

June 19, 2020

Paula Fletcher
City Councillor
Ward 14, Toronto - Danforth

Dear Councillor Fletcher,

I am writing to you in response to your letter regarding the hate crime that occurred last week on the EllisDon construction site at Michael Garron Hospital (MGH). I appreciate the concern you expressed as well as your public denouncing of racist acts in our community. It was an overt and despicable display of racism; an act that will not be tolerated.

Like you, I am grateful to our partner EllisDon for their quick actions to contact police following this incident, for condemning this terrible act and for their efforts to support both the physical and mental health of their workers. We work closely with EllisDon and their construction partners. We have and will continue to raise the matter of Anti-Black Racism in our discussions. We support our partner in acting quickly and swiftly to protect their workers and our community.

Investigations into this matter remain underway and I sincerely hope that whoever is responsible for this act is identified and prosecuted.

Following this incident, I reached out to all staff and physicians at MGH to remind them of our Employee & Family Assistance Program, a confidential support service available to all our employees and their immediate families, and I have made myself personally available to anyone who would like to share their own experiences, questions or concerns. We are holding many discussions and creating safe spaces for Anti-Black Racism dialogues in our institution. Our diversity is our strength and I denounce any form of racism or hate in our community.

Within your letter you also mention confronting anti-Indigenous racism. In partnership with Elder Little Brown Bear and members of the Aboriginal Healing Program, MGH has been actively working to create a supportive and inclusive healing environment. More recently this journey has brought the opening of the Indigenous healing room in the paediatric unit, the painting of a medicine wheel mural on the palliative and complex care units, and the opening of the All Nations Traditional Medicine Sweat Lodge. Healing is a big part of what we do at MGH, and taking part in Indigenous reconciliation requires an ongoing effort and commitment with acts of recognition and inclusion. As an organization, we commit to continuing on our journey towards truth and reconciliation in partnership with Elder Little Brown Bear and with members of the Aboriginal community.

Respectfully,



Sarah Downey
President and CEO, Michael Garron Hospital

cc: Geoff Smith, President & CEO, EllisDon
Chief Mark Saunders, Toronto Police Service