

Newsletter of the Chinook Regional Hospital Foundation

GIVING MATTERS

Please join with others in the community in making a gift to your hospital this Care From the Heart Day. Tune into your favourite local radio station on Thursday, February 9th, between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., log onto www.crhfoundation.ca to make a gift and track the day's progress, or call 403-388-6001 to offer your support. Due to the ongoing pandemic response, in-person donations will not be possible this year but online and phone donations will continue to be accepted and appreciated. For more information, contact the Chinook Regional Hospital Foundation Office at 403-388-6001.

The 2022 Care From the Heart Day and Radio-a-thon was a tremendous success. Over \$308,000 was raised with the support of six local radio stations: 94.1 CJOC, Wild 95.5 FM, B-93 FM, KiSS107.7, 106.7 ROCK, and 98.1 2 Day FM. Each station broadcasts live and remind listeners of the outstanding care Chinook Regional Hospital provides. Interviews with past patients, medical staff, volunteers and donors highlighted the importance of supporting local healthcare and encouraged listeners to call in, log on, or visit the hospital to make a gift. The ongoing support of Lethbridge radio stations is unprecedented and hugely important to the success of Care From the Heart Day.

The Chinook Regional Hospital has evolved into an institution we know and trust because of innovations in surgery, imaging, medicine, and many other areas. At some point, we will all likely need the hospital. Investing in our community's health care is critical to ensure the best health care professionals are available, state-of-the-art equipment is present, and we trust the facility

that will look after our most precious loved ones. If the ongoing battle with COVID-19 has taught us anything, it is essential to have a well-equipped hospital staffed with dedicated front-line workers. Donations to the Chinook Regional Hospital Foundation have ensured this is the case.

A long-time friend of the Chinook Regional Hospital Foundation, Bob Balog of Balog Auction Services Inc., will again serve as Honorary Chair. Bob is incredibly honoured to be at the helm of Care from the Heart Day for the 12th year. "The Balog family, just like yours, has benefited from the exceptional staff and expertise of the Chinook Regional Hospital. Like so many of you, we have seen firsthand the great compassion and wonderful care available here in Lethbridge. We are proud of how our hospital has responded to the pandemic. I am honoured to be asked to help ensure this level of service in our community will continue."

"Care From the Heart Day offers our community the opportunity to support the Chinook Regional Hospital," says Allan Bartolcic, Executive Director of the Foundation. "Your donation will expand the areas of care we can provide and bring new equipment, technologies, and expertise. You are keeping world-class healthcare close to home. What an incredible gift to your friends, family, and neighbours."

Your support of the Chinook Regional Hospital Foundation is an investment in the health of your community, your family and you! community, your family and you!

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BOB BALOG



CHELSEA SLOBODAN, MANAGER OF THE INPATIENT PSYCHIATRY AND PSYCHIATRIC ASSESSMENT NURSE TEAM

Chelsea Slobodan is a Registered Psychiatric Nurse and the Manager of the Inpatient Psychiatry and Psychiatric Assessment Nurse (PAN) team at Chinook Regional Hospital (CRH).

As a passionate frontline worker, she never envisioned a management role in her career path, but when the opportunity to lead the Inpatient Psychiatry and PAN team came along, she knew it was a chance to utilize her nursing skills in a new way.

"I am able to take my years of experience into a variety of mental health settings and apply them to my unit," explains Chelsea, "and that enhances patient care and supports my incredible teams."

As a multi-disciplinary group of professionals passionate about mental health and addiction care, PAN works to provide assessments and consultations to individuals of all ages who are presenting to the Emergency Department with mental health and/or substance use concerns.

With Inpatient Psychiatry, patients have access to a range of healthcare professionals, including Nurses, Psychiatrists, Social Workers, Recreation Therapists, Addiction Counsellors, Pharmacists, Mental Health Therapists, Indigenous Wellness Liaisons, Protective Services, volunteers and Interpreter Services. The Inpatient Psychiatric Unit offers essential programs like culturally appropriate individual and group therapy, wellness programs and mental health referrals.

For Chelsea and both teams, Inpatient Psychiatry and the PAN team, bringing a trauma-informed approach is essential to the care they provide patients. This means weaving an understanding of how trauma impacts individuals into every aspect of care and working to assess and modify services to create supportive environments that avoid re-traumatization.

"Often our physical and mental health

is talked about in two separate categories. However, they work intrinsically together," she explains. "For example, when we are in a state of mental wellness, our sleep is improved, we have reduced anxieties and we are more able to adapt and face challenges. When we are physically ill and have chronic pain, our anxiety increases, and we are at a higher risk for a decline in our mental health. We must be looking at the whole person and whole body to properly care for and treat all illnesses, both mental and physical."

The teams also work closely with other AHS teams to collaborate across the healthcare system, continually improving patient care and bringing new ideas to the table. She credits the environment at CRH as integral to this process.

"The hospital is a community within a community. It's an incredible site to work at, and there is always collaboration and a spirit of working together for the betterment of our patients," she explains.

This constant striving toward improving patient care is also made possible through the support of donors to the Chinook Regional Hospital Foundation.

Funds raised have gone towards improving facilities, including new safety features in patient rooms, more welcoming floor plans for common areas and group therapy sessions, and new nursing stations for cross-team collaboration.

However, one of the most anticipated improvements made possible by donors to the Chinook Regional Hospital Foundation is a new outdoor courtyard space that inpatient psychiatric patients can access from the unit.

"Fresh air and nature are so important to healing," Chelsea explains, "and now our patients have access to the outdoors while in hospital and can enjoy gardening activities with our Recreation Therapists and nursing staff. Bringing the outdoors into our inpatient program adds holistic care. It means that we

can provide a larger variety of programs to benefit our diverse and wonderful patient population to best support them on their journeys.

"Without the services of Inpatient Psychiatry and the PAN team at CRH, we would not be able to provide acute mental health care for people in need in our community and the surrounding areas," Chelsea notes. "Our hospital is an extension of our community, and we always need to keep in mind that we need to be setting our patients and their loved ones up for success in the community upon discharge." Your support makes a difference.

Individuals in our community facing mental health and addiction challenges deserve support. When you donate to the Chinook Regional Hospital Foundation, you're helping healthcare workers like Chelsea and the PAN team deliver the best possible care in our communities.

We celebrate the collaborative, multi-disciplinary spirit of the PAN team at Chinook Regional Hospital. With your support, we can continue to provide healthcare programs like PAN in our community.



IMPACT STORIES

DR. DIONNE WALSH, SCHWARTZ ROUNDS

As a palliative care physician, compassion is a core virtue that lies at the heart of Dr. Dionne Walsh's practice. And, like so many of the physicians at the Chinook Regional Hospital, Dr. Walsh knows all too well that without support in place, compassion can take its toll.

"I talk to people about hard things all day, like their fears and suffering, what's not going well, and what can be done to make a hard situation a little bit better," she explained. "This naturally transferred over to me talking with other health care providers about their struggles."

Through these conversations, Dr. Walsh learned that while compassion is an invaluable aspect of patient-centred care, this connection with patients can be the very thing that fuels stress and burnout, a challenge that existed long before the added pressures of the pandemic.

"We want to take extra time to care for patients who feel alone and scared and we want to spend extra time on the phone updating family members and connecting them to their loved ones, but when we are feeling burned out, we may not have the bandwidth to give patients the extra compassion that they deserve," Dr. Walsh explained. "Sadly, we sometimes feel like we don't have any more empathy to give."

Despite the superhero image that fondly dominates the profession, we often forget that physicians do not, in fact, have superhuman abilities. Physicians are human beings with human needs, and if they don't recognize and care for their own needs, the intense emotional labour can become all-consuming.

"We often don't feel like our problems are 'big enough' to seek formal help, as we navigate cumulative day-to-day micro-traumas, rather than a single critical incident," said Dr. Walsh. "I became really interested in how we can create safe spaces in the hospital community, where we can share our heartaches, learn from one another about how to fill our buckets back up, and have compassion for ourselves, our team members, and our patients."

The Schwartz Rounds® program offers healthcare workers a regularly scheduled time during their fast-paced day to discuss



the social and emotional issues they face in caring for patients and families, to connect with one another, and find respite from the many stressors that challenge the healthcare workforce today.

"Schwartz Rounds can be thought of as Rounds from the heart. Each gathering is focused on a theme, such as The Patient I will Never Forget, The Impact of Unconscious Bias, or Challenging Family Dynamics. Three speakers present a short case that impacted them, and then group members are invited to reflect," Dr. Walsh explained. "As we listen to others describe their experiences and feelings, we empathize and relate to our own experiences, fostering a sense of community and normalizing the sharing of emotional responses among healthcare providers."

The program has been shown to enhance compassion, improve teamwork, and reduce caregiver stress and isolation.

"I had the privilege of participating in Schwartz Rounds with healthcare workers at South Health Campus in Calgary and was awed by the speakers who shared their personal stories with vulnerability and emotion, and by the participants who reflected immense gratitude toward those who shared and followed with their own personal experiences as well as tools and suggestions. Their group had held just a few sessions, but it was clear that the team members present were extremely supportive of one another and were grateful for the opportunity to spend time together thinking about the humanity of their common work."

The Schwartz Rounds program is set to launch at the Chinook Regional Hospital in early 2023.

Last year Chinook Regional Hospital Foundation disbursed more than 1.7 million dollars in support of state-of-the-art healthcare equipment, vital programs and special projects.

AREAS OF SUPPORT INCLUDED:

- Acute Care
- Addiction and Mental Health
- Ambulatory Care
- Cardio Respiratory
- COVID Units
- Day Procedures
- Diagnostic Imaging
- Emergency Department
- Gastroenterology
- Indigenous Wellness Care
- Inpatient Units
- Intensive Care Unit
- Labour Delivery and Maternal Child Services
- Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)
- Nutrition Services
- Outpatient Care
- Pediatric Care
- Pharmacy
- Rehab Medicine
- Surgical Care
- Volunteer Resources

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ALLAN BARTOLCIC

What an incredible year of change and transition; the pandemic has significantly impacted our healthcare professionals. I want to thank all those who have provided the best healthcare service; we certainly couldn't do it without their dedication and support.

Ongoing work carries on at the foundation. During these past two years, we worked very hard to adapt and pivot our programs and services to meet the new pandemic reality and continue to ensure the best possible patient services as we raise, receive and distribute funds for equipment and programs that will enhance our region's patient services and health programs.

We are proud of your gifts' results, as 100% of the funds stay in the area, and the vast

majority are reinvested into the community to ensure excellent healthcare is available for all who need it in Southern Alberta.

I want to thank everyone for their generosity and commitment to our community. Please visit our new and improved website at www.crhfoundation.ca for more upcoming and exciting news.

ABOUT CHINOOK REGIONAL HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

The Chinook Regional Hospital Foundation is a charitable organization dedicated exclusively to raising and accepting funds to support the priorities of the Chinook Regional Hospital and Alberta Health Services in Lethbridge and Southern Alberta.

GREAT WAYS TO GIVE

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR

Automatic payments from your credit card are convenient and save you the time and money it takes to mail in donations. At the end of the year, you'll be surprised by how your contributions and tax credits have added up, while providing a stable and reliable source of funding for the Chinook Regional Hospital.

HONOUR A LOVED ONE

A gift made in honour of a family member or friend is a special and unique way to pay tribute to them or their memory, or to celebrate a milestone occasion such as a birthday or wedding. Caring Heart Tribute funds can be viewed at www.crhfoundation.ca.

GIVE THE GIFT OF SECURITIES

Save a significant amount of money at tax time by donating securities, such as publicly traded shares and mutual funds, even if you have a capital loss!

MAKE A LEGACY GIFT

Consider leaving a gift in your will to the Chinook Regional Hospital. All contributions, whether modest or grand, are pooled together to have great impact on patient care in our hospital, benefitting the health and wellbeing of our community. For more information, email: shonna.lamb@ahs.ca

LOG ONTO OUR WEBSITE

Visit www.crhfoundation.ca for the latest news, to make a secure donation and for more information on how you can support the healthcare of our community!

CHINOOK REGIONAL HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

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CARE FROM THE HEART DAY
Thursday, February 9th, 2023

TRUCK RAFFLE
May 2023

VAL MATTEOTTI ITALIAN OPEN
August 9th, 2023

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL
November 22nd, 2023

CHINOOK 50/50 LOTTO
Every Two Weeks

