

GivingMatters

Spring 2021 Newsletter How YOU help care for patients at Guelph General Hospital



You're helping make the best quality and safest emergency care possible!

SEE PAGE 2

 **Inside:**

- Leslie Austin writes to GGH with thanks for the care her father received
- New patient care equipment arrivals made possible by YOU
- Together, We Care fundraising campaign exceeds \$31-million of \$34-million goal!

Your donations this past holiday season supported Guelph General Hospital's Emergency Department

Thank you for your generous support this past holiday season! The outcome was remarkable with 1,060 individuals responding to our seasonal fundraising campaign with donations totaling close to \$200,000.

These funds will be used to purchase patient care equipment for the Hospital's ED.

Already purchased and in use are an emergency alert system and three new trauma stretchers. The trauma stretchers are x-ray compatible which means patients can be x-rayed without being moved. The emergency alert system is a personal alarm system to keep staff safe.

Three more pieces of equipment have been ordered and will arrive soon: an ECG machine to help monitor and diagnose heart conditions; a glidescope, which is an essential medical tool for safely intubating critically ill patients; and four new vital signs monitors to help equip four new *See and Treat* spaces.

In addition, some funds were used to replace the main ED nurses desk. The previous desk was built over 25 years ago and did not meet current infection control standards. The new desk is larger, providing more room for staff to do their charting.

The ED has had many changes over the past few months to facilitate better care for members of our community.

Last fall, a temporary structure was erected in front of the existing ED to provide additional space to achieve the new standards required due to COVID-19, including enough space for physical distancing. Patient registration, triage and the main patient waiting area were relocated to the temporary structure.

Renovation of the previous waiting room and triage area was completed in March and on Tuesday, March 16, the Hospital opened its new *See and Treat* space which provides four new stretcher spaces and four seated treatment areas as well as its own waiting room. This

new space allows for appropriate distancing and greater patient privacy.

The original *See and Treat* location in the main ED now provides six additional stretcher spaces. In total, the ED now has capacity to treat 10 additional patients while meeting COVID-19 physical distancing standards.

A new resuscitation room was also built in the existing ED. This room allows for safe resuscitation of patients who may have COVID-19 and other communicable diseases.

Even before COVID, our ED was undersized. Twenty years ago, it was built based on a projected volume of 45,000 annual visits. Over the past few years, that number has risen to more than 60,000.

That's why a permanent expansion of the ED is a key priority in the \$34-million *Together, We Care* fundraising campaign. The permanent expansion will increase square footage by 60%, including 14 additional treatment areas, and larger care spaces with enhanced privacy and better infection prevention and control. In addition, mental health and addictions care services will be relocated with a 50% increase in capacity in the short-stay unit for patients with these concerns.

All the patient care equipment costs and 10% of the final building costs for this exciting project must come from community donations. Currently, the hospital team is working its way through the planning and government approval process.

Thank you once more for your caring support this past holiday season. By helping us fund so many pieces of essential patient care equipment, you are helping patients receive the best possible emergency care at Guelph General Hospital.

“
A permanent expansion of the Emergency Department is a key priority of the Together We Care campaign.”

Cover photo: Members of the ED Team stand in one of the new stretcher *See and Treat* spaces.

YOU *make patient care better at Guelph*



Christine Schott, MRI Team Lead at GGH poses with new MRI-compatible cardiac monitor.

Your generosity ensures patients can receive the care they need within their own community

Patients who require continuous monitoring of vital signs such as oxygen levels and heart rhythms cannot be left unmonitored for any length of time. This presents a challenge when an MRI scan is needed.

Standard cardiac monitors do not work in the MRI suite because the MRI creates a strong magnetic field that interferes with the capture of the information by the monitor. In addition, a standard monitor has some magnetic parts, meaning it would become a projectile in the MRI suite!

Because MRI scans can take an hour or even more, transferring the patient from a standard monitor to a

specialized MRI-compatible monitor is an absolute must to ensure the highest level of care and safety.

If there were no available MRI-compatible monitor and the patient required an MRI, we would not be able to do the scan at GGH. The patient would have to be transferred to another hospital to ensure their safety. However, transporting the patient back and forth is not ideal for their stability or comfort.

Guelph General Hospital needed to replace its MRI-compatible cardiac monitor because the previous unit was failing and could no longer be repaired. Thankfully, the Hospital's caregivers and their patients can rely on community members like you who support ongoing patient care equipment needs at the Hospital.

The new MRI-compatible cardiac monitor arrived last month and is already helping caregivers keep a continuous watchful eye on their critically ill patients.



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Dr. Ian Phillips and Susanne Marriott, RPN preparing for a carpal tunnel release procedure.

Dr. Ian Phillips is thankful for your support

Thanks to you, Dr. Ian Phillips has a new carpal tunnel release set to help him keep pace with the number of patients requiring treatment for carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS), a condition that causes numbness, tingling and weakness in the hand and arm.

The 10-minute surgery is done under local anaesthetic. It provides a quick recovery and return to activity for patients.

An extra set of equipment means clinic days are more efficient as we have one set for each patient and don't have to wait for our Medical Device Reprocessing Department to reprocess one of the sets.

"I'm grateful to be able to help our patients with CTS with this minimally invasive surgery, as they can get back to their regular activities much sooner. And our patients are grateful too," said Dr. Phillips.

This is another meaningful example of how donors save lives and improve health, together with our community.



Rebekah Larter, Elder Life Specialist holding a Paint Kit.

COVID-19 Critical Response Fund helps Isolated seniors

Pre-pandemic, our Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP) had 55 highly trained volunteers who worked with older patients to help them avoid the cognitive and functional decline that can happen during hospitalization. HELP volunteers provided support, encouragement and companionship, helping with exercise, meals and therapeutic activities. All of this ended abruptly when volunteers were no longer allowed at the Hospital as a precaution against the spread of COVID-19.

As a result, our older patients are not getting the same level of engagement and fulfillment they once were receiving. In response, our Elder Life Specialist has created Activity Kits and Paint Kits for these patients.

The kits were funded by donors who supported our COVID-19 Critical Response Fund. These funds continue to help us address needs emerging from the pandemic, and we remain thankful to all who donated to the fund.



All equipment used in the direct care of patients at Guelph General Hospital is funded by a caring donor – **like you**

YOU *save lives and improve health*



‘My family was considered part of the team looking after my father’

Early in the New Year, we received this letter from **Leslie Austin**, sharing her gratitude for the care her father received over the holidays.

As a supporter of the Hospital, we hope you read this letter with pride, knowing that you play an important role in supporting Guelph General’s exceptional team.

By giving our caregivers the patient care tools they need, you help deliver the highest quality care and experience to patients and their families.

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“My father and our entire family remain grateful not only for the excellent medical care, but for the humanity with which it was delivered.”
— Leslie Austin

(see next page for letter)



Leslie Austin with her father John (Jack) Ward, enjoying a Tim’s coffee upon arrival back home from the hospital.

We received exceptional standard of care at GGH

This past December, my elderly father's health journey led him to a two-week stay at GGH. Like many of his other admissions to five different Ontario hospitals over the years, this experience came with unavoidable fear with the uncertainty of an unfamiliar hospital in an unfamiliar city.

As his designated caregiver, I spent six to eight hours per day with him in his room over this 14-day period and had contact with countless nurses and doctors as well as team members from multiple departments.

From the Emergency Department, to the Step-Down Unit and beyond, doctors, nurses and allied staff were prompt and clear in communicating with our family, be it over the phone or in person at the hospital. They often reached out to us and approached difficult conversations gently but realistically. It became apparent early on that my father's care would be a team approach, and that we, his family, were considered an important part of the team.

Any comments or ideas we suggested to staff were given thoughtful consideration. Information, be it critical or just small details, travelled efficiently not only from one shift to another, but from one department to another.

Every staff member who came into contact with my father and me treated the experience as though it was a privilege to be doing such work. His dignity was preserved and upheld during every interaction.

With each passing day, I noticed more and more that respect, kindness and compassion were not reserved exclusively for patients. I lost count of the number of times I heard staff members cheerfully offer help to one another with their tasks, often anticipating one another's needs.

Some of those tasks were not even specific to that person's job, they just happened to be nearby when the help was needed. I came to realize that the staff were not just taking care of patients, they were taking care of one another. This pattern played out continually and the nature of GGH's culture quickly became apparent.

It is obvious GGH staff realize that taking care of one another means taking even better care of patients, but there is even further residual benefit. The excellent care, given while supporting one another, allowed me to go home at night, reassure my worried mother, sleep without concern and come in the next day as the best possible version of myself for my dad. In taking care of my father, GGH was actually taking care of my entire family.

The standard of care we experienced at GGH was exceptional, and this during the holidays AND a stressful pandemic no less!

My father and our entire family remain grateful not only for the excellent medical care, but for the humanity with which it is delivered.

Sincerely and with great appreciation,

Leslie Austin and the entire family of John (Jack) Ward

YOU are a part of our healthcare team



Together, We Care fundraising campaign now exceeds \$31-million raised!

Our record-setting \$34 million *Together, We Care* campaign is our Hospital's most urgent community fundraising project ever. With your caring support, will expand our strained Emergency Department and create new space to support better mental health and addictions care, upgrade our Special Care Nursery, and invest in new patient care equipment and technology.

Investing in new patient care technology is where your help has always mattered most, and where it will continue to matter most. That's because at Guelph General Hospital, every dollar spent on patient care equipment is funded by the donations we receive from caring members of our community like you.

The \$31 million reflects funds received and pledged. Already, \$10 million has been put to good use, funding

Together, We Care

numerous pieces of new and advanced patient care equipment. From large pieces of equipment such as our new mammography machine (the first of its kind in Canada!) to smaller items like an MRI-compatible cardiac monitor that arrived just last month.

We'll continue to count all donations towards the *Together, We Care* campaign until we meet our \$34-million goal. We're hopeful it will be within the year! Every contribution counts to help save lives and improve health.



Community Events

Community members and businesses help make patient care better at Guelph General Hospital.

The Beer Store



Thank you so much to The Beer Store and everyone who donated their empties. The bottle drive raised \$122,924.75 for Guelph General Hospital!

Shawarma G



Last April, during Ramadan, Shawarma G donated \$1 for each delivery order and \$2 for each pick up order, for \$5,000 towards GGH's Covid-19 Critical Response Fund.