strategic plan, we will increase the spread of process improvement methods to resolve operational issues by building leadership knowledge and organizational capacity.

SAH thanks all staff, physicians and the leadership team for their dedication to implementing patient care improvements.

Physician Recruitment: Rising to the Challenge

Finding and recruiting doctors for smaller communities continues to be a challenge, one which SAH faces alongside many other Ontario hospitals.

This past year, Sault Ste. Marie has once again risen to the challenge and is enjoying another year of growth with the recruitment of an additional five physicians. In fact, in just ten years, the Physician Recruitment and Retention Program has worked to bring a total of 72 physicians to Sault Ste. Marie.

“Recruiters have the responsibility not only to promote the community health care options but to be ambassadors for

their communities,” says Christine Pagnucco, Manager of Physician Recruitment and Retention. “A relatively unique initiative to Sault Ste. Marie is that for many years we have actively monitored the progress of Saultites who are currently in medical schools or residency programs worldwide, and we stay in touch with them through quarterly newsletters as well as through our Facebook group.”

In addition to keeping in touch with local medical learners, the Physician Recruitment and Retention Program, in partnership with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, hosts a month-long Summer Studentship Program which provides medical students from Sault Ste. Marie the opportunity to work in the local health care system. “The goal of this program is to keep the students engaged in their community in hopes that they will decide to practice here once they have completed their training,” says Christine.

If the number of recent site visits and inquiries by physicians is any indication, the upcoming year looks as though it will be another successful year for the Physician Recruitment and Retention Program in Sault Ste. Marie. SAH recognizes the great work of this small but mighty team and congratulates these individuals on their accomplishments and invaluable contribution to health care in the community.



Summer Studentship Program students (left to right): Matthew Naccarato, Ashley Mackey, Jeff Jonusaitis, Brittany Hoover, Eric Traficante, Vicky Coccimiglio and Sarah White.

Improving Quality of Care for Orthopaedic Patients

One of the program additions to SAH in 2011/2012 year was the North Eastern Joint Assessment Centre (NEJAC). The Centre provides a central point of intake for patients suffering from a wide variety of hip and knee problems. The SAH Centre is part of the NE LHIN’s Hip and Knee Replacement Program which includes five Joint Assessment Centres in the North East region.

The goal of the program is to ensure that patients who are identified as potentially requiring surgery are assessed promptly and provided with appropriate treatment options. The NEJAC program accomplishes this by acting as the liaison between the surgeon and the family physician. For example, patients needing an Orthopaedic consult for possible hip or knee surgery are referred to NEJAC by their family physicians, rather than directly to an Orthopaedic Surgeon. Prospective patients then receive a comprehensive assessment by an Advanced Practice

Physiotherapist (APP). The APP, who has received specialized training in the assessment of surgery candidates, recommends the appropriate treatment.

In the past year (April 2011-April 2012), the SAH NEJAC office received 379 referrals from family physicians and of those, 162 were found to be good surgery candidates. The remaining patients were not quite ready for surgery and received alternative treatments such as physiotherapy, bracing and home/community programs that are designed get patients ready for surgery in the future.

SAH is pleased to report that in one short year, the NEJAC program has already had a positive impact on improving the speed and quality of treatment offered to patients.

Success in Reducing ALC Numbers

Alternate Level of Care (ALC) pressures were relieved at SAH in 2011/2012 with the establishment of a 68-bed interim Transitional Care Unit at the former Plummer Hospital site.

This welcome addition came with the opening of the new hospital last March and has proven to be successful in reducing ALC numbers at SAH. As a matter of fact, total ALC days at the end of fiscal 2011/12 numbered 7,323 compared to 41,014 the previous fiscal year. The unit is being operated by SAH with additional annual government funding of \$6.3 million. Patients in this unit no longer require acute care and may be awaiting placement in a nursing home, retirement home, supportive housing or other long-term accommodations elsewhere in the community.

The long-term plan is to gradually reduce beds in this unit and eventually transfer all patients to appropriate accommodations elsewhere. The Plummer site saw a reduction to 50 beds on March 31, 2012, with the remaining beds to be closed by March 31, 2013. The funding will remain in the community to assist with supportive housing and other long-term solutions, as part of a five year plan developed by the SSM ALC Solutions Group – a collaborative team which includes representatives from SAH, NE LHIN, NE CCAC, City of SSM, long-term care facilities and other stakeholders.

It is also expected that a new 253-bed long term care facility will open by end of this year.

Cancer Program Active in Research and Education

The nationally recognized Algoma District Cancer Program (ADCP) is one of SAH's gems. Already a leading edge clinical trials program, ongoing involvement in research and teaching, augmented by the recent addition of radiation therapy services in 2011, have contributed to a truly comprehensive cancer treatment facility for Algoma patients.

The clinical trials department actively participates in cancer research studies. One of the more recent notable trials was a breast cancer study which garnered a total of seventy participants, earning the ADCP a top five ranking in the category of enrolled patients. SAH typically has 10-15

studies open at any given time and approximately 21 ongoing trials.

In addition to clinical research, the ADCP also offers a unique student development opportunity. In 2009, the program developed an initiative that allows university students who might wish to pursue careers in medicine the opportunity to observe, learn and contribute. The students are enrolled as volunteers and spend time with the physicians and staff in the centre. Each student is required to complete a research audit, which includes a literature search, data analysis and the completion of a final report. To date, every student who has completed a research project has gone on to pursue a degree in the medical field.

In October 2011, the ADCP published four educational/clinical practice posters from various disciplines and all four were accepted for presentation at Princess Margaret Hospital's Annual Multidisciplinary Cancer Conference in Toronto.

Congratulations to everyone at the ADCP for all their ongoing commitment to research and academic excellence.

Enhancing Employee Wellness at SAH



Staff visit Wellness Fair vendors.

In the spring of 2011, SAH established a Wellness Committee consisting of a broad representation of staff committed to improving employee health and wellness.

Led by the Corporate Wellness and Safety department, the goal of the working committee is to promote, support and provide education to all staff in making healthy choices with their work and home lives. The committee developed an annual plan, along with quarterly goals and objectives and their first year was an unqualified success. In addition to a number of onsite fitness programs, the committee also organized a series of "lunch and learn" sessions on topics such as nutrition and sleep strategies.

The committee also held the first annual SAH Employee Wellness Fair last fall which attracted hundreds of attendees, including employees, volunteers and physicians alike. More than 20 vendors were on hand with displays, products and information on a variety of health and wellness topics. The fair received positive attention from media outlets as well as the Sault Ste. Marie Chapter of Partners in Prevention, which invited an SAH representative to deliver a wellness presentation at their Annual Conference and Trade Show.

A Financial Feat

For the first time in a decade, Sault Area Hospital was able to achieve a balanced operating budget - in fact actually delivering a surplus. This accomplishment was no small feat and the culmination of years of efforts by everyone throughout the organization.

The 2010 Hospital Improvement Plan (HIP), validated and endorsed by an exhaustive Peer Review process conducted by four industry experts, represents a robust blueprint for the restoration of financial stability to SAH. After many years of financial challenges and mounting debt, it was imperative that SAH rebuild its credibility with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the North East Local Health Integration Network and our other lenders, by delivering not just on its legal requirement for a balanced operating budget for the year, but also a framework for sustainable surpluses in the future.

As part of the 2011 Ontario Budget, the province announced the establishment of a \$600 - \$800 million fund "to assist with working capital problems at the most seriously impacted hospitals." As a minimum prerequisite, to even be considered for such funding, hospitals had to be in a balanced operating position with a realistic expectation of continued financial stability.

The remarkable turnaround driven by the successful implementation of the HIP, along with the unequivocal commitment of the SAH Board and management team to future surpluses, resulted in approval of almost \$44.5 million in working capital relief funding over three years to Sault Area Hospital. SAH was one of only six hospitals in Ontario to be approved for funding under this initiative.

It must be noted that this funding can be used only to improve the working funds deficit position by paying down current bank indebtedness and cannot be used for capital purchases or ongoing operations. Equally important to note is that while SAH has received the first installment of \$14.8 million, the remaining two years' funding is contingent on maintaining our balanced operating budget along with other terms and conditions.

This reduction of the working capital deficit will allow SAH to focus on providing quality front-line care instead of managing accumulated long-term debt and expending more than necessary on borrowing costs.

In a year of multiple and significant accomplishments, the reversal of our financial fortunes has indeed been one of the most remarkable!

Partnering for Paediatric Patients

Last year, SAH, partnered with the Soo Greyhounds Hockey Club and Kewadin Casinos to offer a pediatric visiting program in Sault Ste. Marie.

As part of the program, members of the Soo Greyhounds OHL hockey team visit paediatric patients throughout the year to brighten their day while in hospital. During every visit, the Hounds provide each child with a stuffed animal, courtesy of Kewadin Casinos (Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan),

and a ticket for the child and a parent to a hockey game, courtesy of the Soo Greyhounds Hockey Club.

In 2011/2012, the Greyhounds made several trips to SAH and each time, paediatric patients and their families were thrilled to meet and visit with these talented and considerate young men. SAH is pleased to partner in an initiative that makes a lasting positive impression on some of the hospital's youngest patients!



Paediatric patient, Ryan shares a power drink with Soo Greyhound, Brandon Alderson.

SAH Unveils Values-Based iCare Awards

In 2011, the SAH Board of Directors established the iCare Awards to annually recognize an employee, volunteer and physician who regularly demonstrate the values of SAH: Integrity, Compassion, Collaboration &, Partnership, Accountability, Respect and Excellence.

Administered by the Governance Committee of the SAH Board of Directors, the iCare Awards reflect the integral role that our values play in the delivery of quality, patient-centred care. All members of the public, staff, physician and volunteer groups may submit nominations for one or more of the three categories.

SAH will issue a call for nominations early each spring and the hospital's Governance Committee will review the nominations and make the selection. The Award will be presented annually in June at SAH's Annual General Meeting.

The inaugural iCare Awards will be presented in June 2012. A permanent display will be prominently placed in the main lobby of the hospital, honouring the recipients of this prestigious award.

Quality – That's the Plan!

One of the key elements of the Excellent Care For All Act of 2010 was the development and publication of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) by all hospitals in the province. The QIP is intended to outline an organization's priorities for quality improvement and articulate a strategy for implementation.

SAH's initial QIP, for the fiscal 2011/12 year, focused on ten key areas: patient, staff and physician satisfaction; unplanned readmission rates; hand hygiene; falls; Alternate Level of Care; conservable days; ED wait times for admitted patients; and total margin. Thanks to the diligence and hard work of everyone in the organization, gains were noted in all areas on a year-to-date comparison, ranging from a 4% to 66% improvement! Due to the timing of the survey, data was not yet currently available for Physician and Staff satisfaction/engagement.

In addition to the significant strides made on the quality measures across the organization, the SAH QIP itself was lauded by Health Quality Ontario as being "written in a way that the public, internal and external stakeholders could easily understand their commitment to quality and safety."

Specifically, reviewers looked for an "inspirational tone" which sought to engage and connect stakeholders; a document that went "above and beyond simply cutting and pasting" from the strategic plan; a clear explanation of how the QIP aligned with both internal and external processes; and well-defined identification of risks and accompanying mitigation strategies.

True GEMs



The SAH GEM team is now fully staffed and consists of Amber Plastino, RN, BScN (missing) Heather Koskela, RN, BScN (left) and Ann Piscopo, RN (completing BScN).

The Geriatric Emergency Management (GEM) program is dedicated to ensuring that seniors receive the optimal level of care in the Emergency Department as well as in the community.

Funded by the North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN), GEM is an important part of the efforts to reduce Emergency Department wait times and Alternate Level of Care pressures. These challenges relate to the flow of people in and out of the hospital and GEM is a key part of easing congestion and enhancing care in the Emergency Department.

The program strives to see all patients age 75 or older who present in the Emergency Department and patients aged 65-74 who have an identified geriatric concern (e.g. falls, cognition, mobility, nutrition, pain, recurrent Emergency

visits, etc.). An automatic referral process was developed and implemented which immediately identifies individuals meeting the specified criteria, ensuring that GEM patients are seen in a timely manner.

A specially-trained GEM nurse conducts comprehensive assessments, linking elders to community services and collaborating with family members, staff and various community agencies, thereby avoiding admission to the hospital in many instances. This results in reduced congestion in the ED and, more importantly, improved and appropriate level of care for the patient.

SAH Honours Volunteers

Volunteers are people of all ages, cultures and walks of life with the common desire to make a difference in their community and in their own lives. The hospital is fortunate to have over 400 volunteers who have contributed more than 63,000 hours of their time and talents this past year.

Volunteer assignments range from providing patient and visitor directions at the Information Desk, to assisting patients with their discharge, serving on the Board of Directors and a myriad of others in between. SAH is also pleased to welcome and work in partnership with volunteers from the Canadian Cancer Society and the Victorian Order of Nurses.

Among their many roles at SAH, volunteers are also actively involved in fundraising on behalf of the hospital. The Volunteer Association raises funds through the Gift Shop, the sale of lottery tickets, bake sales and other events. In fact, this past year, the Volunteer Association contributed a total of \$63,600 in support of the Sault Area Hospital Foundation, in addition to fulfilling their \$500,000 pledge to the Foundation's New Hospital Fund! Regardless of their roles, volunteers contribute countless hours of their experience and expertise and are involved at every level of the organization.

SAH thanks all volunteers for their hard work, loyalty, compassion and generosity. Their contributions are far-reaching, supporting physicians, staff, inpatients and everyone who walks through the doors each and every day.



Left to right: Lorna Brooks, Joan Jones, Doreen Stadnyk, Barbara van Bakel, Velma McClelland, Jackie Tomcbak, Laurel Young and Kayla Gravelle.

Feature Story

2011-2012: A Year to Remember



First Plummer Hospital



First General Hospital



Plummer Hospital, Queen Street

While Sault Area Hospital (SAH) celebrated its first anniversary in our new facility in March 2012, the hospital has been an important cornerstone in the community for more than a century. The long and storied tradition of health care excellence dates back to 1898 with the founding of the Sault Ste. Marie General Hospital, followed by the establishment of the Plummer Memorial Public Hospital in 1917.

The new SAH officially received its first patient on March 6, 2011, ten years after the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care announced support for its construction. The long road to that memorable day of a unified hospital can be traced back to 1993 with the official partnership of the former General and Plummer Hospitals and the ensuing amalgamation of their respective Boards. This was followed in 1999 by the Health Services Restructuring Commission's formal recognition of the need for expansion and modernization, and subsequent recommendation to redevelop the two existing sites. The following years from

2000 to 2007 were spent relentlessly pursuing a dream for the people of the Algoma District – a brand new, one-site hospital.

Finally in 2007, the community witnessed the groundbreaking for the new SAH, and on that historic day in March 2011, the dream finally became a reality. What began as two separate hospitals over a century ago is now a beautiful state-of-the-art facility of which we can all be proud - one that will serve the needs of generations to come.

Now also a part of SAH's rich history, 2011-2012 will undoubtedly go down as a Year to Remember. The benefits of a new environment, location, processes and technologies also came with challenges for staff, physicians, volunteers, patients and visitors alike. Remarkably, despite the monumental amount of change, in one short year, most of these growing pains were overcome, great progress was made on significant longstanding issues and services were expanded.



Senior leadership (left to right): Max Liedke, Kelli-Ann Lemieux, Dr. Heather O'Brien, Elaine Pitcher (Board Chair), Ron Gagnon, Marie Paluzzi and Mario Paluzzi.

in more than a century of service



General Hospital, Queen Street



SAH, Great Northern Road



West Entrance, Great Northern Road

The chronic Alternate Level of Care (ALC) issues that had plagued the hospital for years were alleviated through the creation of an interim 68-bed Transitional Care Unit at the former Plummer site – thanks to the collaborative efforts of SAH, the North East Local Health Integration Network and other members of the SSM ALC Solutions Group, with support from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

And for the first time in more than a decade, SAH ended the fiscal year in a surplus position - a feat that was accomplished through the sacrifice and perseverance on the parts of everyone at all levels of the organization.

The most significant service enhancement of 2011/12 came with the opening of the Cancer Radiation Treatment Suite, which began receiving patients on April 1. During the year, SAH also augmented surgical capacity with the opening of a fifth operating room, increased the number of screening colonoscopies/gastroscopies, and added capacity in clinics such as urology, minor procedures, plastic surgery and orthopaedics.

SAH wishes to acknowledge the unwavering commitment and fierce dedication of staff, physicians and volunteers during this year of unprecedented change - including those in our off-site and satellite locations - as well as the residents of the community and region for their patience, tolerance and understanding during the new hospital's first year of operations. A special thank you also goes to SAH's Board of Directors and all of our community partners who were instrumental in our successes.

After a year of adjustment, we have settled into our new surroundings and the SAH family is finally "home." 2011-2012 was an extraordinary year, filled with activity, excitement, renewed energy and promise for the future. With an unparalleled team of care providers, a modern new facility and strong financial position, SAH is poised to embark on the next chapter in its proud history of health care excellence in Sault Ste. Marie and the Algoma region.



First Anniversary Celebrations

Financial Report

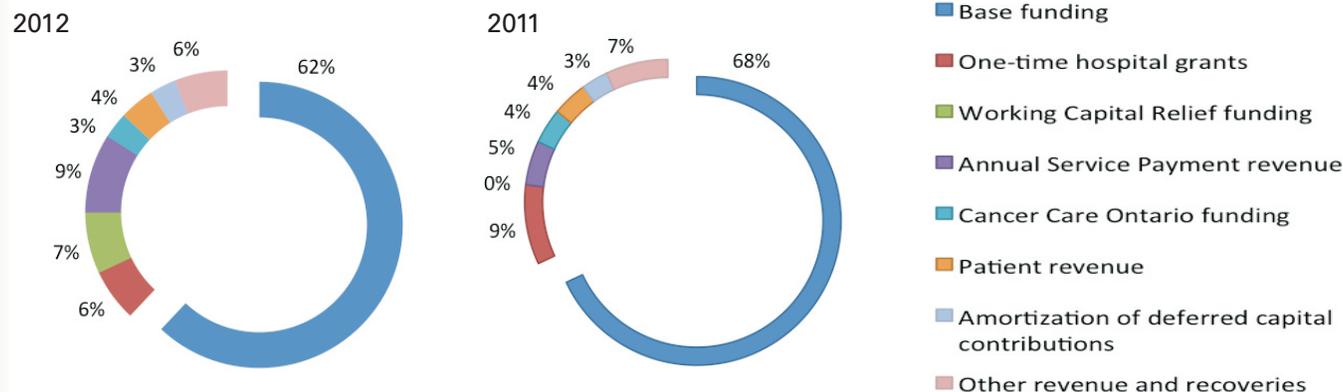
Condensed Statement of Financial Position As at March 31, 2012 with comparative figures for 2011 (Thousands of dollars)

	2012	2011
Assets		
Current assets	\$17,940	\$12,528
Long-term receivables and restricted cash	4,736	13,911
Capital assets	354,061	358,956
	<u>\$376,737</u>	<u>\$385,395</u>
Liabilities, Deferred Contributions and Net Assets		
Current liabilities	\$73,511	\$89,592
Long-term liabilities and deferred contributions	360,245	363,302
Net assets	(57,019)	(67,499)
	<u>\$376,737</u>	<u>\$385,395</u>

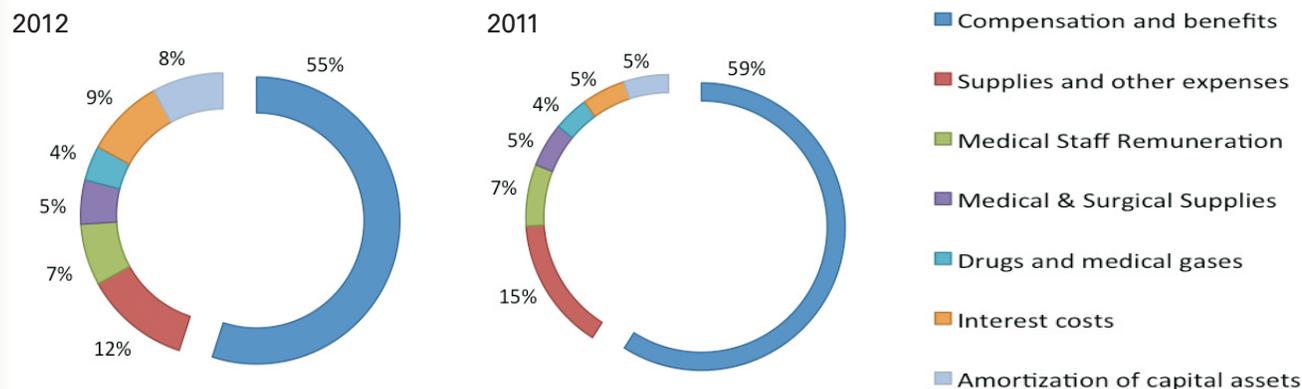
Condensed Statement of Operations As at March 31, 2012 with comparative figures for 2011 (Thousands of dollars)

Revenues		
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and Local Health Integration Network	\$188,065	\$151,796
Other	37,121	33,437
	<u>\$225,186</u>	<u>\$185,233</u>
Expenses		
Compensation and benefits	\$118,264	\$114,798
Other	96,442	81,012
	<u>\$214,706</u>	<u>\$195,810</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	<u>\$10,480</u>	<u>\$(10,577)</u>

Revenues (%)



Expenses (%)



Selected Statistics	2012	2011	2012	2011
Inpatient days	107,230	112,444	Clinic Visits	122,927
Surgical cases	8,675	10,054	MRI Hours of Operation	5,061
Emergency visits	61,126	63,518	Diagnostic Imaging C.A.T. hours	4,537
				4,516

2011/2012 Board of Directors and Committees

Board of Directors Elected

Elaine Pitcher, Chair
Jamie Melville, Vice Chair and Treasurer
Lorne Carter
Joy Haley
Donna Hilsinger
Anthony P. Marrato
Luisa Martone
Gregory Peres
Debbie Romani
Reg St-Amour
Frank Sarlo
Connie Witty

Board of Directors Ex-officio

Ron Gagnon, President & CEO
Dr. Al McLean, Chief of Staff
Dr. Malcolm Brigden, President of Medical Staff Association
Dr. Doug Bignell, Vice President of Medical Staff Association
Johanne Messier-Mann, Chief Nursing Officer
Laurel Young, Volunteer Association

Senior Management Team

Ron Gagnon, President & CEO
Marie Paluzzi, Vice President & Chief Operating Officer
Max Liedke, Vice President & Chief Financial Officer
Dr. Emmalee Marshall, Vice President of Medical Affairs (*to Sept. 2011*)
Dr. Heather O'Brien, Interim Vice President of Medical Affairs (*from Sept. 2011*)
Ila Watson, Vice President of Transformation & Chief Human Resources Officer
Johanne Messier-Mann, Chief Nursing Officer & Director of Maternal Child & Medical Programs
Jeff Weeks, Chief Information Officer/Chief Privacy Officer (*to Jan. 2012*)
Mario Paluzzi, Director of Communications & Public Affairs
Kelli-Ann Lemieux, Chief Allied Health Professional & Director of Clinical Support Services

Medical Advisory Committee

Dr. Alan McLean, Chief of Staff
Dr. Emmalee Marshall, Vice President of Medical Affairs (*to Sept. 2011*)
Dr. Heather O'Brien, Interim Vice President of Medical Affairs (*from Sept. 2011*);
Chief of Anaesthesia; Medical Director of Critical Care (*to Jan. 2012*)
Dr. Malcolm Brigden, President of Medical Staff
Dr. Doug Bignell, Vice President of Medical Staff
Dr. Greg Berg, Medical Director of Medicine
Dr. David Berry, Internal Medicine Representative
Dr. Heather Blois, Chief of Rural Medicine
Dr. Don MacIntosh, Medical Director of Emergency
Dr. Jeff Jenkin, Chief of Diagnostic Imaging
Dr. Marilyn Leahy, Chief of Family Medicine
Dr. Lino Pistor, Medical Director of Mental Health Program
Dr. Joseph Reich, Medical Director of Surgical Program
Fiona Wardle, Chief Midwife, Obstetrics/Gynaecology Program
Dr. Ilan Weinreb, Deputy Director of Laboratory Services
Dr. Kirk Zufelt, Chief of Paediatrics
Dr. Bob Maloney, Chief of Hospitalist Program (*to Feb. 2012*)
Ron Gagnon, President & CEO
Max Liedke, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
Marie Paluzzi, Vice President & Chief Operating Officer
Johanne Messier-Mann, Director of Maternal Child and Medical Programs and Chief Nursing Officer
Elaine Pitcher, Sault Area Hospital Board Chair



SAULT AREA
HOSPITAL
HÔPITAL DE
SAULT-SAINTE-MARIE



Integrity • Compassion • Collaboration & Partnership •
• Accountability • Respect • Excellence