Celebrating Five Years of Excellence in Vision Health

ANNUAL REPORT
2010 / 2011
vision, mission and values

VISION
To be a leader in a movement to transform health care in Ontario into a sustainable system that places the quality care of patients above all else.

MISSION
The Kensington Eye Institute is dedicated to exceeding our patients’ expectations by breaking new ground in healthcare delivery. In doing so, we are promoting an improved quality of life for all our patients.

CORE VALUES
The Kensington Eye Institute provides excellent ambulatory surgical care and strives to be the ambulatory surgery healthcare of choice. In fulfilling our mission and values, the following core values drive our work:

EXCELLENCE
We achieve excellence by creating a best practice environment through quality improvement, utilizing the most current technology and equipment, training eye care professionals for the future and sharing our expertise through national and international alliances.

RESPECT
We provide a patient friendly environment designed to address their specific needs and requirements of each individual we treat.

TEAMWORK
Teamwork is essential in all that we do. We have a team of professional personnel who are passionate about patient care and committed to continuously improving our services to patients. A spirit of collaboration and trust is evident among the medical staff, nursing staff and administrative staff.

The Kensington Eye Institute is a not-for-profit registered charitable organization, licensed under the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care as an Independent Health Facility (IHF).
It has been an incredible privilege for us to watch the Kensington Eye Institute grow over the past five years to become one of the largest cataract centres in Ontario and one of the leaders in the delivery of eye care in Canada. We are immensely proud of the ambitious journey we have embarked upon and we have much to celebrate.

Five years ago on January 9, 2006, the Kensington Eye Institute was licensed by the Ontario government to provide 6,700 cataract surgeries annually on an outpatient basis. Since our opening, we have performed over 36,550 cataract surgeries, trained over 30 University of Toronto ophthalmology residents, offered clinical practicum to 13 nursing students from Ryerson and initiated 15 research projects, 7 which are now completed.

Our Institute has increased its caseload to 7,200 patients a year without increasing our Ministry of Health operating funding. Patient comfort has been maximized by transporting patients in reclining chairs that fold into operating tables. With our healthcare model we are providing a high quality of care, fixing up much needed hospital operating room schedules for more complex eye related disorders and diseases and lessening the cost of cataract surgeries to our government.

Sharing the government’s vision to reduce the wait times for cataract surgery without reducing quality and proficient care, the Kensington Eye Institute continues to do innovative services in the most professional, efficient and cost-effective manner possible. The waiting period for cataract surgery in the Toronto area is now 127 days, 60 per cent less than the waiting time in 2005.

It has been an incredible privilege for us to watch the Kensington Eye Institute continue to deliver innovative services in the most professional, efficient and innovative manner. At the Kensington Eye Institute we are committed to advance technology. At the Kensington Eye Institute we are dedicated to ophthalmology education and research. With the baby boomer generation reaching retirement age, the next ten to fifteen years will see an increased demand for ophthalmologist surgeons and more clinical research will be needed to explore age-related eye treatments, improve equipment and advance technology. At the Kensington Eye Institute we are committed to residency education and we all feel that our residents succeed as great clinicians, academic leaders and researchers.

Along with providing exceptional patient-centred care, our Institute is dedicated to ophthalmology education and research. With the baby boomer generation reaching retirement age, the next ten to fifteen years will see an increased demand for ophthalmologist surgeons and more clinical research will be needed to explore age-related eye treatments, improve equipment and advance technology. At the Kensington Eye Institute we are committed to residency education and we all feel that our residents succeed as great clinicians, academic leaders and researchers.

Combining our philosophy of excellence in care with leading edge technology and world-renowned cataract surgeons, our successes have received national recognition. Our partnership with the University of Utah’s Moran Eye Center, one of the premier eye centres in the United States, allows us to share resources and expertise and participate in collaborative research initiatives.

We are proud of the achievements and accolades we have received over the past five years and we are enthusiastic about our next phase of eye care provision. In the report that follows you will find three themes woven throughout: quality of care, leaders in eye care and patient satisfaction. We invite you to take a few minutes to read our success stories which reflect our pride and commitment to quality patient care.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the generosity of the Kensington Foundation and the individual and collective commitment and innovative leadership of our Board of Directors. With their strategic thinking, planning and strong governance practices, we anticipate the future will be equally rewarding and gratifying.

On behalf of the board, we are also deeply indebted to our many friends, community partners and loyal staff whose ongoing support is pivotal in our delivery of innovative vision care, education, technology and research. Thank you for your ongoing trust and shared vision as we continue our journey together to provide you with the best possible vision care and enhance your rich and independent lives.

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Nick Torchetti

CEO
Brian McFarlane
“I feel like I’m amongst leaders every day I come to work at the Kensington Eye Institute,” explains Dr. Marisa Sit. “I have tremendous respect for my colleagues. Working at the Kensington Eye Institute affords me the opportunity to continuously learn from over 30 leading ophthalmologic surgeons affiliated with this clinic. I feel enabled by so many perspectives and experiences!”

Dr. Marisa Sit is a graduate from the University of Toronto. During her final six months of ophthalmology residency education she had the opportunity to be trained at the Kensington Eye Institute when we opened in January 2006. Dr. Sit’s desire to become an ophthalmologist was motivated by the gratifying experience of restoring an individual’s sight. “Vision has a profound impact on a person’s life and I find it immensely satisfying to go home each evening knowing that my work has had an immediate and positive outcome. One patient knit me a beautiful baby blanket as a way of saying thank you for giving me back my eyesight.”

The Kensington Eye Institute is proud of our reputation for clinical excellence and is committed to training the leaders of the next generation of ophthalmologists. Our training program places residents in a state-of-the-art facility that is medically, surgically, and technologically challenging and rewarding with a strong emphasis on patient care and research. Dr. Shaun Singer, Medical Director, explains, “Most of our residents graduate with extremely high surgical volumes. They are exceptionally well prepared for independent practice when they leave.” Many of our residents further fellowship training in all fields of ophthalmology, becoming experts in retina, glaucoma and cornea. When our residents succeed as great surgeons and academic leaders, we all benefit from their shared knowledge and wide gamut of experiences.

For Dr. Sit there were many advantages to joining the Kensington Eye Institute in its inaugural year. “My success as a surgeon has been mentored and encouraged by a supportive family atmosphere that exists between the physicians, residents, nurses and support staff. Everyone at the Kensington Eye Institute is very collegial and we all work together as an extraordinary and dedicated team.” Dr. Sit is grateful for the opportunity five years ago to be welcomed as a newly graduated surgeon allowing her and her patients access to a highly sophisticated medical facility and research institute. She values the opportunity to further develop residency education and surgical teaching. Now she is the one to offer encouragement and deliver the same quality of teaching excellence to the ophthalmologic surgeons of tomorrow as she received. As one of our accomplished graduates, Dr. Sit serves as an excellent role model for our current residents.

Final year nursing students from Ryerson also have the opportunity to hone their practical skills at Kensington Eye Institute by preparing patients for pre-op and post-op cataract surgery. This program began in the fall of 2009 and over the two- to three-week clinical practicum, emphasis is placed on the acquisition of a broad and comprehensive clinical experience fostered by the close supervision of Registered Nurses, Gail Reiff and Lulu D’Sousa.

With over 60 years of healthcare experience between them, Gail and Lulu focus on sharpening students’ observation skills, building trusting therapeutic relationships with the patients, and emphasizing the importance to explain post-surgery eye care instructions. “By the end of their experience with us they will have admitted a patient in pre-op, observed the surgery and followed through with patient teaching post-op.” Gail smiles, “A well-informed patient is a very satisfied patient!” The high-quality skills the student nurses gain from this clinical experience will prepare them for a diverse array of environments including acute care, surgery, hospital and community health settings.
“Everyone who works at the Kensington Eye Institute is proud to work here. Our ability to collaborate as a team always places the patient first.” Maryanne Davidson speaks from experience. Trained as a Registered Practical Nurse, Maryanne has worked in healthcare for over 35 years. She joined the staff of the Kensington Eye Institute when the clinic first opened. “Every day I hear patients say that the Kensington Eye Institute is the best experience they have ever had in healthcare. It is a privilege for me to be a member of a team so committed to upholding and delivering exceptional standards of care and service.” Maryanne enjoys the variety of work at the Kensington Eye Institute and divides her time between pre-op preparations and post-op care. Compared to her many years working in operating rooms at Doctors Hospital and Toronto Western Hospital, she enjoys the individualized care she is now able to provide to patients. The way we interact with patients and family members every day is as important to us as the medical expertise we use to deliver our services. Strong leadership and camaraderie amongst staff builds morale and a culture of caring leading to employee and patient satisfaction. At the Kensington Eye Institute we see the value and importance of education and knowledge transfer and we endeavor to provide opportunities for continuous learning and growth for our clinical staff. The conversion from a paper to an electronic patient records management system made a significant improvement to the way staff can access, track and share information. Every year representatives within the eye care sector are invited to the Kensington Eye Institute to talk about new technologies and staff is encouraged to attend conferences and training. Prioritizing education helps us to achieve our vision as a “Centre of Excellence”. Recognizing the need to invest in our staff guides us in the development and implementation of best practices to ensure our patients receive superior clinical and patient-centred care. Maryanne is also a satisfied and happy patient of the Kensington Eye Institute. At the age of 59, she developed her first cataract. Without hesitation, she booked her surgery with Dr. Shaun Singer. Six months later she had cataract surgery performed for her other eye. Experiencing cataract surgery at the Kensington Eye Institute placed Maryanne in a unique position to be able to relate compassionately to patients and alleviate anxiety and fears. Today with her sight restored, she enjoys walking her dog, gardening and of course, providing excellent care to everyone who visits our Eye Institute.
The academic program for resident cataract teaching at the Kensington Eye Institute remains the premiere resident teaching program in Canada,” explains Dr. Jeffrey Hurwitz, Academic Director, Kensington Eye Institute. “Our ophthalmology residents now perform the highest volumes of cataracts surgery in their training compared to any other ophthalmology training program in Canada and probably in North America.”

All of the surgeons at the Kensington Eye Institute are members of the Department of Ophthalmology and Vision Sciences at the University of Toronto and have academic appointments. The residents from the five teaching hospitals all rotate through the Kensington Eye Institute for cataract surgery experience in their Post Graduate Year 4 and Post Graduate Year 5.

At the University of Toronto, the Toronto Ophthalmology Residency Introductory Course (TORIC) was envisioned 20 years ago to prepare residents who had just completed a year of general medical internship training for specialty training in ophthalmology. Most medical students have very limited exposure to the diagnosis and management of eye diseases in their core training during medical school.

This six-week course is now held annually at the University of Toronto from Victoria Day to June 30th and was created to provide opportunities to residents at the very beginning of their specialty training with tools in both basic sciences and clinical ophthalmology. The emphasis is on preparing the junior resident for his or her first two years of residency training. “The opportunity to come together as colleagues and study ophthalmology is a great privilege. I am extremely grateful for the efforts required to make this experience possible.”

David Ehmann, University of Alberta, Edmonton

Teaching is entirely voluntary in this course and it is the quality of the teaching that has grown this course to a national level with participation from every ophthalmology residency program in Canada as well as the University of the West Indies.

The Kensington Eye Institute became involved in 2008 and is proud to be engaged directly in the clinical teaching of approximately 50 ophthalmology residents from across Canada and the Caribbean who attend this course which consists of instructive lectures, anatomy dissection and wet labs covering basic sciences in ophthalmology as well as clinical introductions to eye diseases. Surgical orientation begins in the first week with an introduction to ophthalmic instruments, microscope use and basic surgical techniques. With this strong foundation in ophthalmic surgery and the introduction to a state-of-the-art academic cataract institution, residents will be well prepared for their future success in ophthalmology.

David Comstock, University of Dalhousie, Halifax, is one of the participants this year. “I am very grateful for this wonderful opportunity to attend the TORIC course here in Toronto. The wet lab experience at Kensington was especially unique and an enjoyable break from lecture time.”
Every day in developing countries, people lose their sight as a result of treatable or preventable eye diseases because of lack of knowledge, education and facilities.” Donna Punch, Clinical Director explains, “On my recent trip to Nigeria, the patients reminded me, through their words and smiles, what strength of character truly means. I am so proud to be working with the non-profit organization ORBIS, as a volunteer, to teach other nurses methods and skills that prevent and reverse curable blindness.”

ORBIS Canada, the Toronto-based development office of ORBIS International, is dedicated to the prevention of blindness, the caring of sight, the delivery of training, the transfer of skills and the creation of a world in which no one is needlessly blind, where quality eye care, education and treatment are available to everyone. Several times a year, volunteer Canadian ophthalmologists, nurses and medical technicians join ORBIS Canada to travel to the developing world to work in rural eye care clinics and hospitals; teaching can include everything from surgical and anaesthetic techniques, to creating a sterile environment and improving bedside manners.

ORBIS and the Kensington Eye Institute first collaborated in 2006 when two of our employees, Dr. Shaun Singer, Medical Director, and Juanita Strowbridge, Clinical Director, visited Jimma, Ethiopia on an ORBIS assignment. Since then, three Kensington Eye Institute employees have been recruited as Volunteer Medical Professionals to help with ORBIS’ ongoing sight saving work throughout the developing world and we have also supported countless ORBIS Canada fundraising events.

“ORBIS Canada is deeply grateful to the Kensington Eye Institute for their commitment to eliminating preventable blindness worldwide,” comments Daniella Bianchi, Director of Development, ORBIS Canada. “Donna is an extraordinary Volunteer Nurse with ORBIS. She is a selfless individual that is like a gold-covered treasure that you want to preserve for years to come. We consider ourselves grateful to count her among our many wonderful Canadian Volunteer Medical Professionals.”

Dr. Shaun Singer has trained ophthalmologists in Ethiopia and Laos. Setting up a framework for local healthcare teams to carry on and best use the resources available to them is a rewarding and fulfilling experience. Dr. Singer smiles, “I have great respect for the collaborative work we provide through ORBIS Canada to combat blindness worldwide. The opportunity to work with doctors and other healthcare professionals in developing countries is a huge privilege.”

Donna spent two weeks in Ilorin, Nigeria in March 2011. For a developing country like Nigeria, there is general lack of trained eye personnel, medicines, ophthalmic equipment, and eye care facilities. Approximately 28 nurses from all over Nigeria came to Ilorin to learn invaluable skills in the operating and recovery rooms as well as instrument care. This year most of the patients Donna worked with were at risk of losing their sight due to strabismus. Strabismus is defined by a condition involving a lack of coordination between the muscles of the eyes. The eyes do not point in the same direction which affects depth perception and prevents binocular vision. Nigeria is Donna’s second experience with ORBIS; last year she travelled to Viet Nam. “I have over 30 years of nursing expertise to share. This volunteer experience enriches my life immensely. The nurses and doctors are so appreciative and grateful. I will definitely continue to volunteer annually in another area of the world where there is a need for improved eye care. I look forward to the interaction with local healthcare teams and the opportunity to share as well as gain new knowledge.”

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Valuing research and honouring achievements over the past five years

Vision research, particularly in the area of cataract surgery, is at the forefront of the Kensington Eye Institute’s mandate. Our researchers are exceptional experts in the field of cataract eye care and with the tremendous number of patients who visit our clinic every year we have a unique opportunity to conduct numerous studies. To date, fifteen research projects have been initiated with seven completed. Dr. Rosa Braga-Mele, Director of the Cataract Unit at Mount Sinai is the Director of Research at the Kensington Eye Institute and all research projects are funded through the Kensington Research Institute.

We are particularly proud of our partnership agreement with the University of Utah’s Moran Eye Center, one of the premier eye centres in the United States. Having this access to more extraordinary thinkers for collaborative research projects gives us the opportunity to share and disseminate valuable information on an international level and to further our expertise in bringing innovative care to our patients. Our partnership with Abbott Medical Optics has opened opportunities for research initiatives and discussions are already underway to test new products. The Kensington Eye Institute recently purchased new equipment including a Pentacam which is the Gold Standard for evaluating the cornea and a Visual Acuity Testing machine to allow for more in-depth research opportunities.

Virtual reality simulator

Residency programs are constantly seeking effective tools outside of the operating room to prepare ophthalmology trainees for precision skills and surgery. Recently, high-fidelity, virtual reality simulators for ophthalmic surgery have received much attention in the realm of surgical training and education. The EYESI® is a simulator for intracocular surgery that allows our residents to experience intracocular surgery realistically outside of the operating room.

In our recent study we wanted to test the effectiveness of using such advanced technology to successfully train and evaluate our residents. The results of our analysis suggest there is a positive correlation between an objective assessment of intracocular surgical skill and the performance scores using the EYESI® surgical simulator. We found that surgical simulation can be used as a valuable tool to predict actual surgical proficiency of our ophthalmology residents performing live cataract surgery.

Infection incidents remain low

Surgical procedure in adults in Canada but infection post-operative is always a concern for medical professionals.

This research study, published in the prestigious Canadian Journal of Ophthalmology by Dr. John Lloyd and Dr. Braga-Mele, was conducted to measure our infection incidence in our high-volume outpatient surgery centre. All the Kensington Eye Institute surgeons who participated in the study used similar incision techniques and post-operative topical antibiotics.

During the 24-month period of the study, 13,931 eyes underwent cataract surgery. Using surgeon quality assurance reports, it was determined that our rate of infection was 0.043%, extraordinarily low for a high-volume cataract surgery centre. This represents one-half to one-quarter of the infection rates in comparable facilities.

Meeting the needs of our community in timely eye care delivery

Sharing the government’s vision to reduce the wait times for cataract surgery without reducing quality and proficient care, the Kensington Eye Institute is currently conducting a study on the impact we are having on cataract surgery wait times.

Six years after the wait time initiatives in Ontario were introduced, the primary objective of this project is to understand the reasons and socio-demographic factors which play into wait times for cataract surgery. Sometimes patients choose to postpone their surgery and this study will explore the extent of patients’ choices, needs and preferences in the management of their wait times for surgery.
we are always looking to the future to see how we can take our expertise to the next level.
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TORIC students in wet lab at the Kensington Eye Institute