

Hi. Thank you for attending this inaugural Town Hall meeting for the new Windsor Regional Hospital.

Initially I want to thank Ken Deane and the whole team at Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare for their friendship, partnership and leadership during this realignment process.

Their commitment to putting the patient first and our community at the center of this realignment process is laudable.

I look forward to the renewed relationship with Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare going forward. The benefits for our patients, families and staff are limitless.

I will share a little bit about myself for those of you who do not know me that well.

I was born at the Ouellette site. I was initially raised in west Windsor until grade school.

I then moved to the former Anderdon Township on the sixth concession and attended St. Joseph's Grade School in River Canard.

I attended General Amherst High School in Amherstburg.

I went to high school and graduated High School with an amazing person, Lori Dupont. Lori will always have a special place in my heart.

I have been married for over 20 years to the most beautiful person in the world, my wife, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth and I are the proud parents to a 13-year-old son, Maxim.

My parents live next door to us in Amherstburg. They keep me centered and grounded and remind me daily who the most important person is – each and every patient we serve.

I was honoured to be appointed CEO of Windsor Regional Hospital 6 years ago and doubly honoured to be CEO of the realigned Windsor Regional Hospital.

The challenges facing us as a result of the downturn of our local, provincial, national, international and worldwide economy have been dramatic. Unfortunately, we have possibly not seen the worst yet.

As a result of this realignment, we are in a stronger position to address these issues head on with a greater ability to absorb and adjust to them.

When I became CEO of Windsor Regional Hospital in 2008, we were not doing that well financially or clinically.

In fact we had only one balanced budget in the previous 10 years, and to tell you the truth, we did not know how we were doing clinically because we never measured or tracked our performance.

We were all working hard but it seemed like we were treading water.

When people asked where we worked, we mumbled the response or just said – I work in healthcare.

We then stopped. We were tired of being tired and not seeing any positive concrete or sustained results that benefited our patients. In fact it was the news of having a hospitalized standardized mortality ratio of 149 – 100 being the target – that made our heads snap back. That number indicated that patients attending our hospital were more likely to pass away from an illness rather than walk out of our hospital.

We took a long hard look in the mirror and agreed to pull our sleeves up and change.

We then decided we needed to do things differently. It all started with the creation of a strategic plan.

A plan – not created by me and a few others in a back room– but hundreds of front line staff.

At the end of the day the front line staff created a vision – outstanding care ...no exceptions!

We collectively live and breath that vision today.

Any and all successes can be tied back to the creation of the strategic plan and the mantra – if **you** can't **measure** it, **you** can't **manage** it.

Since then Windsor Regional Hospital has had a balanced budget for five straight years and has been recognized locally, nationally and internationally for its clinical best practices.

Best of all – when asked – team members are proud to say I work at Windsor Regional Hospital.

I can tell you this.

Living in this community I have always been impressed with the clinical expertise of the front line staff at the Ouellette Campus.

It is a gem for our community and Province.

In fact it is a diamond in the rough.

It is now time to polish that diamond and show it off to the world. When I say world, I mean world.

This realignment and consolidation of all acute care services under one organization now gives us that opportunity.

We are now the third largest non-academic hospital in the province of Ontario.

Hanging in my office is a plaque – it states:

If a man can write a better book, preach a better sermon, or make a better mouse trap, than his neighbor, though he builds his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his door.

This was the same plaque that hung in the offices of two brothers who created one of the best healthcare systems in the world in a town that is home to only 100,000 people in the middle of nowhere – Rochester, Minnesota.

It hung in the offices of the Mayo brothers who created the Mayo Clinic. It inspired them to create the Mayo Clinic.

If they could do that in Rochester Minnesota with a population of 100,000, we can surely do it in Windsor – with a population twice that size.

Getting to where we want to get to though will take some effort and some work by all of us. But from what I see with my own eyes, you are more than capable of getting there.

We need not follow where the path may lead. We need to go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.

How do we get there?

Soon we will be embarking on a process to standardize and optimize our operations between the two Campuses.

This will include all of you.

This is not about picking what is being done at Ouellette and implementing at Met or vice versa.

This is not a time to allow our egos to get in the way.

This is about bringing in best practices from across the world and implementing them in a standardized fashion at both campuses. Maybe we are already at a best practice. If so, great. Then we implement that across both campuses.

We need to ask the following program by program.

Who is doing this the best in the world?

We need to talk to them and visit them.

We then need to bring the best practices back to Windsor Regional Hospital and implement them in a standardized fashion at both Campuses.

This will not only result in us being Canada's Mayo Clinic but drive the design of the new state-of-the-art acute care hospital.

Instead of designing a new facility and having our operations modified to fit within that facility we are going to create best practice operations and have those operations design the facility we need and our community deserves. A facility built not for just 2013 but for 2023, 2033, 2043.

Team members from both Campuses have been working all summer on retaining the support and developing a process to start this standardization and optimization project. This project will begin before the end of this year and continue in earnest into next year and beyond.

Why will it be successful?

It will be successful because you will be directly involved in the process each step of the way. Similar to the creation of Windsor Regional Hospital's strategic plan, its success lies in the fact that it will be created by each and every one of you.

Expect to hear more about this standardization and optimization project moving forward and someone tapping you on the shoulder to participate.

Before we begin this standardization project, I recognize there is some nervousness but also excitement. In order to use this positive energy, each of the 21 programs from across both Campuses developed three – what we term low hanging fruit – that we can implement at both Campuses – that front line staff have asked for as generally simple concepts that can help have a positive impact on patient or staff satisfaction or both.

At the end of today these items will be posted on the Internet site with a link for easy access.

This is not our first and last Town Hall meeting. There will be more along with other forms of communication. I know the value of communication. In my opinion you cannot communicate enough. If you are thinking of asking me or telling me something, err on the side of asking me or telling me. Never err on the side of – he is too busy I will not ask or tell him now.

In times of change, rumors can become legend. If you have a question or hear something that you wish to confirm, call me, email me or stop me in the hall and ask. We do not have time for rumors.

Our patients deserve that we do not spread rumors or be distracted by rumors. Rumors are for the school yard. We are above that.

On a side note, for the staff at Ouellette: You currently have to swipe in with Kronos and swipe out each and every day. That will continue because it drives payroll and is a good system that we will be looking at system wide shortly.

One thing that will change with the system is the penalty for being one minute late or one minute leaving early and being deducted 15 minutes pay. That will be eliminated.

You are all professionals. You are accountable to yourself and your colleagues. I know we all have issues in our lives that arise where we have to lean on a fellow colleague to stay later for us or vice versa.

However, please continue to swipe in and out with Kronos because, if you do not, you will not get paid.

I am confident you will stand by me, work with me and work towards creating a world recognized health care system in Windsor for the benefit of our community and generations to come.

I promise to give you all I have.

I will never ask you to do something I would not do first. And I will support you each and every step of the way.

The future we see is the future we will get.

I leave you with a video we assembled with some team members from across both Campuses.

This video is meant to focus our way moving forward and how we need to approach the past, present and future.

I want to thank those in advance who had a hand in making this video.

After the video I can take questions from anyone.

In addition I will be posting a video and written script of this Town Hall meeting along with the video we are about to watch. There will be a link where you can ask me any question you may have and I will respond and send your question, on a no names basis, to everyone, with my answer.

Please enjoy this video.