

President & Chief Executive Officer

Change is ever constant in health care and this past year has been no exception. As a recurring part of evolving care in response to the needs of the residents of the North Island and the ability of our staff, several changes have taken place in several aspects of St. Joseph's activity. However, throughout it all, St. Joseph's has held steadfast to its role, values and its principles.

Retirements and departures of staff have been difficult but have created new opportunities for fresh approaches.

External reviews have been multiple and have, in the end, all found a reliable, sound organization; efficient and frugally run.

New systems, equipment and renovations have enabled improved services of greater quality and efficiency. Each year St. Joseph's becomes a better equipped, better maintained and more viable structure for its services. However, the volume of services that St. Joseph's now provides is exceeding its current footprint. Either expansions, relocations, additions or significant changes are required to keep pace with the growing needs.

Innovation by staff is still a vibrant part of St. Joseph's contribution to the Vancouver Island Health Authority and the health care system in general. Compassionate and spiritual care; generating hope for all, has been administered by every one of our staff in spades.

Yet there is more to do!

The downsizing of the Regional Hospital into two facilities now coupled with changes in the fiscal climate means a new round of discussions on local v's regional services.

A response to ambulatory care growth cannot be delayed until a totally new building is in place; but rather either expansions or off-site structures need to be considered in order that we can continue to attract and retain the very best staff.

New equipment; such as an MRI, is now timely and necessary for the sustainability of our regional services in the North Island. It also need not wait, as we can see how little it takes to put these structures in place. Linkages of these instruments is possible through the electronic age. Perhaps, until such time as an MRI is physically in place, for example, our Radiologist should be able to read all MRI's for residents of the North Island wherever they are carried out.



Arrangements of this global nature with the Vancouver Island Health Authority are physically possible and now must be further explored.

Leadership development in keeping with our management philosophy of “servant leadership” is required by our managers so that they are more comfortable and confident in dealing with the challenges they face each day.

Advances in computer applications in health care touch all aspects of our care from outpatient to residential services; and judicious use of technology is required as scarce resources are available. The roll out of Cerner by the Vancouver Island Health Authority, and other local innovations will bring a new era to patients and staff at St. Joseph’s.

The Vancouver Island component of the University of British Columbia Medical School is now reaching further north, and I expect further developments in respect of an Island Medical School and medical students here in the coming year. This, coupled with St. Joseph’s support of North Island College, Discovery College and other training organizations is another aspect of St. Joseph’s contribution to the health care system.

St. Joseph’s has great strengths. The Comox Valley is an extremely attractive place to live and work.

The Medical Staff has exceptional members who are committed to a quality of care. There is a synergy between the General Practitioners and Specialists that is not found elsewhere. Hospital staff is truly dedicated and committed, and respond both for care of the patients and residents, and also of each other.

Our Board and Foundation are excellent community representatives and supporters. Our Volunteers are numerous and growing. Our local and provincial political support is strong, and our reputation with the Vancouver Island Health Authority and comparative statistics show us to be a leader in all their divisions on Vancouver Island.

The support of the Bishop and the Diocese is the touch-stone in our foundation as we strive to promote the Healing Ministry in our services.

These elements enable us to respond in a reasonable, professional and measured way to community needs as they change. We are not always able to do all things in the timeline that all would desire, however there is continuous improvement.

To the Bishop, the Board, the Medical Staff, all staff, the Senior Management team, my Executive Assistant and the Administrative Assistants and all of the Volunteers, I extend my appreciation for your support of St. Joseph's and its management team this past year and look forward to continued improvements throughout the next year.

I also wish to extend our appreciation to the Vancouver Island Health Authority Board and President & Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Howard Waldner, Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, Mr. Mike Conroy and staff for their support of St. Joseph's this past year.

It has been my privilege to be your President & Chief Executive Officer this past year.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Pontus', written over a horizontal line.

Michael Pontus