THE BEST HEALTH CARE BEGINS WITH VALUING DIVERSITY

Five years ago, The Scarborough Hospital set upon a new vision: To be recognized as Canada’s leader in providing the best health care for a global community. It was a vision we took to heart. Our community is one of the most diverse in the country; improving outcomes and providing outstanding patient care experiences mean deeply understanding every person’s unique needs. This report is about an entire hospital taking action on diversity.

The results are for life.
The Scarborough Hospital

Diversity and equity

Diversity is the approach by which we recognize similarities and differences, both visible and invisible, among people and groups. At The Scarborough Hospital, our definition goes beyond the traditional scope of culture and ethnicity to include differences, such as age, gender, sexual orientation, language, ability, socioeconomic status and religion.

We are also dedicated to being an equitable organization. This means ensuring a positive and respectful work environment for our staff, volunteers and physicians, and creating an accessible environment for everyone. It also means recognizing how our population is impacted by important social determinants of health, which are the conditions and circumstances that contribute to health outcomes – known as “health equity” – and removing any barriers to accessing health services.

Inclusion

Inclusion is about accepting, respecting and embracing our global community of staff, volunteers, physicians, patients and families. An inclusive environment is one in which every person feels welcomed and valued. When we feel included, we feel a sense of belonging.

Our Framework for Fostering a Global Community

At The Scarborough Hospital, diversity, equity and inclusion are essential ingredients for serving and supporting the global community of Scarborough.

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Message from the President and CEO

Within our province’s ever-changing health care system, the importance of diversity and its impact on providing excellent patient care cannot be understated. At The Scarborough Hospital, it has become a passion here, an intrinsic way in which we operate.

It’s also an aspiration that keeps us focused not only on delivering high quality care, but also on being sensitive, respectful and responsive to the needs of our staff, physicians, patients and community.

The roots of this commitment run deep at The Scarborough Hospital – it’s part of our DNA! Twenty years ago, we were among the first hospitals in Ontario to dedicate a department and a director to meet the needs of our changing community. Our leadership in this area was recognized in 2008 during extensive consultations with more than 1,300 stakeholders as part of our strategic planning process. Diversity and health equity were identified as core strengths.

When we introduced our strategic plan in 2009, we took our actions a step further, embedding diversity into our new vision to provide “the best health care for a global community.” The vision struck a chord. It went to the heart of who we are and what we want to be. It challenged us to expand our concept of diversity beyond the typical boundaries of culture and ethnicity, and to ensure that equity and inclusion were an integral focus of our efforts. In short, it became a part of every aspect of our work.

This report is a testament to the comprehensive initiatives undertaken by our staff, physicians, volunteers and community partners since 2009. I am honoured to be part of such an outstanding organization and am exceptionally proud of all that we have accomplished. As our current strategic plan (2009 – 2014) draws to a close, ushering in a new era of transformation at The Scarborough Hospital, one thing remains certain: we will continue to pursue diversity and health equity, enabling us to continue offering exceptional patient care and an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.

Robert Biron
President and CEO
WHY DIVERSITY MATTERS

We can think of more than 625,930 reasons to value diversity at The Scarborough Hospital, one for every person in Scarborough. Here are just a few of the benefits that diversity, equity and inclusion are delivering to our community.

• Improved access to health services
• Optimal patient experiences
• Patient safety and quality care
• Improved health outcomes
• Patient trust and satisfaction
• Increased staff satisfaction and engagement
• A culture of inclusivity and acceptance
• Ability to attract diverse talent
• Accountability to our stakeholders
• Community connections and partnerships

MESSAGE FROM ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSITY

It was billed as “A New Day” in 2009 when The Scarborough Hospital unveiled its five year strategic plan and new mission, vision and values.

It was certainly a new day for diversity at our hospital. Though we had long embraced being a welcoming organization, the new direction went further and deeper. Diversity would no longer be a wonderful addition to our many initiatives; it would become a fundamental part of how we operate.

To support our vision of providing the best health care for a global community, diversity and health equity were formalized in our strategic plan. We expanded the scope of our engagement by establishing three pillars for action that would enable us to realize our vision: Our Patients, Our People and Our Community. We developed inclusive policies, programs and practices to ensure that diversity, equity and inclusion were components in our activities.

We believe that our framework for serving a global community is integral to our planning. It impacts access to services, health outcomes, patient experiences, workplace morale, staff and community engagement, and so much more. Diversity and equity have even been shown to increase organizational innovation and creativity – something that we can attest to here at The Scarborough Hospital.

This report celebrates the progress we have made on our vision since 2009. We thank our staff, physicians, volunteers and community partners for making it possible.

Rhonda Lewis
Vice President,
Human Resources
and Patient Relations

Waheeda Rahman
Director,
Organizational Development
and Diversity
59\% of residents are foreign-born*

25.4\% of children are living in low income families**

More than 50\% speak a primary language other than English or French****

14.2\% are without Canadian citizenship, more than double the Ontario average^

8.8\% are recent immigrants to Canada*, coming from various countries, including China, the Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan*

50\% of families are headed by a female lone parent, considered to be among the most economically vulnerable*

10\% of the general population is estimated to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered****

1 in 7 people in Ontario (1.85 million) have a disability^^

Almost 1/2 of the Neighbourhood Improvement Areas in Toronto (6/13) identified by the City of Toronto are located in Scarborough**

The population is aging in Scarborough and across the province. The number of seniors is projected to almost double in the next 22 years***

77\% of the population identify themselves as Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jewish and Traditional (Aboriginal) Spirituality with respect to religious affiliation within Scarborough*.

The Scarborough Hospital serves a diverse and vulnerable population.
We aim to exceed the highest expectations of our patients and families.

“Offering impartial interpretation is critical.”
— Seemi Khan, Learning and Diversity Specialist

Removing Language Barriers
Imagine arriving at the hospital and not being able to communicate what’s wrong— or even understand what the doctor is saying. In Scarborough, where nine per cent of the population has no knowledge of English*, and more than 50 per cent speak another language other than English or French**, this is not an uncommon occurrence.

“I have had patients who don’t speak English at all. Patients like this are very vulnerable and often have difficulties navigating the hospital and the health care system,” said Kelly Zhang, Mandarin and Cantonese Interpreter at The Scarborough Hospital’s Birchmount campus.

In order to help address these challenges, we offer patients professional interpretation services, which are available anytime of the day or night. Initiated as a volunteer program in 1996, Interpretation Services was formalized and made into policy, with certified medical interpreters in 2010. All clinical areas, including patient registration, are now equipped with pre-programmed phones that connect staff to interpretation in more than 200 languages. Two face-to-face interpreters, including Kelly and her Tamil-speaking colleague, Sophia Anantharajan, work out of the Emergency Departments at both campuses. “Every clinical department knows our pager numbers,” Kelly said.

Interpretation Services is filling an urgent community need. In 2013, The Scarborough Hospital received 8,275 requests for interpretation, a 17 per cent increase over 2012. It is also important for patient safety, as language barriers may result in failure to obtain consent or staff may not properly comprehend the nature of the ailment. Our interpreters are fluent in medical terminology, aiding communication between patients and their health care providers.

“Offering impartial interpretation is critical,” said Seemi Khan, Learning and Diversity Specialist at The Scarborough Hospital, who has coordinated the program almost since its inception. “It’s stressful for the family to interpret, especially if they have to deliver bad news.”

Interpretation Services is just one part of our comprehensive program to support patients who encounter language barriers at the hospital. Signage, way finding, patient education material, treatment plans and consent forms are all available in multiple languages for patients who may not be proficient in English. For people who are deaf, deafened and hard of hearing, a range of accessibility devices are available throughout the hospital. Sign language interpreters are also readily available upon request. In addition, many members of our staff are multilingual, enabling them to provide one-on-one care in the patient’s preferred language. In our Mental Health program, for instance, staff and physicians speak more than 25 languages.

“It’s our mission and our passion to be helping people,” said Kelly. “By providing interpretation, we could be saving a patient’s life.”

Patient Gowns Offer Comfort and Dignity
The standard “tie-back” hospital gown has never been known for its modesty, so when community partners approached us about other possibilities, we enhanced our patient gown options. Patients can now choose a robe and pyjama pants in addition to our standard patient gown. Although these are not new products, they are meant to offer our patients more comfort and choice. Being a patient in a hospital can be a vulnerable experience and these options are meant to offer more dignity and address the needs of our global community.

* Statistics Canada, 2011 Census
** City of Toronto Community Council Profiles: 2011 Census: Area D: Scarborough
A ReFRESHing New Menu

The ReFRESHing our Menu program at our General campus may change how you think about hospital food. Gone is the bland, generic foods tray lacking in fruits and vegetables. In its place are meals featuring fresh, diverse and local foods, cooked from scratch in the hospital’s own kitchen.

Thanks to a grant from the provincial government and the Greenbelt Fund in 2011, we created 20 new recipes for the patient menu. We also upgraded our kitchen facilities and provided training to staff on scratch cooking methodologies.

In addition to the Halal, Kosher and vegetarian options already available to patients, we enhanced our menu to include more diverse options, including Asian and South Asian dishes. It’s a ReFRESHing food change, and a healthy one too.

“Supporting diverse birth practices is fundamental to supporting the family,” said Barb Scott, Patient Care Director, Maternal Newborn and Child Care, Critical Care, and Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence programs.

Diverse maternal care is a practice that’s constantly evolving and we’re eager to accommodate when we can. Patients, staff, physicians, administration and diversity experts at the hospital have all assisted in program enhancement and community outreach. Community leaders from various faiths have conducted sessions to educate staff on specific birthing practices.

The end goal is that every mother has a positive experience, which supports her values and beliefs. If patient satisfaction scores are any indication, new moms are noticing the difference and appreciating the respect.

Maternal Care Brings Diversity to Life

Every year, The Scarborough Hospital brings nearly 5,000 new lives into our vibrant community. In the Family Maternity Centres of our Maternal Newborn and Child Care program, expectant moms not only receive safe, high quality care, but also have the opportunity to give birth their way, according to their preferences, customs and beliefs.

“Supporting diverse birth practices is fundamental to supporting the family,” said Barb Scott, Patient Care Director, Maternal Newborn and Child Care, Critical Care, and Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence programs.

We meet the patient’s needs in a variety of ways, such as through individual birth planning, accommodating preferences for female care providers when possible, and supporting other requests, provided the mom and baby are safe.

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Innovative Partnerships Serve Aging Population

Our Specialized Geriatrics program has instituted a number of partnerships with community agencies to improve the care and coordination of services for the elderly in Scarborough.

In partnership with Carefirst Seniors and Community Services Association, we launched the “Assess and Restore” program. This program supports elderly patients in returning home again by integrating services available at Carefirst into the patient’s discharge plan before they even leave the hospital.

Patients being discharged from hospital who are identified to be at especially high-risk for hospital readmission can also be referred to the six-week “Virtual Ward” program. In the Virtual Ward, social workers from the hospital and Carefirst reach out to patients within 24 hours of discharge, and check in regularly for six weeks. Together, they ensure that the patients fill their prescriptions, see their family doctor or specialist and receive health education. In the first year, more than 100 patients were assisted. The Virtual Ward is now being expanded across both hospital campuses to increase the number of seniors who can benefit from this service.

Another innovative project was “Wrap Around Services”, a collaboration between the hospital and TransCare Community Support Services. In this recent pilot project, an on-site Community Support Services Coordinator from TransCare worked with our social work team to assess each senior being discharged and developed advance plans for the services they will need.

“We’ve also expanded our GAIN (Geriatric Assessment and Intervention Network) Clinic into the community in partnership with Carefirst and St. Paul’s L’Amoreaux Centre. The GAIN Clinic provides comprehensive interprofessional geriatric assessments and interventions to patients post-discharge from the hospital and from the Emergency Department.

“These partnerships and programs have enabled us to greatly enhance the transition process from hospital to home for seniors and it helps them avoid future hospital readmissions,” said Nancy Veloso, Patient Care Director, Medicine, Geriatrics and Oncology at The Scarborough Hospital.

Volunteers Help Patients Find Their Way

For people living with accessibility challenges, getting to a hospital appointment can be a painstaking process. That’s why we launched the Call Ahead for Volunteer Assistance (CAVA) program.

With CAVA, patients and their loved ones can “reserve” a volunteer who will meet them and help them navigate the hospital. To schedule the service, they simply call or email the hospital 24 hours prior to their scheduled appointment. A volunteer will be waiting for the patient at the entrance most convenient for them, with a wheelchair if required.

“The response has been overwhelmingly positive,” said Debbie Vandenberg, Manager, Volunteer Services at The Scarborough Hospital. “It’s amazing what a little guidance and a friendly smile can do to enhance a patient’s experience.”
Chronic Disease Prevention Model Promotes Health Equity
To optimize the health and quality of life for people living with diabetes, hypertension, kidney disease and other chronic conditions, we have developed a Chronic Disease Prevention Model (CDPM) that is influencing care throughout the hospital and beyond.

Established as a key area of focus by the hospital in its Clinical Action Plan in 2010, the CDPM framework is based on research and best practice. It outlines the key components for successful CDPM care delivery across the health care system, and directs an equitable approach to how care should be delivered.

“The model helps improve coordination, access and navigation for patients, and breaks the silos that can exist between services,” said Ethel Doyle, Patient Care Director, Nephrology, Diabetes, Cardiology, Ambulatory Respirology and Family Medicine Teaching Unit at The Scarborough Hospital.

“It also recognizes health disparities within our population and the benefits that our diverse workforce brings to making this model successful.”

The CDPM defines key elements for providing seamless patient care to the diverse population in Scarborough. It offers a comprehensive system of care that is based on each person’s distinct needs. As well, it allows for a “real partnership” between the patient and care provider, and between the hospital, primary care physicians and community partners.

To date, the model has been introduced internally where it is directing care in the Diabetes, Chronic Kidney Disease, Home Dialysis and Medicine programs. It is also being used for patient care initiatives in other areas of the hospital. Over the last year, Ethel has shared the CDPM with the Central East Local Health Integration Network and Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in hopes that it will influence programs at these higher levels.

“This work is foundational. It’s not a cookie cutter approach,” said Ethel. “It’s a powerful tool that defines key principles for providing excellent patient-centred care.”

Improving the Patient Experience with the Input of Patients and Families
At The Scarborough Hospital, we are always looking for innovative ways to improve our patient care. This means exploring everything from how we communicate with patients and families to partnering with them in program planning to truly making patients participants in their own care.

As providers, we may not fully understand the patient’s perspectives. So, in order to improve how we work with patients and families, we created a ‘Person-Focused Care Steering Group’. The Steering Group is developing a clinical practice framework to ensure that all the care we deliver embraces each patient’s individualized needs.

Since November 2013, the Steering Group has been reviewing research and best practices on positive patient experiences. This group is now recruiting patient/family advisors who will work hand-in-hand with the hospital to develop and evaluate processes, policies and programs.

“Implementing this approach across the hospital will go to the heart of patient experience, embracing diversity, health equity and our mission to meet the unique needs of each and every patient,” said Rhonda Seidman-Carlson, Vice President, Interprofessional Practice and Chief Nursing Executive at The Scarborough Hospital.

When Dilemmas Arise, Ethics Assist
What happens when a patient’s beliefs conflict with a hospital’s professional or legal standards, especially when that hospital is committed to providing appropriate care to a diverse population?

Our health care teams don’t have to look far for answers. Clinical Ethicist Moji Adurogbangba finds sensitive solutions for care to move forward in a way that is valuable for patients, families and health professionals.

“For some families, disclosing the nature of an ailment to a loved one is like delivering a prognosis.”

This is done through family meetings, where discussions ensure that patient care progresses in a positive manner while considering all values and beliefs including religious, cultural and family issues that might influence treatment. Ethics help our health care teams and families navigate issues respectfully and develop solutions together.

“Health care teams have told me that even though the final decision may have been different than what they envisioned, they appreciated how it was reached and they felt supported during the process,” said Moji.

The voice of ethics in the clinical domain helps us deliver on our goal of respecting the patient’s values and beliefs, while ensuring excellence and patient safety.

“For some families, disclosing the nature of an ailment to a loved one is like delivering a prognosis.”

– Moji Adurogbangba, Clinical Ethicist
Inspiring Change Through Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

While supporting diversity is a collective effort right across the hospital, one department is dedicated to advancing its progress: Organizational Development and Diversity.

“We have focused the department on three key strategic areas: identifying the barriers patients face in accessing the hospital and its services; creating an equitable and inclusive work environment for our staff; and building community connections and partnerships to ensure patients and families have access to required resources outside the hospital.

“In this way, we are not only able to understand the clinical challenges involved in providing sensitive care to a diverse population, but can also provide the leadership required to motivate and inspire staff, physicians and volunteers to be patient and family centred.”

Waheeda and Seemi Khan, Learning and Diversity Specialist, are two of the people within the team who work intimately on diversity, equity and inclusion issues at the hospital.

Performance Reviews Evaluate Diversity Competency

Diversity is such an integral part of the job at The Scarborough Hospital that it has been built into the performance review assessment, which is conducted annually with management and staff. As part of the Performance Development and Review Process, employees are evaluated on their

“We are embedding the diversity and equity lens in all of our work from planning to implementation, so that it becomes a part of everything we do,” said Waheeda.

“Our goal is to build a culture of community and engagement, so that staff and patients feel empowered to create an environment that is equitable and inclusive.”

The Scarborough Hospital Diversity Audit Identifies Gaps and Opportunities

In 2012, the hospital partnered with Ryerson University’s Diversity Institute to examine how we could fully institutionalize and embed diversity and equity into our policies, programs and services. This initiative identified gaps and opportunities in our current practices within both our clinical and non-clinical programs, from governance to patient care. The insights helped to shape key recommendations, which included deepening our staff education around diversity, equity and inclusion issues at the hospital.

“In Interpersonal and Diversity Fluency”, which includes promoting inclusion, recognizing needs based on diverse differences and learning from others with different backgrounds and experiences. Diversity fluency is considered a chief marker for our hospital’s core values of Integrity, Compassion, Accountability, Respect and Excellence.

We don’t just serve a global community, we are a global community.

“Our people

The Scarborough Hospital

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Diversity and Inclusion Report 2009-2014
The Scarborough Hospital Scores High on Employee Inclusion

Our Employee Experience Survey measures employee engagement and job satisfaction on a variety of workplace issues. Since 2009, when the hospital launched its new vision and strategy, employee engagement scores from the annual Employee Experience Survey have risen dramatically – and now exceed Ontario Hospital Association levels.

To see how we were doing in terms of workplace diversity, three questions were added to the survey in 2012. The results have been highly positive. In last year’s survey, 81 per cent of employees felt their supervisors treated them fairly regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, age, aboriginal status, sexual orientation or disability, and 84 per cent said their department was welcoming and inclusive. In addition, more than two-thirds of employees felt they had the opportunity to advance, regardless of their diverse background.

Diversity Education Builds Global Community

Learning opportunities come in many dynamic forms at The Scarborough Hospital, especially when the topic supports education around equity, diversity and inclusion.

In 2010, we hosted a ground-breaking speaker series to create an environment of inclusion. “Embracing Diversity through Personal Journeys” featured five hospital staff members who shared their personal stories on gender, physical disabilities, sexual orientation, religion and ageism. They each talked about one dimension of their identity and the stereotypes and misconceptions they have faced as a result. These sessions were a transformative learning experience for staff and resulted in a powerful shift in staff empathy and understanding of differences.

The speaker series was just one of several programs in our educational curriculum over the last five years.

Within the hospital’s Leadership Development program, management staff are provided with mandatory training on how to lead a diverse workforce and become bias-aware. Other examples include the workshop “Valuing Our Global Patient Community”, which helped clinicians understand how social determinants of health affect some groups adversely, and the sister workshop entitled “Valuing Our Global Staff Community”, which taught staff how to foster an inclusive workplace. In addition, a core element of the orientation for new employees is understanding the way in which we provide care to a global community.

In 2012, staff were also provided extensive training sessions to understand the challenges faced by individuals who are visually or hearing impaired. In “Understanding Vision Loss,” representatives from the Canadian National Institute for the Blind tested attendees’ abilities to navigate their surroundings wearing special eyewear that mimics conditions like glaucoma and muscular degeneration. In “Understanding Hearing Loss,” the Canadian Hearing Society discussed the experience of people who are deaf, deafened and hard of hearing. In both of these workshops, participants gained knowledge of communications strategies, the availability of assistive devices and sign language interpretation available at the hospital.

The workshops were part of our Annual Accessibility Plan, which aims to create a barrier-free environment for patients and staff.

Research Aims to Inform and Improve the Patient Experience

The Scarborough Hospital has engaged in a number of academic research studies to help us better understand how to deliver care to a diverse community. Our patient population has been a fertile ground for research in the areas of health disparities and patient care.

Since 2010, we have included questions on diversity in our Patient Satisfaction Surveys. Key health equity questions were also included to allow us to better identify barriers patients encounter when accessing our services. These surveys go to patients post-discharge and have helped us develop programs to improve care.

To probe more deeply about what matters most to our patients, we conducted an innovative research study called “Understanding Patient Satisfaction: Expectations, Experience, and Implications”. Eighteen patients, roughly half of whom were non-English speakers, participated in videotaped interviews on each facet of patient-centred care. The results identified which areas were of higher concern to patients, and how the hospital was rated. The patient stories provided transformative learning for staff in how to enrich the patient experience.

As well, our Mental Health program has implemented anti-stigma training around mental illness that is being delivered to key areas within the hospital, including Patient Registration and the Emergency Departments.

These many initiatives have allowed us to build organizational capacity to support an inclusive and welcoming environment for patients, staff and community.

Additionally, we have partnered with a number of post-secondary institutions including Ryerson University and the University of Toronto on research around delivering care to a diverse population. As well, our partnership with the Heart and Stroke Foundation led to a seminal study on the “Journey of Recovery of Chinese Ontarians Living with Heart Disease or Stroke.”
Since 2010, The Scarborough Hospital has led and participated in more than 1,000 community outreach and engagement activities to help our community better understand their health care options, navigate services and provide input on hospital programs and service delivery.

"We want to build knowledge capacity in our community, so that everyone feels empowered to access appropriate health care and provide input on services," said Waheeda Rahman, Director of Organizational Development and Diversity at The Scarborough Hospital.

While we have long been a leader in engaging the local community and building partnerships, we have enhanced our focus over the last five years to support greater participation and inclusion of our diverse community on issues that impact health equity and access to care.

To achieve this goal, we have worked with a wide variety of partners, including faith-based groups, women’s organizations, ethnocultural community organizations, newcomer agencies and other health agencies to understand and address relevant issues in our global community.

“Our Scarborough population is both diverse and vulnerable,” said Waheeda. “We are committed to reducing health disparities and providing coordinated care. Community engagement is an essential part of this.”

Located on the ground floor of the General campus, the Centre is staffed by volunteers – some of them internationally trained professionals seeking Canadian health care experience – and representatives from 14 Scarborough community agencies. Visitors can drop in, sit with agency staff and learn about their services. They can also attend workshops twice a month on subjects like patients’ rights and obligations, elder abuse, dementia, suicide prevention, finding appropriate housing, employment and diabetes management.

Lee Soda, Executive Director of Agincourt Community Services, explains why her organization partners with the Centre. “It doesn’t matter how many years you’ve been in the community – we’ve been here 40 years – people don’t know you unless they need you. The Global Community Resource Centre has been great for having people access what we do.”
Resource Guide Helps Community Navigate Services
Scarborough is home to an incredible array of health and social services. When staff at The Scarborough Hospital need to make a patient referral, they pick up our Community Resource Guide to help them find the right linkages.

Sickle Cell Protocol Meets Urgent Community Need
In the past, a number of barriers prevented patients with sickle cell disease from getting the immediate treatment they needed to stop the sickle cycle and their tremendous pain. Thanks to a community partnership with TAIBU Community Health Centre, a new Sickle Cell Crisis Protocol is helping patients to secure much faster care in the Emergency Department.

“Community Partnership Improves Service for Victims of Sexual Assault
Making the best use of each organization’s expertise, The Scarborough Hospital and Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities (SCHC) are ensuring that victims of sexual assault and domestic violence get the right treatment in the most helpful location.

The Spiritual and Religious Care department shares a strong alliance with local faith communities, helping the hospital deliver faith-sensitive services appropriate to each patient’s needs.

Removing Access Barriers
The Scarborough Hospital strives at all times to respect the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. In 2003, we were one of the first to establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC). The objective of the AAC is to create a barrier-free environment that ensures people with disabilities have equitable opportunities in accessing the hospital. The AAC is comprised of patients with disabilities, community members, hospital staff and members from community agencies like the Canadian Hearing Society and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

Spiritual and Religious Partnerships Serve Multi-Faith Patient Community
The Spiritual and Religious Care department shares a strong alliance with local faith communities, helping the hospital deliver faith-sensitive services appropriate to each patient’s needs.

When a matter arises related to a specific faith or religious group, our On-Call Clergy program ensures that the appropriate faith leader is available to assist. The department’s Lay Spiritual Caregiver Education program helps train community members who wish to provide spiritual or religious support at the bedside. With the successful completion of the training, lay volunteers deliver 6,000 patient visits each year.
Teaching Best Practices to the Global Community

Through international clinical partnerships, The Scarborough Hospital is providing the best health care to a global community—right around the world. Over the last three years, a variety of delegations have travelled to the hospital to learn about specialized medical techniques, best practices and how we serve our diverse population.

The Scarborough Hospital’s IV Team hosted clinicians from Mexico City in September 2011. The delegation was here to learn how we successfully implemented a bedside nurse-inserted PICC (peripherally inserted central catheters) program. The Mexican physicians were beginning an IV team at their hospital and were interested in using PICC to help minimize morbidity and mortality.

Five Chilean surgeons arrived in February 2012 to observe Orthopaedic Surgeon Dr. Jim Rathbun perform an innovative knee procedure: the Oxford domed lateral partial knee technique. For the surgeons, the demonstration was an opportunity to learn this specialized procedure from one of the world’s leading experts.

Health care professionals from Tianjin, China visited in May 2012 to tour the hospital and learn more about our Maternal Newborn and Child Care program, Nutrition and Food Services, and diversity initiatives. They were so impressed with the hospital’s programs, which have benefited many patients originally from Tianjin, that they expressed interest in a future partnership.

Over a three-month period from March to May 2014, we welcomed two groups of nurses from Hong Kong who participated in an education and clinical observation program developed by our acclaimed Regional Nephrology program. The nurses spent several weeks learning nephrology care delivery and maintenance across the health care system.

Improving the Health Literacy of Newcomers

Research has shown that newcomers experience the “healthy immigrant effect”: they arrive in Canada healthy, but the stresses of settlement decrease their health over time. To help this extremely vulnerable population, we work closely with newcomer agencies and government organizations to help them learn where and how to navigate the health care system.

Assisting the Community of Internationally Educated Professionals

In June 2014, we held an innovative one-day conference to provide Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs) with an opportunity to explore career options in health care. #worldforce Day was developed as part of “Code:Career”, a comprehensive, first-of-its-kind career program launched by the hospital earlier in the year. The #worldforce Day component establishes vital connections between the hospital, skilled professionals and post-secondary academic institutions.

A Proud Partner with Community Agencies

Patient care and improved outcomes are greatly enhanced by our partnerships with valuable community agencies in Scarborough. These agencies offer a wide range of programs in the areas of employment, mental health, newcomer settlement, seniors’ and women’s health, as well as children and youth services. We would like to acknowledge a few of our partners:

- Alzheimer Society of Toronto
- Agincourt Community Services Association
- Aisling Discoveries
- Carefirst Seniors and Community Services
- Catholic Crosscultural Services (CCS)
- Centre for Immigrant and Community Services
- Community Care Access Centre (CCAC)
- Diversity Midwives
- Goodwill Employment Services
- Hong Fook Connecting Health Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic
- Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities
- Settlement Assistance and Family Support Services
- St. Paul’s L’Amoreaux Centre
- TAIBU Community Health Centre
- Toronto Public Health
- TransCare Community Support Services
- Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care

A few of our activities include offering hospital tours to groups of new Canadians, taking part in Newcomer Health Fairs and participating in the Local Immigrant Partnership that supports the coordination of care among agencies. We also seek the input of newcomers into our programs. Given the significant number of newcomers living in Scarborough, opportunities to increase health literacy are essential in order to give everyone in our community a healthy start.

It is well known that skilled professionals face challenges and barriers to finding work in their chosen fields when they come to Canada. We actively recruit IEPs as volunteers, forging a career pathway to permanent employment. In addition, we have developed “Career Compass”, a resource that helps IEPs, as well as all staff, learn about different clinical and non-clinical opportunities within health care.

Our staff have also spoken at universities, colleges and conferences on topics related to IEPs, including communication skills, opportunities within health care and workplace norms.
Living the Vision at The Scarborough Hospital:

For a hospital, the most important thing we can provide is excellent health care – everything starts there. We then need to ensure that the health care provided is understanding and sensitive to the worldwide ethnic and cultural concerns and languages of our patients and community. It is then, and only then, that we can fulfill our mission of providing an excellent patient experience that meets the unique needs of each and every patient.

– Stephen Smith, Past Chair, The Scarborough Hospital Board of Directors

I find The Scarborough Hospital to be a very welcoming environment where patients and staff alike are in lifted-up spirit and quite cheerful. With its strategic location in the middle of a diversified community, we see people from all walks of life filled with hope and enthusiasm, giving the hospital a true picture of a global community.

– Geta Demisse, Outreach/Community Engagement, Goodwill Industries of Toronto, Eastern, Central and Northern Ontario

I am much more comfortable using the hospital, given that my beliefs are represented in the services. The hospital has gone above and beyond providing the best health care for diverse patients.

– Saba Khan, Patient

The Scarborough Hospital recognizes that each patient is different in regards to his/her culture, language, ethnicity and beliefs, but in the end the needs of all patients are similar. That is to say, everyone expects to receive high quality services delivered with respect and dignity.

– Dr. Kazi Hoque, Executive Director, Settlement Assistance and Family Support Services

As co-op students, we really appreciated the opportunity to do our placement in such a diverse environment. We have witnessed the efforts of all employees and volunteers to provide excellent patient care and useful information to them and their families.

– Iqra Chishti and William Hanna, Volunteers at The Scarborough Hospital

The Scarborough Hospital is a model health care system; it means having access to quality health care across populations and providing excellence and extraordinary service to communities in Scarborough.

– Mariya Rajab, Settlement Worker, CCS

Diversity at The Scarborough Hospital means:
1. My identity will be respected while receiving quality health care;
2. The hospital will be globally aware and equip their staff to respond in a skilled and knowledgeable way, which is respectful and inclusive;
3. Being a global health care provider that believes in equity;
4. The ability to provide a distinctive health care experience for the patient;
5. Collaborators in our health care.

– Varsha Patel, Community Member

What it means to our stakeholders

For me, it means understanding the meaning of health, wellness and illness as perceived by different members of our community. Improved understanding enhances our ability to partner with our patients, families, staff and physicians to provide the best approach for the individual patient at the specific time in their lives.

– Rhonda Seidman-Carlson, Vice President, Interprofessional Practice/Chief Nursing Executive at The Scarborough Hospital

Achieving our vision starts with building a strong, enlightened and diverse workforce that works in partnership with our stakeholders, rather than making assumptions about what their needs might be.

– Carol Stevenson, Organization Development Specialist at The Scarborough Hospital

As a Community Health Centre established to serve the Black community across the GTA and all Malvern residents, I can attest to The Scarborough Hospital’s strong involvement and responsiveness to the community needs.

– Liben Gebremikael, Executive Director, TAIBU Community Health Centre

With our aging and diverse population, we ensure excellence and commitment to high standards of quality and safety in order to provide the best experience and patient-centered care. Through our strong innovations, integrity, leadership, respect, communication and collaboration, we are dedicated to providing exceptional health care to all of our patients, families, visitors and the community.

– Natalie Quan, Risk Management Compliance Lead at The Scarborough Hospital