



2025 Annual Report

Almonte, Beckwith, and Carleton Place

THE OTTAWA VALLEY FAMILY HEALTH TEAM (OVFHT)

One Team. 3 Communities. Comprehensive Rural Care, Close to Home.

The Ottawa Valley Family Health Team (OVFHT) brings together a diverse group of healthcare professionals - physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, psychotherapists, dietitians, pharmacists and administrative staff - all working together to provide high- quality, patient-centered primary care.

Since its formation in 2012, OVFHT has focused on improving access to care, enhancing chronic disease management, promoting health and wellness, and supporting patients through every stage of life. With an emphasis on teamwork and collaboration, OVFHT ensures patients receive the right care, at the right time, by the right provider. We will continue with this vision as we expand and move into our second location in fall of 2025.

Rooted in the values of community, compassion and continuous improvement, OVFHT is proud to serve residents of Lanark County - strengthening rural health through collaboration and innovation.

**Number of Rostered
Patients**
(as of March 31, 2025)

29,500

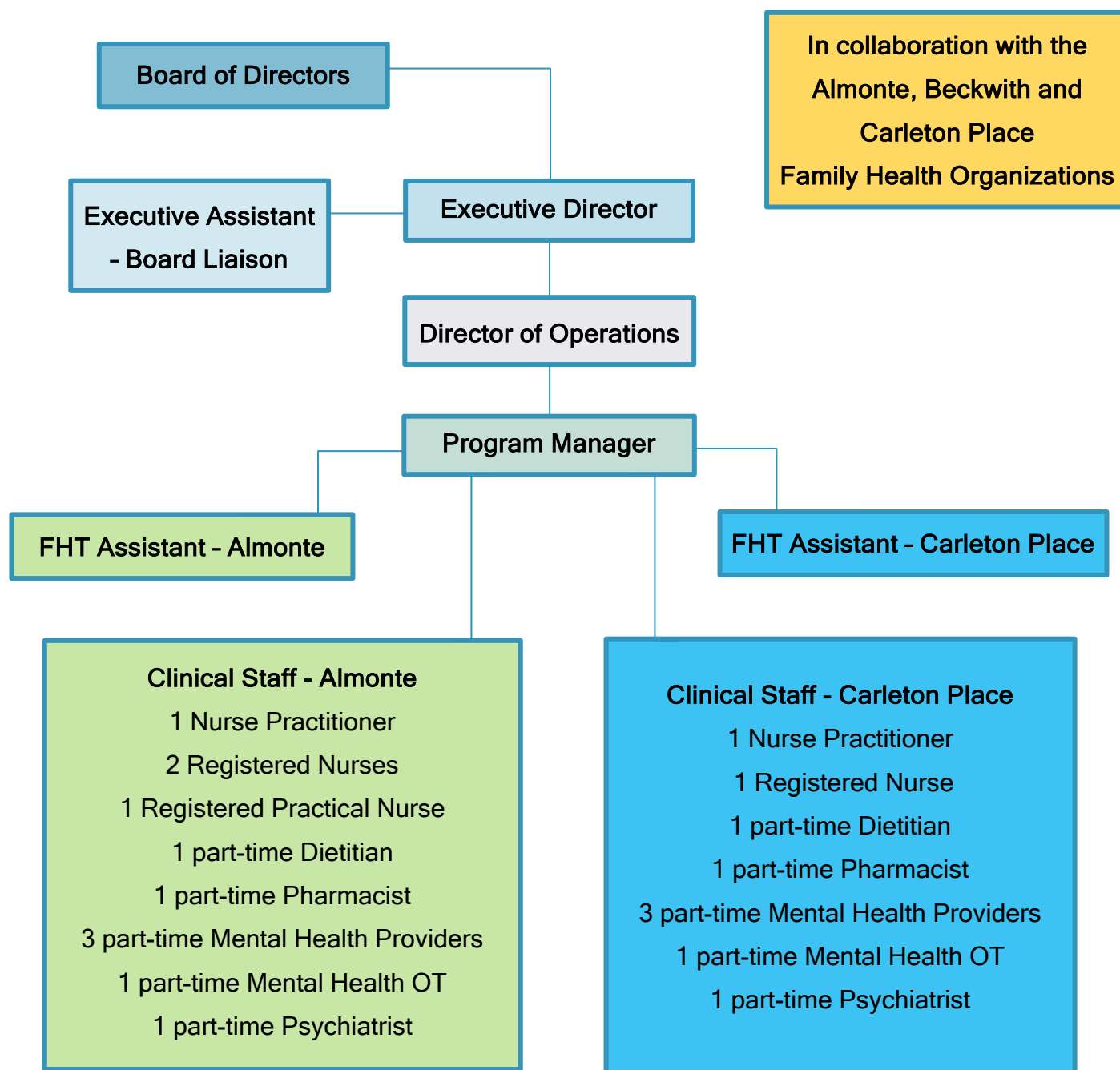
Number Physicians
*(Almonte, Beckwith,
Carleton Place FHOs)*

29

**Total number
primary care visits**
(by physicians)

over 70,000

FHT FUNDED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Current and future funding proposals will prioritize the recruitment of clinicians and support staff to strengthen **patient attachment** to primary care teams and enhance care coordination. Proposed roles may include nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nursing staff, and collaboration with the community paramedicine program.

BY THE NUMBERS (April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025)

Bringing together a variety of healthcare providers to coordinate the highest possible quality of care for patients by delivering programs and services that meet the needs of the communities.

By provider

Appointments

Nurse Practitioners

3,212

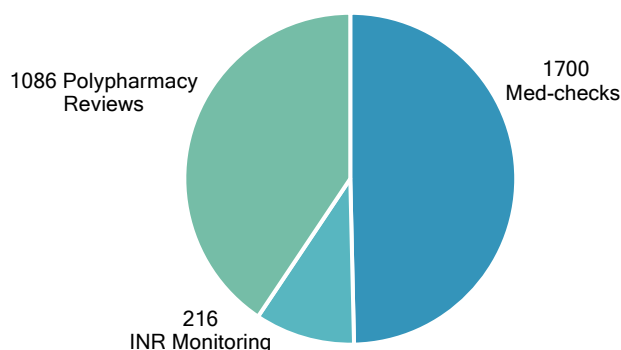
Dietitian

323

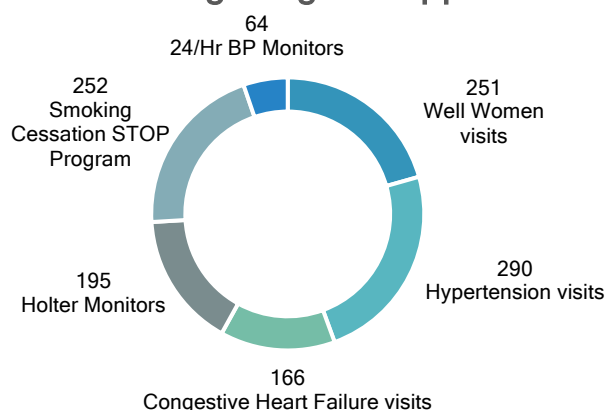
Mental Health Providers

1,259

Pharmacist Encounters



Nursing Program Appointments



Services offered

Appointments

Flu Shots Given

over 580

Diabetes Management

2,137

RPN Triage Calls

1,972

Memory Clinic

66

Footcare

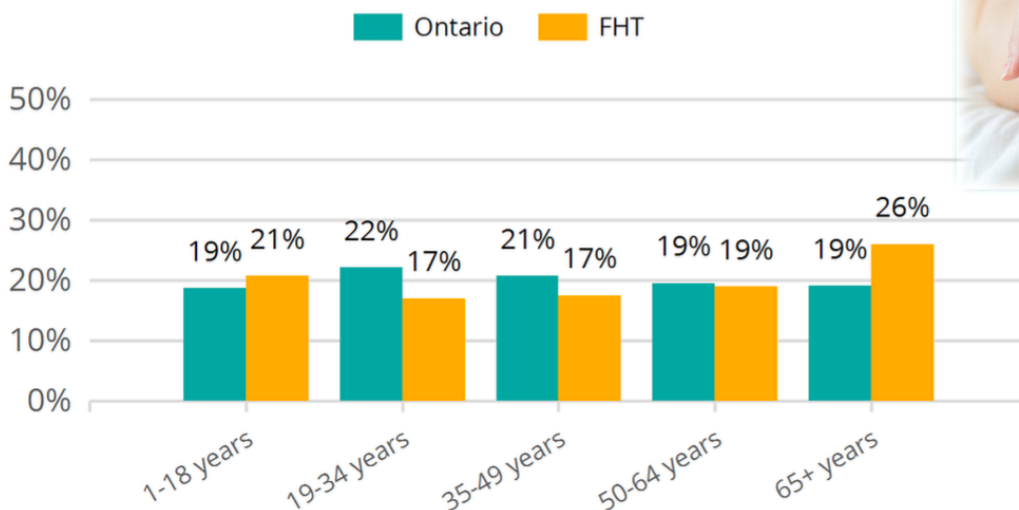
593

**Over 14,000 patient encounters/appointments
by FHT clinicians**

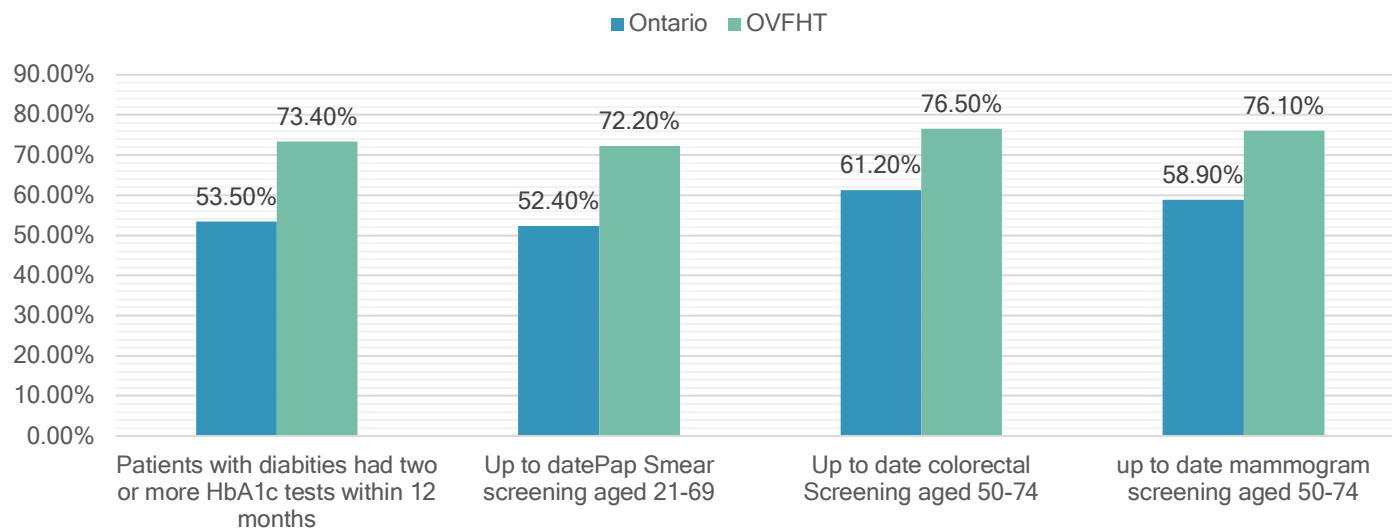
OVFHT COMPARED TO ONTARIO

(Source - MyPractice - Primary Care Report - Date up to September 30, 2024)

Percentage of Your Patients By Age Cohort



Diabetes & Cancer Screening Comparison



HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2024/2025

Connecting Our Communities

Creation of the “Community Connection” Newsletter



Now with **15 editions and counting**, the “Community Connections” newsletter continues to share key updates, health education, and community outreach highlights across the community.

Community Needs Assessments

Mental Health Community Needs Assessment in early 2024

Led to the **reimaging** of our Mental Health Team, ensuring services are aligned with local needs.

- Recruitment of two **Registered Psychotherapists**, a **Mental Health Occupational Therapist** and a **Clinical Supervisor** formed our team.
- Launched **new group programs**:
 - Coping Skills - October 2024
 - Introduction to Mindfulness - November 2024



2024 Healthcare Needs Assessment for the communities of Carleton Place and Beckwith

- Led by master’s students from Simon Fraser University
- Gathered insights from key stakeholders and residents in both Carleton Place and Beckwith communities to shape future programming and services, access to care, and equity in local healthcare services.

Funding Opportunity

With the support from all three Family Health Organization, OVFHT participated in a multi-organizational proposal in response to the **Interprofessional Primary Care Team’s (IPCT)** call for proposals that will focus on **increasing patient attachment and access to a primary care team** in the KOA (postal code) area.

The proposal, endorsed by the **Ottawa West Four Rivers Ontario Health Team**, was **submitted to Ontario Health for consideration**. There are 120 proposals and only 80 will be approved in this initial round. Successful proposals will be notified by summer 2025.

Another call for proposals is scheduled for September 2025.

Smart Tools, Better Care

Digital Innovation in Practice

- **AI Scribe**
Introduction of an AI scribe tool - **Mikata Health** - to streamline charting, reduce administrative burden, and spend **more time with patients**.
- **Online Booking with OCEAN**
Launched in Almonte, OCEAN simplifies appointment scheduling with physicians and nurse practitioners. More convenience. Less wait time.



New TEAMS focused on both locations

- **Quality Improvement Team** - ensuring that care is **safe, effective, patient-centered, and continuously improving**.
- **Program and Services Team** - will review current programs and looks ahead to create new programs and services - making sure they meet patient needs and are accessible, coordinated, and effective.

Dr. Laura Santos Joins Almonte's Memory Clinic Team

What is Memory Clinic? An interdisciplinary team including a **Registered Nurse, Occupational Therapist, Pharmacist, Physician, and First Link Care Navigator from the Alzheimer's Society**. Together, they assess needs, support safety and function, provide diagnoses, review medications, and connect individuals and caregivers to community resources – working as a team to develop personalized treatment plans and referrals.

Collaboration with Mississippi River Health Alliance

We strengthened our relationship with the new President & CEO of Mississippi River Health Alliance.

- collaborating on physician recruitment to improve local access to family physicians and specialists
- focusing on our shared commitment to patient-centered care



New Gender Affirming Care (GAC) Program

Led by our nurse practitioner, Krista Kennedy, is responding to the need for improved access to affirming care for trans patients in the region by expanding care locally and in other Ottawa Valley communities.

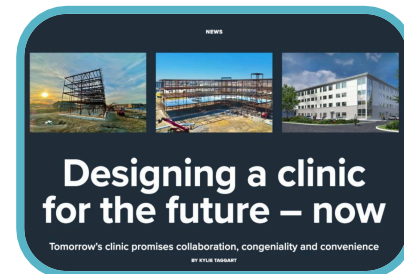
EXPANDING SERVICES AND GROWTH IN CARLETON PLACE

Featured article

Designing a clinic for the Future - Now

The Carleton Place Regional Health Hub was featured in The Medical Post for its innovative model of integrated, patient-first care.

Article by Kylie Taggart



Phases of Construction:



Highlights over the year - Road to the new building

Oversight Committee - work tirelessly behind the scenes sharing priorities, supporting collaboration, and ensuring accountability as we work towards integration in the new location. Members include leaders from the OVFHT and Carleton Place and Beckwith FHOs.

Workflow Committee was established to map out the patient journey through the clinic as well as roles of the support staff. The committee relies on physician, management and administrative input.

Q&A Town Hall - physician led all staff and physician meeting - to keep the conversation going, build relationships, buy-in and awareness. More sessions are scheduled before move in.

TOP 5 THINGS OUR PATIENTS SAY ABOUT US THROUGH OUR ANNUAL PATIENT ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

1. We create a welcoming, small-town feel

The warm greetings, familiarity, and genuine relationships make patients feel at home—even in a busy healthcare setting.

Would you recommend our services?



2. We lead with compassion—together

Our team works as one—kind, respectful, and deeply collaborative. From front desk to clinical care, patients feel the warmth of a united, professional team that truly has their back.

3. We deliver thorough, personalized care

Patients value in-depth assessments, thoughtful follow-up, and being included in decisions about their care.

4. We truly listen and care without judgment

Patients often say they feel heard, respected, and understood for the first time. Our providers build trust through compassion and non-judgmental care that can be truly life-changing.

5. We make care accessible

Same-day NP triage, virtual appointments, short wait times, and flexible scheduling ensure care is timely and patient-centered.



PATIENT QUOTES

***"To every team member,
"Thank you! This is what compassionate, high-quality care looks like, and you make it happen every day."***

***"You make me feel seen, heard and respected. You're not just providing healthcare – you're changing lives."
- a grateful patient***

RECOGNITION & RECRUITMENT

Honouring Physician Retirements

- **Dr. Scott Higham**

Retired in July 2024 after 43 years of service to the Carleton Place community. His practice was transitioned to **Dr. Kathryn Kipp**, who joined the team with enthusiasm and fresh perspective.



- **Dr. Graeme McKillop**

Concluded his 22-year career in Almonte in October 2024. We welcomed **Dr. Laura Santos**, who brings a strong commitment to patient centered care and community engagement.

- **Dr. Rob Courchene**

After 28 years serving Carleton Place patients, Dr. Courchene retired in March 2025. His practice is now in the capable hands of **Dr. Angus Pauls**, who has seamlessly joined the team.



Our commitment to strengthening our medical team continues through active ongoing physician recruitment, with focused efforts underway to fill key roles in both Almonte and Carleton Place.

- **In Almonte**, we are seeking permanent physicians for **two Family Health Organization (FHO) practices** currently supported by locum coverage.
- **In Carleton Place**, we are working to recruit **three net-new FHO physicians** to meet growing community needs and enhance access to primary care.

Leadership and Growth

At the **governance level**, new board members joined our **Board of Directors** this year, bringing diverse experience and fresh insight to support strong, forward-looking leadership. Our Board of Directors now has **six active community members**, along with one physician representation from both Almonte and Carleton Place.

Clinic Management

The Beckwith FHO successfully recruited a **Clinic Manager** for Carleton Place Location, strengthening site-level leadership and unity as we move into the new location.

HONOURING DEDICATION AND IMPACT

At OVFHT, we believe in recognizing the individuals who make a lasting impact on our patients, teams, and communities. In 2024-25, we proudly acknowledged **seven** of our team members in Almonte celebrating **5 years of service**. Congratulations to each of you and thank you for your continued commitment to exceptional care.

Each year, we take pride in recognizing team members who go above and beyond in the eyes of those who matter most – our patients. Through our patient engagement survey, several individuals were highlighted for their outstanding care, compassion, and commitment.

Dr. Melanie Fortune

“Dr. Fortune has been a life saver – literally. She is kind and considerate.”

“Amazing, super easy to talk to, and calm under pressure.”



Harriet Soudant, RN

“Harriet’s common-sense approach helped me understand and manage my health.”

“Outstanding rehab care, and always willing to go the extra mile.”

Karen Lytle, MOA

“Always smiling and remembers everything you say.”

“So helpful and caring – she ensures your concerns are taken care of.”

“The warm and welcoming face we’ve seen for years.”

Though this year’s staff appreciation recognition focused on our **Almonte location**, we look forward to expanding this celebration across both communities when the Carleton Place location opens and bring us all under one roof. These events give us an opportunity to connect as a team and recognize the dedication and commitment of our staff.



LOOKING AHEAD...2025/26 PRIORITIES

As we continue to grow and evolve, the year ahead brings exciting milestones and meaningful progress across the organization:

- **New Leadership**
Earlier this year, we successfully completed recruitment for a new Executive Director. We're pleased to welcome Ashley to our Team. Ashley will officially assume her role on July 7th as we begin this next chapter together.
- **Electronic Medical Record (EMR) Integration**
The Carleton Place and Beckwith Family Health Organizations will merge onto a unified EMR system in July 2025, supporting more seamless care delivery and collaboration.
- **Joint Programs & Services Team**
The newly integrated Programs & Services Team will hold its first meeting in July 2025, aligning care delivery and resource planning across sites.
- **NEST (Newborn and Early Postpartum Support Team) Program**
Continued development of the **NEST Program** will support unattached newborns and families in our community with a primary care provider, which will enhance early parenting and family wellness.
- **Expansion to the Carleton Place Regional Health Hub**
We anticipate moving into our new shared space at 22 Costello Drive, Carleton Place in September 2025, creating a centralized, collaborative environment.
- **Patient Engagement Survey**
A new wave of patient feedback will be collected in November 2025, ensuring our services reflect the evolving needs of those we serve.
- Continue to work with **Ottawa West Four Rivers Ontario Health Team** and **Primary Care Network** to coordinate **attachment of patients** to a primary care team including patients on the Health Care Connect waitlist (through new and expanded IPCTs).
- Continue our commitment to **promoting equity, inclusion, diversity, and anti-racism education** for all staff and providers, with the goal of creating a safe and inclusive environment for patients, partners and employees.
- **Strategic Planning Continuation**
Our strategic planning process will resume in January 2026, guiding long-term priorities and community-focused innovation.

A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Tanya Brydges, Acting Executive Director & Dr. Lawrie Ray, Chair, OVFHT Board of Directors

This year has been one of meaningful transition and forward momentum for the Ottawa Valley Family Health Team. While I've had the privilege of working alongside this dedicated and compassionate team for many years, stepping into the role of Acting Executive Director in January 2025 has offered a new perspective – one that has deepened my appreciation for the incredible people, partnerships, and potential within our organization.

In this role, I've also had the opportunity to engage more directly with our Board of Directors, and I'm grateful for their guidance, support, and commitment to community-based primary care. Our shared focus on collaboration and innovation has helped drive significant progress across our teams and clinics.

As we prepare to welcome our new Executive Director and continue this important work, I want to express my sincere thanks to the Board, our partners, and above all, the staff who have demonstrated resilience, compassion, and professionalism every step of the way. It has been an honour to serve in this role during such a pivotal year.

With Gratitude,




Tanya Brydges
Acting Executive Director
Ottawa Valley Family Health Team

Each year brings both change and opportunity – and this year, our focus was on transition, leadership, and laying the groundwork for the future. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to express deep appreciation to our entire OVFHT team for their resilience, compassion, and continued commitment to patient-centered care.

We extend special thanks to Tanya Brydges, who stepped into the Acting Executive Director role during a period of change with grace and strength. We also acknowledge the hard work of the Board and Hiring Committee in leading a thoughtful and values-driven recruitment process for our new Executive Director – a milestone that positions OVFHT for long-term success.

As I conclude my term as Chair, I'm proud of all we've accomplished together. While stepping away from the Board, I remain dedicated to the organization in my ongoing role as a physician and look forward to seeing OVFHT continue to grow and thrive in the years ahead.

Warmly,




Dr. Lawrie Ray
OVFHT Board Chair