

## Local hospitals face shortage of 1,400 workers

By Gordon Lambie

On Friday afternoon the CIUSSS de l'Estrie - CHUS provided its first update on the local COVID-19 situation since Mid December, highlighting the fact that as the public works to control the spread of the virus, the same challenge is being faced by the healthcare administration. According to Yan Belzile, the Director of human resources, communications, and legal affairs with the CIUSSS, there is an average of about 1,400 staff out of work on any given day because of Covid.

"We see about 100 new cases reported daily, and about 100 people coming back to work at the same time," he said, explaining that this equilibrium is expected to continue for at least another two weeks.

Although the healthcare administration was given authorization at the end of last year to call Covid-positive employees back before the end of their 10-day isolation period, Belzile said that the CIUSSS has only done this in the case of 40 employees to date because of the increased risks it represents.

Stéphane Tremblay, the chief executive officer of the CIUSSS de l'Estrie - CHUS, said that despite the fact that that region has been operating at the fourth and highest level of temporary service reductions for over a week in the name of freeing up resources to ensure care for both urgent needs and

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## "Acts of Love" bring joy to Potton seniors during the holidays



COURTESY

By Mable Hastings

In December the "Acts of Love" volunteers were at it again spreading holiday cheer to seniors in the Potton area. For a second year the group partnered with the Missisquoi North Volunteer Centre (CABMN) and these two dynamic groups that have created a wonderful bond were out delivering special surprises all over the township.

"Acts of Love" is an organization with a mission to break the isolation for seniors. CABMN volunteer, Danielle Poitras brought the project to the CABMN Senior Services team inviting them to partner with the group in bringing some happiness to seniors especially during the dismal news of more pandemic isolation.

Some 100 packages were delivered between Dec.13 and 22 to many seniors living alone and others over the age of

85 by a team of 9 pairs of volunteers working together for the deliveries. The packages were put together in beautiful wrapping by a team of four volunteers: Danielle Poitras, Sheila Kerr, Janet Jones et Marie-Claude Joly.

The products delivered were honey from Api Farm, maple syrup from Laplume Maple Syrup Company and coffee from Appalachian Coffee Roasters, all valued at \$20. The CABMN took the opportunity to insert a pamphlet from the CABMN, a document on fraud prevention targeted to seniors and a 2022 resource directory for seniors.

At the same time, again this year the two local elementary schools were approached to have the students make 100 greeting cards for the same group of seniors so that they would not feel alone during this period which can be difficult. These cards were mailed out the week of December 17th. The

CABMN has received many calls from seniors thanking those who made the gifts possible and commenting on how much they enjoyed the local products. These packages were a definite highlight to the holiday season.

"I must extend a huge thank you to Danielle Poitras and all of the volunteers who make these gestures of love and support for our senior population possible," said Monique Gilbert, CABMN Coordinator of Senior Services. "Danielle and her Acts of Love group brought the idea to the CABMN and the opportunity to deliver to local seniors and brighten their day is a highlight for us as well," added Gilbert.

If you would like more information about the Missisquoi North Volunteer Centre (CABMN) senior services, visit the website at [www.cabmn.org](http://www.cabmn.org) or call the Centre located at 314-B Principale in Mansonville at 450-292-3114.

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