



From the Editor-in-Chief

Collaboration has surfaced as an important theme in this issue of *Hospital Quarterly*. We are pleased to present two distinct strategies to bring together different organizations and providers.

Community and remote hospitals will find the paper by Jeffrey Weatherill of interest. A valuable model for rural healthcare organizations to reach out and develop academic and research partnerships with health sciences centres is described – a partnership meant to address many challenges and opportunities unique to rural medicine. Well worth reading.

The second paper discusses collaboration between primary care physicians and psychiatrists to deliver shared mental healthcare. Thomas Ungar and Sarah Jarman examine ways and means to foster and implement a collaborative approach at North York General Hospital. Don Schurman from Edmonton notes that the North York initiative makes an important contribution to our understanding of the challenge that must be met to achieve the real benefits of shared care.

These contributions present innovative strategies for hospitals and other healthcare providers and may have important policy considerations for both provincial and federal governments.

I am very pleased that we are publishing the consumer perspective as presented by Valerie McDonald. A young mother faced with serious challenges in her family, writes — in a crisp and forthright manner — about the best and the worst that the system presented her and probably many other patients and families across the country. Valerie not only agreed to write about her experiences but also to share these with her hospital and with the Ontario Hospital Association. She presents suggestions for many departments to enhance the patient/parent experience including medical, nursing, information and communications.

Michele Jordan and Neil Stuart appropriately set out critical points for mergers to succeed. These are also reflected in our summary conference report highlighting lessons learned by 25 Canadian CEO's — a column prepared by veteran health reporter Jane Coutts working from her new office at the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation.

This issue also includes an article about the Disney Institute in Orlando, Florida. This is a little different for *Hospital Quarterly*. However, we hope you will find Disney's leadership, management and service strategies relevant to healthcare, and wanted you to take a look at what they offer. As healthcare managers in Canada strive to improve the patient experience maybe there are lessons to be learned from Disney's consumer-focused approach.

I would like again to acknowledge the members of the editorial board who provide ongoing advice and commentary, review articles and refine our editorial program. Also our special editors, Drs. Robert Filler, Michael Guerriere and Earl Berger, have been instrumental in developing our “next” series as we present factors that will influence the near future of healthcare. These editors and all of our authors make an important contribution to the body of knowledge that offers an authoritative source for healthcare managers and policy makers. Thank you.

Peggy Leatt, Ph.D.