

WIN 6.1 - Creating a Positive Work Environment

Lesson 2 - Hospital Profiles: Scarborough Hospital

Rhonda Lewis, The Scarborough Hospital:

Particularly for our healthcare organization, high focus on diversity is very important in today's environment, because you can only provide service to a patient if you understand them; if you are there—if you respect their needs—if you support what they want.

Waheeda Rahman, The Scarborough Hospital:

We serve a very diverse and vulnerable population. Almost 50% of our patient population does not speak English or French as their mother language. 57% of our population is foreign-born, which is a greater number than the GTA. We have eight neighbourhoods in Scarborough that are identified as "neighbourhood improvement areas" by the City of Toronto and United Way. 77% of our population identify with some religious affiliation. We also have a very diverse ethnocultural population; almost 70% of our population represents South Asian—Asian—Caribbean—black populations. So really that demonstrates the breadth and depth of our city within Scarborough.

Our hospital's vision is to be a leader in Canada in serving a global community. So because it's embedded in our vision it needs to be embedded in everything we do, and we really have it focused in three main areas.

How we focus on our patients: at the end of the day, they are our clients and we need to have to—services and a workforce that's reflective of our patient population, and we're able to support our patients and the needs and the expectations that they have when they come through our doors.

Secondly of all, it's really through our staff population; we need a diverse workforce that is reflective of our patient population. And I can say today, confidently, that our staff population is reflective of that based on our recent staff demographic survey that we did. And it's really not just about representation or reflection of that; it's really about harnessing the potential of all of our staff. So it's bringing all of their ideas and innovation to work, and that they're engaged.

Thirdly of all, it's also about the kind of partnerships that you develop, and for us the diversity program is very much focused on a diverse group of community partners that are really speaking to and are able to connect with our patients and client populations.

So our program really takes a real holistic perspective, and it really is enshrined in our vision, and in our strategic plan.

Rhonda Lewis, The Scarborough Hospital:

It is about creating an atmosphere where not only staff but patients also feel respected, feel valued, and feel that they have the same opportunities as others.