

# PUBLIC ENTITY PROFILE

## BUILDING A HEALTHY CULTURE OF DISCLOSURE AT COVENANT HEALTH

“The more that people come forward and we can problem solve and work together, the better.”



An employee who sees something wrong on the job and raises it with their managers or discloses it to our office should be encouraged and celebrated. It’s an opportunity to improve governance, right a wrong, and ultimately improve transparency and accountability.

That’s been the philosophy employed by the office of the Public Interest Commissioner since our inception in 2013. In our early days, however, not all public entities understood or embraced that concept.

But many did. And three years of investigations, analysis and interaction between our office and one of the larger public sector organizations in the province have shown that to be the case. This year, our investigators, director and the Commissioner met with Covenant Health board members, senior management and front-line employees offering educational presentations and hosting question and answer sessions. The aim was to improve knowledge and understanding of our office and the *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act*, while improving awareness of the disclosure process as well as rights and obligations under the Act.

Disclosure of wrongdoings is not new for Covenant Health. It had a disclosure policy in place prior to 2013 and amended it to bring it into compliance with PIDA.

Gordon Self, the Vice President of Mission, Ethics and Spirituality at Covenant Health, agrees the relationship has evolved in a positive manner – and the face-to-face educational opportunities are the most recent example of that.

“The education helped reinforce what we also want to get across regarding safe disclosure, with the added leverage of the legislative requirements,” he said. “It’s part of our culture, but it’s also an obligation we have under legislation. So having education and exposure to our staff helped reinforce what we all desire. We have mutual goals. It helps create that desired effect.”

Covenant Health has tried to go past the minimum of compliance with the legislation, he added.

