



MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, April 1, 2014

Dr. Joanna Hope, Interim Chief of Staff, leaving role

It is with mixed feelings of gratitude and sadness that Niagara Health System is announcing today that Dr. Joanna Hope will complete her more than five-year tenure as Interim Chief of Staff, effective April 28, 2014.

In accepting this challenging role, Dr. Hope built on her important work as the Chair of the organization's credentials committee which oversaw physician applications and reappointments. In the ensuing years, Dr. Hope acted as the organization's lead physician for medical quality, leader and Chair of the Medical Advisory Committee of the Board, and overseer of the practice of more than 600 physicians. During her term, a great deal was accomplished at the organization, including major improvements of quality of care markers like Hospital Standardized Mortality and improvements in hand hygiene and a reduction in sepsis, and more recently a reduction in hospital-acquired infections. She also co-chaired the Board's Bylaws Committee, the group charged with the challenging task of establishing important documentation of the corporation. Dr. Hope was a frequent spokesperson for the organization, and frequently led quality reviews with a view of building on success and learning where the organization could perform better.

Dr. Kevin Smith, CEO, noted: "I admire Dr. Hope's dedication to high quality care, and her work as a role model of compassionate care, as well as championing a high quality of work life for all on our teams. Dr. Hope has been faced with many challenges and has always risen to the task with great professionalism. She has also achieved a great deal in the continued development of the MAC. I have been fortunate to have her wise counsel during my time with the NHS."

Dr. Barry Wright, Chair of the NHS Board of Directors, stated: "I've been very lucky to get to know Dr. Hope over the last year. She brings a great enthusiasm and unique leadership style to the table, and never lets the Board venture far from discussions about our core mission of building the best health system possible for all in the Region. I know I speak on behalf of all our leaders in saying we will truly miss Dr. Hope, and with great affection we wish her well."

Dr. Johan Viljoen, Regional Chief of Obstetrics and a member of the Medical Advisory Committee, commented on Dr. Hope's style as a leader and colleague. "I've always been able to count on Dr. Hope to help me through the largest challenges of the last 5 years. She's a person who cares for the people working with and for her. I've been very lucky to work with her and have her in my corner, and I expect all my MAC colleagues have warm feelings about her time as our leader."

Dr. Hope's own reflections focus on her relationship with patients and those that have supported her. "I am always a family doctor first and foremost, and my philosophy has always been that if I'm your doctor, I'm part of your family, and you're part of mine. This approach also steered me

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in my role as Chief of Staff. It's been an incredible life experience, and I am so grateful to the many that have supported me including my colleagues at the hospital, but also the patients of my family practice and my staff there as well. My hope in leaving is that the health system is better for patients than when we started this journey, and if it is it's because of all the people I've mentioned. I can't express how very deeply I care about all the lives we touch each day at NHS sites."

Previous to taking on the role of Interim Chief of Staff, Dr. Hope was well-known as a family physician from Fenwick who had held numerous senior medical staff leadership positions within the NHS and was Chief of Staff of the Welland Hospital from 1992 to 1998. She will be returning to her busy family practice full-time, and will also continue to have physician privileges with Niagara Health System.

Future medical staff leadership will be announced in coming days, as will plans to celebrate Dr. Hope's contributions.

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