



## **President's Report September 2020**

As President of the York Hills Board of Directors, I send my well wishes to the organization and my sincere thanks and gratitude from myself and the Board members for an unprecedented and successful year. With such extraordinary change in growing our organization from the merger in 2019 to COVID-19, our organization has met these challenges that have served as tectonic shifts in your approach in serving the children and families that rely on your services. You have done superb work, we recognize and congratulate you in your tireless efforts in serving our community. Our Board remains committed to you, this past year and moving into 2021. In addition to myself, our dedicated Board includes Richard Housen (Vice-President), Mike Shulman (Treasurer), Elaine Forrester, Basil Mwawasi, Eleanor Wint, Gleb Matushansky (Secretary), Victoria Tundo, Rajiv Kutty, and Peter Milovanovic. I wish to thank them for their leadership throughout this past year as seasoned and new members to the Board.

I would like to commend the leadership of York Hills, and particularly Dean Rokos as CEO. Dean has worked tirelessly with you, myself and the Board of Directors in ensuring that client service and staff safety above all has been maintained. We commend him and you for adhering to the public health practices that have disrupted your professional obligations whether you were working from home or continuing your dedicated work in our offices. Of course, the pandemic has had a significant impact on our personal lives, and the balancing of the stressors of our work and family obligations has been difficult. The Board acknowledges these stressors and thank you for maintaining your work with our community. Certainly, recognizing the harms associated with the pandemic in association with mental health and well-being is well documented, and you play an insurmountable role in our community in assisting children and families in working through this period in your evidence informed practice. Moving into the fall, our continuing diligence, observation of and maintenance of public health requirements will be even more important as we will be battling COVID-19 and our annual influenza season simultaneously.

I am pleased to share that the Board, like you, remains a strong, united, and dedicated group. Despite the limitations of the pandemic, the Board has taken full advantage of virtual options to meet on a monthly basis since March (and in-person in January and February). This virtual space has allowed the Board to maintain communication, review key indicators of the Agency's performance such as the Balanced Score Card, and provide support to you through Dean in any way that we can. The Board remains

encouraged and thankful to you in observing increasing service numbers, programs and community partnerships when the community needed it most. Dean's weekly message provide comfort to the Board in reaffirming your commitment to the Agency and our key benchmarks, and we are grateful to see your feedback to these updates and of course Dean's efforts in sharing these with us.

The Board has added 3 new members since last September through the leadership of the Governance committee. The new members bring finance, education and legal backgrounds that have assisted the Board significantly in adding to our existing competencies. The Board's skill sets have been particularly valuable as we venture towards the development of an agency strategic plan, the anti-oppressive agency restructure, and supporting the maintenance and building of relationships with Georgina Island and the First Nations community. Certainly, it has been an all-hands and skills sets on deck approach, and the Board, through its meetings and finance and governance committees has been fully engaged in assistance in the governance of York Hills. Speaking of the committees, the Finance Committee has met regularly in ensuring and assisting in the financial health and sustainability of the agency. With additional support through the Provincial government and our grants, we remain in stable financial status with the ability to further support and grow our agency moving into 2021. With respect to the Governance Committee, in addition to leading the recruitment of new Board members, the committee has met frequently in ensuring that our policies remain adhered to and are adjusted to align with our agency direction and are relevant in maintaining our fiduciary responsibility to the Agency.

The Board remains grateful to the Ministry of Health and the Provincial Government in assisting the Board and Agency through the transition of the Agency and in their leadership through the first wave of the pandemic. Further, the Board is thankful to CMHO in offering their assistance to the Board, in particular over the past 6 months in supporting the Board with training opportunities along with their roles in advocating and lobbying for mental health agencies in the Province and our children and families.

On behalf of our Board members, we wish to extend our thanks to your dedication to your work in the community. We commit to our dedication to you in assisting with the continued growth of the agency and our continued success for the remainder of 2020 and moving into 2021.

Sincerely;

Steven Rebellato  
President, York Hills Centre for Children, Youth and Families