

Teamwork and commitment – Vital for success according to Jennifer Spencer, CHE

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Born and raised in Manitoba, Jennifer Spencer, CHE, strongly values relationships with her fellow nurses and healthcare administrators. After graduating with a Bachelor's of Arts degree from the University of Manitoba, she began her career as a crisis worker and counsellor for the Mobile Crisis team and Clinic Community Health Agency. This hands-on experience, coupled with being able to help – and in some cases change – a person's life, led to her becoming a nurse. After working as a registered nurse for several years, she went on to complete her Masters in Nursing from the University of Manitoba.



While Jennifer never envisioned herself working in management, her strong leadership skills and solutions-focused mindset led her to her current role. Today, Jennifer is the Director of Centralized Home Care and Palliative Care for the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. "I am passionate about creating systems to improve our healthcare – for both those receiving care and delivering it," she says.

Jennifer first became involved with the College when she was searching for mentorship support. When asked about her favorite experience with the College, Jennifer mentions the national conferences as well as the networking opportunities.

In 2016, when she obtained her CHE designation, the Manitoba Chapter was relatively inactive. Jennifer's energy, ideas and strong collaborative skills brought new life to the Chapter, as she helped create relevant and informative education sessions, which have increased attendance both in-person and online. In 2017/2018, she stepped in the Chapter President role – an experience which she values because it allows her to continue connecting and learning from others within the industry. She understands how working in healthcare is a journey, and wants all those who embark on these rewarding careers, at every level, to know they are not alone and that there is a community of practice supporting them.

It is not a secret that the COVID-19 pandemic has presented several unexpected challenges to the healthcare industry. However, Jennifer believes it has also presented opportunities for healthcare teams to create more integrated systems, breaking barriers while also getting the job done effectively. While the

pandemic has required healthcare workers to work tirelessly, Jennifer is proud of how teams have come together to support each other and develop innovative systems to ensure quality care is delivered in safe environments for all.

When asked what she would say to someone looking to work in healthcare, she smiles and says, “healthcare is 100% about teamwork – collaboration is critical. While you need leadership at every level in healthcare, it is not a singular profession. Its heroes not hero. There is truly strength in numbers.”

Jennifer continues to show nothing but commitment through her professional career as well as her involvement with the Chapter. In recognition of her efforts, Jennifer was named the recipient of the CCHL Chapter Award for Distinguished Service for the Manitoba Chapter in 2020.

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