

**BRIGHT LIGHTS AWARD**

  
2012
**Access and Capacity****Award Winner - Marina Hodson, Kawartha North Family Health Team**

## **Marina Hodson, leadership to improve access in Kawartha North**



“Overwhelming” is a word a lot of people might choose to describe Kawartha North Family Health Team’s transformation over the past four years. Marina Hodson saw challenge, and opportunity, and thousands of patients and the staff who serve them are benefiting from her vision.

Ms Hodson began as executive director of Kawartha North Family Health Team in 2008, when it had two nurse practitioners and ancillary staff to serve 900 patients. The four years since have been a time of constant growth and expansion. The team now operates in two locations — Fenelon Falls and Bobcaygeon — with five physicians, two nurse practitioners, as well as registered nurses, registered practical nurses and several medical reception staff, for a total of 18 people.

As executive director, Ms Hodson has needed clear vision and flexibility to lead the Kawartha North team through four years of frequent changes in focus and direction. That included renovating and opening a new site in Fenelon Falls in 2008, and adding two doctors and renovating the Bobcaygeon site in 2009. Along the way, there have been physician billing challenges, the need to advocate at Queen’s Park for new recruits — and then handling the rapid patient growth when three new doctors joined the roster in 2011 and 2012.

The beneficiaries of Marina’s hard work are the people of Kawartha Lakes, a large rural area where 19 per cent of the population are senior citizens, many in lower income brackets and less mobile than the provincial average. They have also, until recently, been drastically underserved in terms of health care. That’s changing, with Kawartha North providing primary care to over 5,500 patients, many of whom previously had no care, or travelled long distances to see a provider. Now, residents have access to effective and accessible team health care, with an emphasis on early intervention and health education — including diabetes education and programs, chronic disease management, smoking cessation and many other programs. Ms Hodson’s leadership has been key to Kawartha North’s success.