



MEDICINE  
HAT  HEALTH  
FOUNDATION

**Medicine Hat and the surrounding region is a special place, filled with hard-working, compassionate people of all backgrounds who believe in one thing: the power of community. Despite unprecedented economic turmoil and a cost of living crisis that has stretched on for months, the kindness and generosity of our friends, neighbours, and families continues to move and inspire us. When things get hard, Hatters don't ask: "How are you going to help me?" Hatters ask: "How can I help you?"**

**We find our proof of this in the continued ongoing support of our Foundation, helping us every day on our mission to push for better healthcare. Your commitment and kindness cannot be overstated, and we are so grateful and excited to share with you the impacts your donations have made for patients, staff, and families this past year.**

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### **From Our Board**

Looking back on 2022-2023, it is sometimes hard to think it was only a year. At the beginning of the year, we were still dealing with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our hospital's units were carefully monitored, separated by unwelcoming plastic screens, and normally smiling faces were hidden behind masks. Our healthcare professionals were bearing the mental and physical toll of two years of unprecedented stress and effort, but like the heroes they are, they pushed through to the very end, delivering outstanding care to patients no matter the challenges.

We're happy to say that with the end of pandemic guidelines, our re-opening and a return to 'normal' began. Naturally, it started slowly, with people hesitant to gather in numbers once again. But the desire in our community to do good eventually won out, and at our annual Gathering for Gratitude we had a record number of donors attend. We're still learning how to operate in a post-pandemic world,

but we're wiser, smarter, and more aware, and our Board is fully confident the future is brighter due to everything we experienced.

Over the last twelve months, your generosity combined with our ongoing efforts allowed us to continue to grow our Foundation's revenue. In total, we managed to distribute over \$1.1M to our various programs and facilities, helping enhance everything from mental health care to cancer screening. We also focused on strengthening our team, recruiting experienced professionals that can bring new expertise and insight to our Foundation. Our registered charity is governed by extremely high ethical standards, and moving forward we want to make a concerted effort to live up to these expectations – both for ourselves, and because we truly believe you, our community, deserve nothing less.

Much goes into running a charitable organization that many are unaware of. There's a common misconception that a charity exists simply to take money and to funnel it to people who need it. While that is the essence of our work, the day-to-day reality

requires immense personal integrity and professional scrutiny. In order to deliver impactful healthcare, we must implement best practices that help us function more efficiently, adapting a business-like mentality at every level. We are excited to see the growth that results from this switch in mentality, and how we can best channel it to maximum effect.

Lastly – and most importantly – on behalf of the Board for the 2022-2023 year, we wish to say thank you. It's a simple message, but it bears repeating again and again: thank you, thank you, thank you. Everything we do is made possible through your donations, and we're so privileged to be a part of the wider Medicine Hat community. We hope you'll look forward to the next year with us in excitement, and continue to dream of better healthcare for our friends, our neighbours, and our families.

  
**Nick Punko**  
Board Chair

  
**Heather Bach**  
Executive Director



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### Supporting Youth Through Mental Crises

One of the biggest achievements of the past year was the completion of a specialized pediatric mental health room at the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital, which was officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 17th, 2023.

### A Safer, More Comfortable Solution

This room, the first of its kind in the Medicine Hat region, is ground-breaking in nature and will provide immense value in the years to come. Previously, youth would be assessed and treated between the pediatric floor and the adult psychiatric unit depending on their maturity, size, and age. As you can imagine, this could lead to some young people already going through considerable trauma being placed in an unfamiliar and uncomfortable environment alongside adults.

### Donors

Contributions from many sources helped to make this pediatric mental health room a reality. The Foundation is grateful to all who donated, and in particular would like to thank Methanex, Cancarb, the Medicine Hat Lions Club, as well as the signature sponsor, Strikeout Stigma Foundation. Strikeout Stigma was formed in memory of athlete Mason Close and supports the mental well-being of youth and young athletes, pursuing the goal of ending negative stigma around the subject.

However, thanks to the opening of this specialized room, countless children and youth struggling with mental health issues now have a dedicated space that is suited to their needs, no matter their age. The room is designed to be a calming and welcoming space, allowing vulnerable children to find a place in which they feel secure in talking about the issues troubling them. A particularly notable feature are the hand-painted custom murals created by local artist "Paintergirl," who came in near the conclusion of the project and applied her magic touch to make the room more interesting, serene, and inspiring.

### Funding New Equipment

During the past year, the needs of our Hospital and healthcare system continued to change and evolve. The medical field is one of the most advanced in the world, and is constantly updating at a rapid pace. Sourcing new equipment is therefore vital to ensure patients in our region are truly receiving the best possible care. Your kind donations allowed us to acquire numerous tools, systems, and machines that have already been integrated into our facilities.

#### Air Ambulance Transport Ventilator

Ventilators, which can support or completely control a patient's breathing, are vital pieces of equipment – particularly for our fixed-wing air ambulance crew, who have to keep patients stable as they transport them long distances. Earlier this year, your donations allowed our Foundation to replace the aging ventilator in our fixed-wing air ambulance. Now, thanks to you, even at 10,000 feet our neighbours, friends, and family are receiving the highest quality of care.

**“This is extremely exciting news for our program. This ventilator will ensure we continue to provide the best care for our patients with the most appropriate and safe equipment. Thank you for the generosity shown by the Medicine Hat Health Foundation and the donors!”**

– Greg Cruickshank,  
Air Ambulance Paramedic

#### MRI Safe Monitor – Diagnostic Imaging

Patients entering critical care in our Intensive Care Unit (ICU) frequently require MRI scans, this vital procedure usually takes around one hour. Due to the magnetic field generated by the MRI machine, conventional monitoring equipment cannot be used inside the MRI machine.

Thanks to your donations, our Foundation was able to secure specially-designed MRI-safe monitoring equipment that can safely enter the MRI machine with the patient. This equipment immediately alerts staff when the patient requires urgent attention, improving their chances of survival significantly.

The great news? This purchase reduces the need to transfer patients to larger centers, patients can now stay closer to home and the support of loved ones.

**“Both DI and ICU are thrilled to be able to safely monitor critically ill patients while they under go MRIs.”**

– Jaylene Watson,  
Diagnostic Imaging Manager

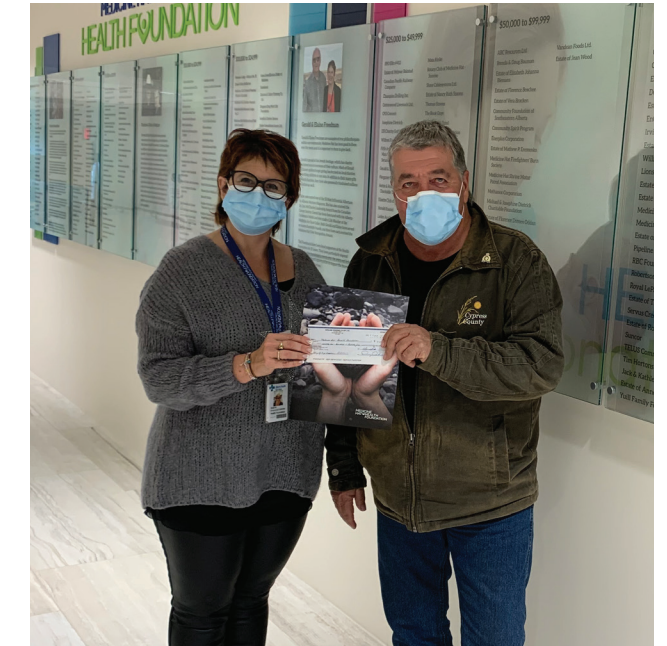
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#### Fluid Management System for Surgical Suites

Up until this year, our Hospital had been using a trial version of specialized surgical equipment that removes tissue during gynecological laparoscopic procedures. In Alberta, this method is considered best practice because it is less invasive, less painful, and requires less recovery time. Thanks to the Yuill Family Foundation and the Royal LePage Breast Cancer Classic, we were able to purchase this cutting-edge equipment outright. Mothers, sisters, and daughters in our community are now able to undergo diagnosis and treatment of uterine, ovarian, and cervical cancers, along with many other gynecological procedures, in a greater level of comfort.



#### Fabian Ventilator

Our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) takes care of our tiniest patients – babies who are born prematurely. Sometimes these babies are so small they cannot even breathe on their own. A Fabian Ventilator is a modern machine that helps these little warriors learn how to breathe independently. Previously, we only had one Fabian Ventilator on our NICU unit, but thanks to a generous donation from Pipeline Grazing, we've managed to fund the purchase of a second machine.

**“Thank you so much for this wonderful donation! This piece of life-saving equipment will truly make a difference to our NICU department and to our preemie babies needing ventilation. Especially for twins!”**

– RN in NICU



### Therapeutic Burn Sleeves

Our community's generosity is helping even our newest neighbours. The Occupational Therapy Department reached out to our Foundation to help with the treatment of a refugee Ukrainian family, who had received significant shrapnel injuries in the bombing of Mariupol. Their young son in particular had received terrible wounds. When the Medicine Hat Firefighters Burn Society heard this story, they delivered our Foundation a cheque within 48 hours. We used these funds to secure burn sleeves needed to help flatten the boy's scars.

"I want to express my gratitude. We are a family from the ruined city of Mariupol. A rocket hit our house and severely injured us all, especially our son. He underwent four operations and received a disability. Thank you very much to your doctors and Foundation for [providing] two sleeves for my child's arm."

– Quote from the Boy's Mother



### Sonosite Ultrasound for the High-Risk Maternal Clinic

In our High-Risk Maternal Clinic, there has long been a need for a new ultrasound machine. Previously, the department had to share and borrow from the Labour and Delivery Department when needed, which was a massive inconvenience for both departments. Once again, Your donations have made a big difference once again, and now our High-Risk Maternal Clinic has a brand- new Sonosite ultrasound device of their very own, alleviating the pressure on current ultrasound capabilities!

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### The Little Things

A high-tech piece of medical equipment designed to help with complicated surgeries is a great asset for healthcare professionals. But the truth is, a successful hospital relies on a lot of little things besides the tools our doctors use to deliver outstanding care. Your donations have helped us secure a whole host of day-to-day items and smaller pieces of medical equipment that make our hospital feel less like a facility and more like a home – something our long-term patients, short-term patients, and visitors appreciate 24/7!

- **Recliners for Parents in Pediatrics** – Allows parents and staff to support and sooth sick children comfortably - thanks Kinsmen Club of Medicine Hat!
- **Pharmacy Fridge** – Stores medical materials at controlled temperatures, made possible by Ron Mastel and Susan Krause.
- **Shower Chairs for 4W** – Enables infirm patients in our cardiac and general medical units to bathe in privacy.
- **Endoscopy Department Bronchoscope** – Enables doctors to perform a range of exploratory procedures.
- **Car Seats for Community Health** – 24 low-income families received subsidized infant car seats.
- **Flowers for the 2N Patio** – Seniors can now take part in recreational therapy horticulture.
- **Emergency Department Tonometer** – Helps specialists measure the pressure inside patients' eyes.
- **Geriatric Unit Microwave** – Allows patients and staff enjoy a warm meal or drink at any hour of the day..
- **Emergency Department Blood Warmer** – Keeps blood warm during transfusions, especially for trauma situations.
- **East Entrance Flower Beds** – Thanks to the Rotary Club of Medicine Hat for beautifying our entrance!

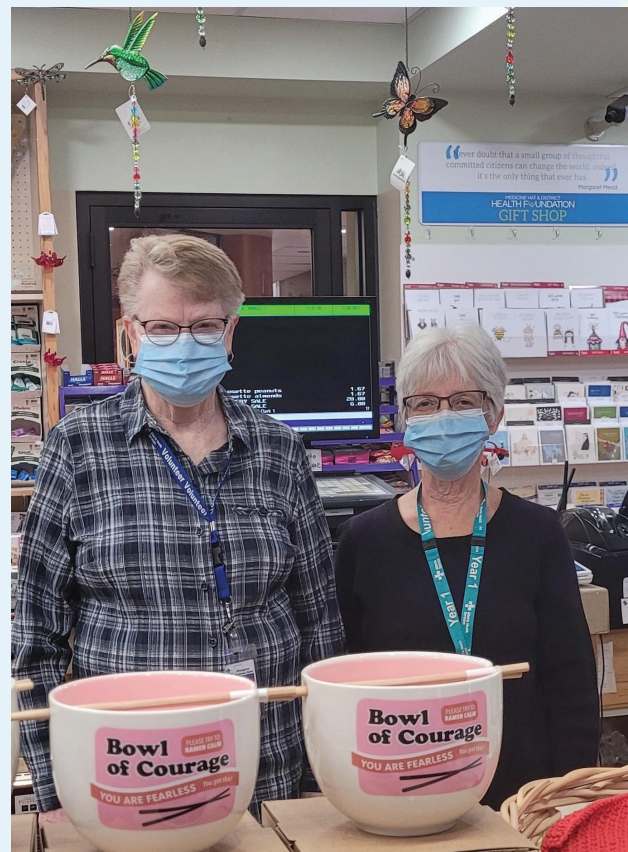
"The Rotary Clubs – Sunrise, Saamis, and Ignite – came together [to fund the East Entrance Flower Beds] as a means to brighten up the day for those people in, visiting, or working at the hospital. Flowers are always bright, beautiful, and cheerful. Their presence can help ease the pain of those who are suffering. We look forward to this garden being around for many years in the future!"

– Bill Cooper,

President, Sunrise Rotary Club

### How Your Donations are Making a Difference

Every day, we're lucky to see the impact your donations are making in our Hospital and other healthcare facilities. From the smiles we see on patients' faces to the smell of fresh coffee filling our departments, you are positively affecting people on a personal level. That's why we say every dollar helps – one dollar might not be able to buy an advanced piece of diagnostic imaging machinery, but it can provide a small toy or activity for a brave child on our pediatric unit, making their stay that much better.



### Impact of Volunteers

Our Foundation is based on volunteer work. The COVID-19 pandemic unfortunately forced us to drastically reduce the number of volunteers we could work with due to social distancing guidelines. However, with the pandemic in our rearview, in 2022-2023 we were able to return to full operating strength! This year, our kind-hearted cadre of volunteers logged up a total of 2150 working hours, helping us at every level from our Board on down. Of those hours, 1790 of them were spent in our Gift Shop, helping to raise funds and improve patient comfort, 270 were in our office performing administration, while the remaining 92 were spent preparing and hosting our Tribute Tree event.

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### Impact on Hospital Staff

Our hard-working hospital staff deserve all the support and appreciation they can get. Our Foundation is so grateful to them, and on your behalf we've done everything we can to make sure they know our community feels the same way. We'd like to thank our friends at Tim Hortons for helping us hold a Staff Appreciation Day in June of 2022, where we delivered coffee and cookies around our Hospital, providing some much-needed energy and sweetness. We also arranged a treat on Valentine's Day, with little gifts for staff and hand-written cards for our patients.



### Impact on... Christmas?!

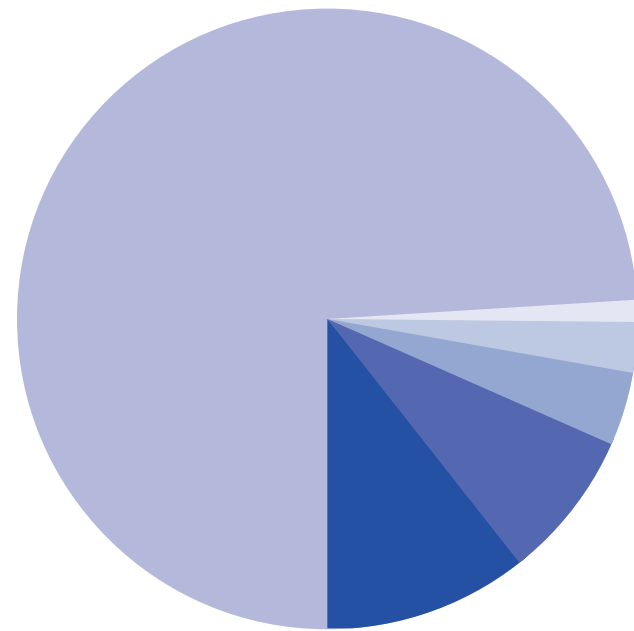
Our community's kindness is so great it even managed to have an impact on Christmas this year! Throughout the month of December, hospital staff at our healthcare facilities were treated to gifts, cards, goodies, and acts of kindness. Our guests in the pediatric units received gift bags, teddy bears, and a pizza party! On Christmas day, all other patients received stockings filled with personal hygiene items, treats, and activities.

Santa was not available for comment, but we're certain he'd join us in thanking our friends at Remax, Methanex, Medicine Hat Tigers, South Country Co-Op, and Cook Southland Funeral Home for making all this Christmas magic possible.

**Program Breakdown**

2022-2023 was an exciting year where we managed to divert more funds than ever before to our Greatest Needs program – a total of \$855,261, or 74.2% of the total! The Greatest Needs program is one of our most versatile programs, which provides funding throughout our entire hospital and healthcare system to the areas which need the most support, as determined by our panel of experts.

We were also able to contribute almost \$300,000 to our other departments, helping improve pediatric, mental health, and cancer treatment among other achievements.



**Donations**

Here's how funds received over the 2022 fiscal period were designated by donors:

- 74.2% Greatest Needs
- 9.9% Cancer Clinic
- 7.8% Designated Equipment
- 4.4% Addictions & Mental Health
- 2.6% Children's Health
- 1.2% Other\*

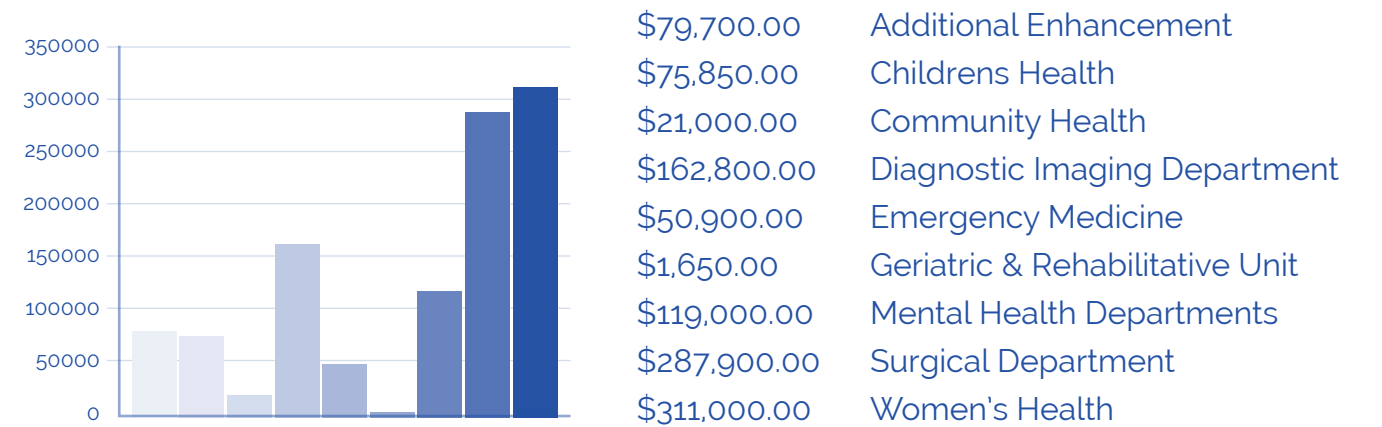
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**Departmental Breakdown**

Your donations helped us contribute a total of \$1,109,800 across all our departments this year. Of particular note was the concerted effort given to advancing Women's Health facilities, along with major donations to the Diagnostic Imaging Department and Surgical Department.

Even the \$1,650 we donated to the Geriatric and Rehabilitative Ward is making a difference in the lives of our senior patients – helping our staff to care for your mothers, fathers, and grandparents. When it comes to a hospital, every little amount truly helps.

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\*Kidney Care, Men's Health, Seniors' Health, Women's Health, Staff Appreciation

## Looking Forward

As we look forward to 2023-2024, we are filled with an immense sense of gratitude for the community we are blessed to be a part of. Even in a time of economic hardship, you have continued to find a way to put your neighbours before yourself and chosen to support better healthcare for the Medicine Hat Region. From high-tech medical equipment helping vulnerable newborns take their first unassisted breaths, to supporting young people undergoing mental health crises, to allowing seniors to find purpose and routine in the peace of our recreational horticulture gardens, your donations have truly helped our Foundation make a difference this past year to people at every stage of life.

However, there is still so much more we could do – there's no such thing as 'perfect' healthcare, only 'better' healthcare, and we will never stop fighting until our community's healthcare is as 'better' as we can make it. To do this, we rely entirely on your donations and your spirit of generosity, and there are so many ways you can get involved and help us on our missions. Beyond financial donations, you can donate your time as a volunteer, or even help us spread the word online by sharing our social media posts. The key to it all is our website at [ourheathfoundation.ca](http://ourheathfoundation.ca) – visit us regularly to keep informed.

Let's believe in better together. 2023-2024 is counting on us.

