Giving Matters

FALL 2026 NEWSLETTER

How YOU are transforming healthcare through giving

Your generosity is helping Guelph General Hospital deliver more care, more services, and more support throughout our community.



THE FOUNDATION OF GUELPH GENERAL HOSPITAL

Transforming healthcare through giving

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- A look inside **The Angel Gabriel Foundation Centre for Mental Health and Addictions**
- From medical emergency to a community match: **Read Kevin and Sharyn's story**
- Over 70 and unstoppable: **Meet Charlie Barnes**

COVER STORY

New emergency mental health and addictions space doubles capacity for care

This past September, hospital staff, donors, and government officials joined together to celebrate the completion of The Angel Gabriel Foundation Centre for Mental Health and Addictions Centre, marking a major milestone in the redevelopment of Guelph General's Emergency Department and Emergency Mental Health and Addictions Services.



A look inside a patient room in the new Angel Gabriel Centre for Mental Health and Addictions at Guelph General Hospital.

Housed on Level 1 of GGH's Delhi Campus, the Centre's short stay assessment unit (SSAU) will expand and connect emergency mental health and addictions services. Most prominently, the unit doubles current capacity — growing from four beds to eight — so more adults experiencing psychiatric emergencies can be assessed, monitored, and treated in a dedicated, specialized setting.

The transformation is significant in addressing a real need within the community. When originally built, Guelph General Hospital's emergency facilities were designed to care for 40,000 patients a year; today, they see closer to 60,000, including a rising number of people seeking help for mental health and addiction-related concerns.

"This is an important step forward in enhancing the care we provide at Guelph General Hospital. With patient volumes far exceeding what our facilities were built for, this upgrade will allow us to better meet the needs of our community, especially those seeking care for mental health and addictions," said Mark Walton, President & CEO of Guelph General Hospital. "It's a meaningful investment in patient safety and dignity as we lay the groundwork for a future new hospital."

The SSAU will also be newly joined with the Mental Health and Addictions Emergency Follow-up Services Program, supported by Homewood Health Centre. These follow-up services will increase individual and group counselling by 14 per cent, helping more than 2,220 patients stabilize before they are discharged and reducing their likelihood of re-admission.

"This project reflects a deep-rooted partnership that has supported emergency mental health and addictions patients in our community for many years, and it strengthens our ability to work together in the future, when and where people need us most," said Dr. Carlos Lalonde, President & Chief of Staff at Homewood Health Centre.

The emergency services redevelopment project is made possible by a $23.4 million investment shared by the Ontario government, donors to The Foundation of Guelph General Hospital's Together, We Care campaign, and the City of Guelph. For everyone who saw the need and were inspired to act — through giving, advocacy or otherwise — a heartful thank you. **You are transforming healthcare in our region, and bringing comfort, safety and dignity to the patients and families who rely on these critical services.**

Cover Photo: The waiting space inside The Angel Gabriel Foundation Centre for Mental Health and Addictions

YOU make patient care better at Guelph General Hospital

Kevin and Sharyn: Bringing life-saving care closer to home

When Kevin Gardiner developed chest pains in June, his wife Sharyn drove him to Guelph General Hospital's Emergency Department, where the doctors and nurses immediately went to work.

"The team was fabulous," she recalls. "They never left our side for one moment."

A CT scan revealed a small aneurysm on Kevin's aorta, so vascular specialist Dr. Mah admitted him for monitoring. That decision proved critical.



Sharyn and Kevin Gardiner

Everything was stable for a few days. Then a follow-up scan showed that the aneurysm had suddenly doubled in size. Without surgery, Kevin could die.

The best option was an emergency thoracic endovascular aortic repair (TEVAR) — a minimally invasive surgery that allows doctors to access the aneurysm using a tiny incision near the groin instead of cutting open the patient's chest.

Dr. Mah knew how to perform it. But because Guelph General didn't have the facilities, he was forced to send Kevin to Hamilton General Hospital.

As the ambulance raced down Highway 6, Sharyn followed with their two adult children, who had dropped their long weekend plans to rush back. She knew Kevin would be in excellent hands in Hamilton. But every minute he spent in transit delayed the surgery, increasing the risk he wouldn't make it.

Travelling to an unfamiliar city at 9:30 at night only added to the stress. "You can imagine the emotions," she says.

Thankfully, Kevin's surgery was successful. Today, he's back on the golf course, cheering on his grandson at baseball games and celebrating milestones — including his 70th birthday this fall.

But the Gardiners didn't want other families to experience what they went through. After a discussion with their children, they pledged to match donations, this holiday season, for Guelph General's renovated vascular surgery suite until December 31st, up to a total of $100,000.

The state-of-the-art facility, including precision X-ray technology, will allow Dr. Mah and his colleagues to perform TEVARs and other advanced procedures right here in Guelph.

That creates benefits for an entire region. The province has designated Guelph General as a regional vascular surgery provider, serving more than a million residents in an area that covers Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, Orangeville, Stratford, and north to Owen Sound.

For patients like Kevin, the renovated vascular surgery suite will mean they can get the advanced care they need closer to home — and closer to the people who matter most — instead of being transferred to London, Hamilton, or Toronto.

The lower-dose X-ray equipment will reduce exposure to radiation, creating a safer working environment for the surgical team. And in the face of a national shortage of vascular surgeons, the new facilities will also help the hospital retain and recruit top talent.

"We have such incredible surgeons and staff [at Guelph General] that can make a difference to families," says Sharyn. "We just need to be able to give these capable people the ability to do it here."

YOU help to transform healthcare at Guelph General Hospital

Donor-funded lab renovation reaches major milestone

Thanks to generous support from the Circle of Life giving collective and donors across the community, Guelph General's multi-year laboratory transformation continues to move forward.

This year, a major milestone was reached with the completion of Phase 1 of the Transfusion Medicine and Blood Bank renovation. The space has been operational, supporting safer and more efficient blood testing and storage.

Work is now underway on Phase 2, with an automated track system being introduced this fall to move blood samples seamlessly between testing areas and reduce the need for manual handling.

With over 1.9 million laboratory tests run at GGH last year, this major project is vital to bringing faster diagnoses and better care to patients.



A look behind the scenes in GGH's laboratory

Local families help bring advanced prostate equipment to Guelph General

Men across Guelph-Wellington, Kitchener, Waterloo and beyond now have access to a new treatment close to home: laser prostate enucleation, made possible by the generosity of two extraordinary donors.

Led by Dr. Topher Morris, urologist at Guelph General Hospital, the program offers patients a less invasive, one-time procedure with shorter recovery time and fewer complications than traditional surgery – even for enlarged prostates once considered too complex to treat locally. It also lowers reintervention rates, or how often patients need a repeat procedure down the road, from as high as seven percent to about one percent.



Deb and Alex Beath

Previously, patients needing this procedure had to travel outside of the region to access care — often to Toronto or Owen Sound. Now, thanks to the Beath and Job families, the team at Guelph General Hospital is newly equipped to perform these advanced procedures, with the first six surgeries completed in just one month.

Alex Beath said, "Having experienced firsthand the stress of travelling outside the community for treatment, we worked with Dr. Morris and The Foundation to help bring this technology to Guelph and make care more accessible for future patients."



Emily, Director of Medicine at GGH, with donor-funded patient bed

New beds bring comfort and safety to patients at Guelph General

Thanks to the generosity of donors like you, 20 new patient beds have arrived at Guelph General Hospital and are already in use across medical units.

These beds include the latest innovations in patient safety, including pressure-relieving surfaces, fall-prevention alarms and features that make transfers easier and safer for care teams.

In addition, eight specialty beds have been placed in The Angel Gabriel Foundation Centre for Mental Health and Addictions, supporting patients during some of their most vulnerable moments with the comfort and dignity they deserve.

Because of you, patients are experiencing safer, more comfortable care here at Guelph General.

A special thank you to **John and Donna Core**, whose extraordinary support funded 11 of these new patient beds. Their leadership and commitment to exceptional patient care will make a meaningful difference for countless patients and families.



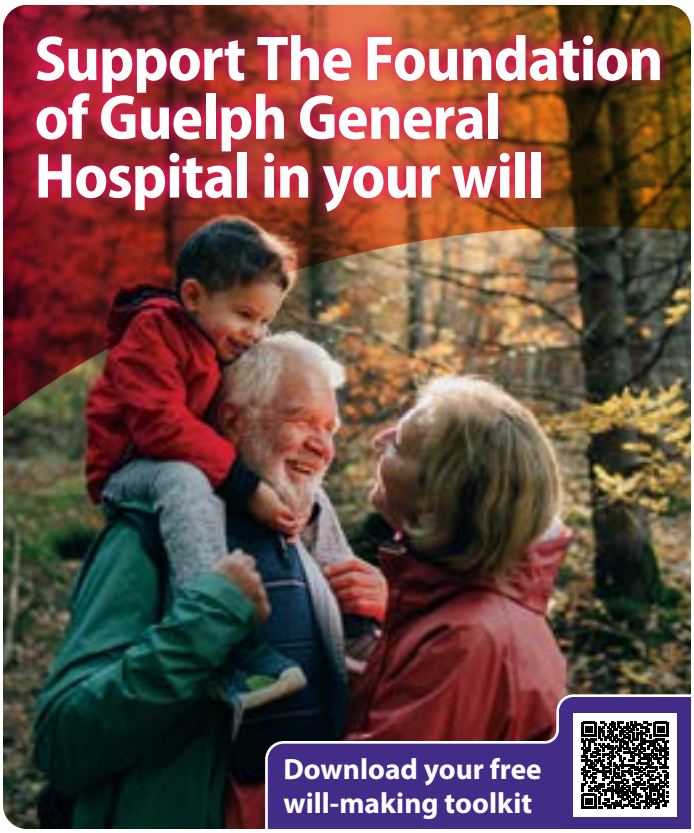
Charlie Barnes, longtime Tour de Guelph rider

Charlie Barnes Named Top 7 Over 70 Winner

At 87, Charlie Barnes continues to prove that age is no barrier to excellence. This fall, Charlie was honoured with a United Way Top 7 Over 70 Award.

A longtime Tour de Guelph rider and one of the event's most dedicated fundraisers, Charlie has raised more than $150,000 to support patient care at Guelph General Hospital and local Rotary-supported programs. His generosity extends far beyond dollars raised; each year, he reaches out personally to hundreds of supporters, inviting them to be part of something meaningful.

Charlie has also competed internationally as an age-group triathlete well into his 80s and mentors young athletes through the Guelph Triathlon Club. His energy, humility, and heart make him a true example of community leadership at any age.





Local healthcare thrives when the community comes together.

Whether you're a business owner or a caring neighbour, your support helps ensure patients receive the best possible care, close to home. This year, community-led events have raised over $100,000 for Guelph General Hospital. Learn more by scanning the QR code or visiting gghfoundation.ca.

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