



## **Chair's Report to the Members at the Annual General Meeting of June 21, 2022**

If one were obliged to describe the past fiscal year at The Vitanova Foundation in one sentence, my choice would be "We've rebounded, and then some"! Let me explain. When the fiscal year 2021-2022 started, COVID-19 was a little more than a year old. With the exception of a few clients still living on-site, all other services--- family support, aftercare, daily groups, individual counselling, and so on---were being delivered virtually. At that same point in time, we launched a new three-year strategic plan, now 15 months old, with much progress to report about each of the strategic priorities it features:

*The first such priority is to reflect the community we serve*, and the reason is simple. The community we serve today is not the same community we first served when Vitanova began 35 year ago. By better reflecting whom we serve, we are better placed to solicit that community's on-going moral, reputational and financial support--- supports that have always sustained Vitanova. To that end, four new employees were hired over the past year, each of whom is contributing to our increasingly diverse staff complement.

*Our second priority is to be a charity of exceptional reputation.* To date we have been accredited twice by the Canadian Centre for Accreditation. In addition, we have applied for accreditation by a second agency, Imagine Canada (which focuses on charities in particular) and expect to meet with success later this year. As well, we are the only agency in York Region receiving bed-based funding for addiction and mental health. In addition, we co-lead a six-agency collaboration in the delivery of day treatment programming to a much-underserved community---the west end of the former City of North York, while being a member of the Western York Region Ontario Health Team.

*To be financially secure, our third strategic priority,* we have been successful on a number of fronts. Donations and fundraising proceeds bounced back by nearly 80% over the previous year. More importantly, our annualized operational funding from the Ministry of Health has been increased by nearly 50%---three times the target for such increased funding in our current strategic plan, and achieved two years ahead of schedule.

*In respect of our next priority, to offer high quality programs supported by superior operational functioning,* (1) the three directors who form the board's Quality and Risk Committee and all four senior managers completed a wide-ranging risk assessment exercise recommended by our insurers (HIROC), covering both clinical and operational areas, (2) two senior managers received in-depth training over nine months in quality improvement strategies applicable in both areas, and (3) our bookkeeping/accounting and information technology operations have been restructured to better reflect the expectations of our funders.

*To improve succession processes, at the board level,* we have submitted for your approval three amendments to the by-law which (1) detail the plan to bring our board into conformity with the new *Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act*, (2) enhance board continuity despite shorter terms of service, and (3) ensure officer succession is fully considered in the run up to future annual general meetings.

I close with a sincere thank you to our executive director, Cindy Cepparo, and her entire team, all of whom each day exhibit their unfailing dedication to our clients, for whose benefit Vitanova was created 35 years ago.

Respectfully submitted,

*A. J. Grando*

Chair