

2024

Community
Publication

Heartbeat

OF THE HAT



MEDICINE
HAT  HEALTH
FOUNDATION

Introduction



For more than 25 years, we have connected the generosity of our community to the creation of real impacts in local healthcare.

As we step fully into 2024, we at the Medicine Hat Health Foundation are delighted to bring you another edition of Heartbeat of the Hat. Thank you for being a part of our journey, and for the unwavering support that breathes life into our mission.

For more than 25 years, we have connected the generosity of our community to the creation of real impacts in local healthcare. From delivering mental health services and prenatal/neonatal care to supporting critical surgeries, your contributions make a powerful difference to the well-being of our neighbors and loved ones. Recently, your support of the "Our Time to Give" Christmas campaign truly warmed the halls of our hospital and uplifted all our spirits. It's a testament to the remarkable kindness embedded in the fabric of our community.

For this year, our fundraising is focused on one critical area: raising our largest amount to date in order to replace our aging fleet of cardiac monitors. The current monitors are vital to the daily operations of our Intensive Care Unit and other hospital areas, but after many years of faithful service, they can no longer be repaired

and must be replaced. Along with them, we are also hoping to acquire other essential medical equipment: GlideScopes, an MRI-safe ventilator, and a LifePak defibrillator.

Every day at the MHHF, we choose to spotlight the human side of our work: the community, compassion, and collective spirit we share. The Heartbeat of the Hat is a celebration of all of this. As you read through these pages, we hope you see how these things define our journey together. Thank you for being here with us – yesterday, today, and on all the days to come.

Sincerely,

Heather Bach
Executive Director



Places of Honour: The Donor Walls

As a non-profit, everything that we do is thanks to the support of our community. To show our gratitude, we have had donor walls for a long time – one near our office and one in the Atrium at the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital. But this year, we were thrilled to update the Atrium wall to a new digital version. This allows us to update the listings more frequently and it also gives us much more freedom in how we can present information and thank our donors.

This digital donor wall will highlight individual and business donors to the Foundation, as well as legacy donors and service groups. We can also add full donor stories, show our past and present board members, shout out our volunteers, and add touching tributes in memory of those we have lost. Together, both walls express our recognition and gratitude to all those committed to enhancing healthcare in Medicine Hat.

Foundation Office Donor Wall



Digital Donor Wall



Support Today and Tomorrow

The Multi-Year Commitment of Pipeline Grazing

In healthcare, there will always be a need for more supplies and modernized equipment. This requires that we always think and plan ahead to meet the needs of our community.

That's why we're so grateful for companies like Pipeline Grazing. These selfless community leaders entered a four-year agreement with the Medicine Hat Health Foundation to fund the purchase of a new Fabian ventilator. This is a highly specialized, cutting-edge machine that supports premature babies until they can breathe independently – a literal lifesaver!

Previously, we only had one of these ventilators in the NICU, but thanks to the generosity of Pipeline Grazing, we've funded the acquisition of another. For more information on multi-year agreements and ways to give, reach out to the MHHF at info@ourhealthfoundation.ca or call 403-528-8311.

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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

Shane Hok
Pipeline Grazing



Gifts That Keep on Giving

For many visitors to the hospital, the snacks, supplies, and friendly faces at the Gift Shop are a welcome sight in a difficult time. When you can't go off-site to pick up basic items, thoughtful gifts, or just a simple heartfelt message in a card, the Gift Shop is there to help you out.

We're excited to announce that we'll be starting renovations on the shop in the spring of 2024, ensuring that it can keep filling this role for years to come. Intended to make the space more accessible, lively, and modern, this is part of a broader push to make the Gift Shop even more available than it is already. We're hoping to expand the hours of operation (currently weekdays from 10am – 5pm) to the weekends as well. This will make it easier than ever for the general public, visitors, patients, and staff to support the Foundation, as all proceeds go back to enhancing local healthcare.

To make sure our gifts can get into the right hands, we're also recruiting volunteers for the Gift Shop Cart program. Volunteers load up a cart of free and purchasable items (such as snacks, drinks, hygiene products, reading materials, and stationery). They visit the different units of the hospital, giving patients and staff the opportunity to get things that they otherwise could not.

Did you know?

The Gift Shop is entirely run by volunteers! We're always looking for new helpers, so let us know if you want to join a great cause and an even better team. For more information, contact 403-529-8863 or email alexa@ourhealthfoundation.ca.

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You go around at your own pace, making people as happy as possible. You get to chat with some of the patients who need a friendly face and opportunity to talk. Patients are very appreciative to see you, even if they can't buy anything, and the staff agree it's a great service.

– Isobel, Gift Shop Cart volunteer

How You Can Support Local Healthcare

We live in an amazingly generous community, and people often ask, "What is the best way to support the Foundation?" For us, the best method is simply the one that works for you – and that's why we've made it possible to give in multiple different ways. You can find more information about how to donate on our website at ourhealthfoundation.ca/support.

Legacy Giving

Also known as leaving a gift in your will, this is a donation of assets typically done through a will or estate plan. There are several approaches and financial tools that can be adapted to your situation, but the result is always the same: a legacy gift of hope and healing for local healthcare. Whether you're new to the idea or a lifelong donor, this is an excellent way to enjoy plentiful tax benefits while giving back.

We accept e-transfers!

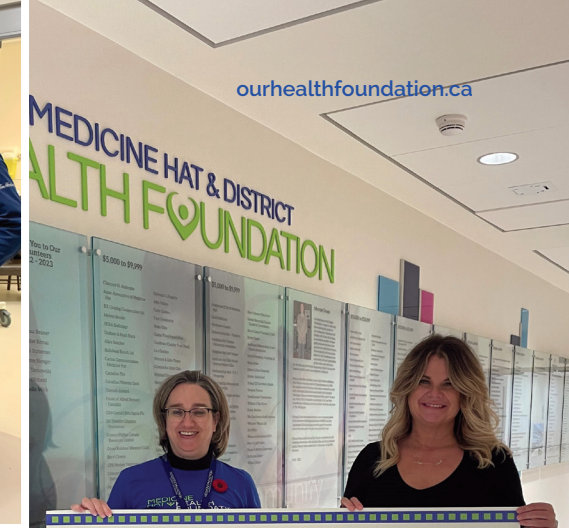
Make a hassle-free donation by sending to info@ourhealthfoundation.ca.

The Grateful Patient Program

Patients and their friends and families often have the most heartwarming stories about doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals who have gone above and beyond their duties. If someone has delivered hope and kindness when you needed it most, why not make a donation to the Grateful Patient program on their behalf, and tell your story in the process? These donations ensure more patients can get the same level of care and compassion that made such a difference.

Monthly Giving

This club makes a generous commitment that creates something amazing: enhancements to local healthcare, a lasting impression on the most important causes to you, and ultimately, more hope for patients and their families. For as little as \$20 a month, you can provide twenty-four patients with hygiene packs each year, or a teddy bear to comfort and support a child every single month.



Practice Makes Perfect



The Medicine Hat Regional Hospital's eSIM Lab

In any profession, learning vital skills in a realistic environment is the key to success. But what happens when that environment is a life-or-death situation, like a medical emergency? The need for proper training in these situations helped drive the creation of the eSIM Lab at the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital. Initially slated for a grand opening ceremony in 2020, the lab recently marked three successful years with an official ribbon-cutting with physicians, staff, and partners.

Previously a clinical area within MHRH, eSIM – which is short for Educate, Simulate, Innovate, Motivate – is an educational training space where healthcare staff can practise critical skills in a controlled environment. The lab supports many practice areas: pediatrics, obstetrics, neonatal intensive care, geriatrics, emergency, trauma, EMS, the operating room (OR) and post-anesthetic care, medical units, surgical units, mental health, and rural and intensive care.

Three simulated patient-care areas, a control room, and a debriefing space allow instructors and staff to work through realistic scenarios to boost competence and confidence. The lab also has an OR simulation lab, the province's first, which allows staff to train without interrupting an active operating room. In the last year alone, this lab and others like it provided more than 1,000 training hours across 190 sessions.



The new lab gives us the opportunity to work with staff and teams in a safe and controlled environment, ultimately growing and improving skills and knowledge in our communities. This has great benefits for urban and rural healthcare.

– Amanda Dyck, Simulation Consultant for MHRH and SE Alberta

The lab comes with two mannequins that mimic human physiological responses such as breathing, heart rate, blood pressure, sweating, and bleeding. This allows lab facilitators to simulate major incidents like cardiac arrests and respiratory distress scenarios, enabling the medical staff to learn in a realistic, hands-on way.

Beyond the technical skills, the lab is used to orientate new staff and provide continuing education for existing staff. One major benefit is that the exercises promote interprofessional training, in which different members of the healthcare team can practice as one cohesive unit. After each session, teams gather to review their scenario and get critical feedback for development and improvement.

"Teams come together and, in doing so, they learn how each other thinks, and what everyone's priorities and responsibilities are," says Randi Galenzoski, a Clinical Nurse Educator who specializes in operating room and post-anaesthetic care. "It helps us to

build communication and improve the team dynamic in a safe space, which translates into better care for patients."

Dr. Vincent Grant, Medical Director of the eSIM Provincial Simulation Program, says, "This is a state-of-the-art facility – and we're really proud of the work that went into creating this space. I'd like to thank the Medicine Hat Health Foundation for funding the project, and to AHS's Facilities, Maintenance and Engineering and the many staff and community members who stepped up to help this project along."

eSIM Lab



Better Outcomes With Connect Care

In our last edition a year ago, we talked about the imminent launch of the next phase of Connect Care – a provincial network of medical information that has been designed to work together across multiple sites, zones, and specialties. The program recently completed its seventh launch, further connecting the province and marking a very special milestone in the areas of acute care, diagnostic imaging, and clinical labs. These are now entirely served by Connect Care across Alberta, and this is important for patients and providers alike. Now, any patient at any hospital in the province will have consistent health information wherever they go – through any care they receive or any future health events across AHS.

Connect Care Kick Off



South Zone Connect Care Lead and Director of the zone's Emergency and Ambulatory Care, Marguerite Dorchak, says this is a transformative change in the way clinicians can send and receive patient information. At last, she says, it will "allow physicians, clinicians and patients to be partners, especially in the way patients in South Zone will be able to access their health information in real time through the Connect Care patient portal."

Dina Tymchyshyn, Executive Director of Provincial Acute Care Clinical Services, is also thrilled with this next launch phase. "If we were transferring ICU patients – or any patients – we'd be taking the entire chart, printing out the information, and then the clinicians would have to look through it all manually. Now, with Connect Care, they can look at this information before the patients even get on site and pull their care team together."

The Impact of Your Donations

OBIX Prenatal Monitors

At the beginning of 2022, we were raising funds to purchase new OBIX equipment through our "Big Hearts for Tiny Heartbeats" campaign. OBIX is a cutting-edge prenatal software system that not only records real-time fetal and maternal data, but also connects to a network of specialists across the city, province, and country for immediate analysis and response. An expectant mother can have an expert opinion in seconds. This is a major step up from our older prenatal monitoring systems, which used paper printouts.

Thanks to public support and a donation by Drowning Ford, OBIX was fully funded and launched in 2023. This fits into the provincial launch of Connect Care, a medical data management system that streamlines more than 1,300 independent health information systems into one cohesive digital platform. Thank you for helping make this step a reality for Alberta healthcare!

The Hana Orthopedic Table



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OBIX has been stress-free and easy to learn. It saves patients from having to travel in bad weather. With Connect Care, the health care team can review the test outside of the patient room, and it makes another look with fresh eyes possible. Those group discussions lead to the best plan of care.

– Dr. Duncan McCubbin, OB/GYN

The Hana Orthopedic Table

The major fundraising item for 2023 was a new Hana table for orthopedic surgery. This is a highly specialized bed that allows better placement for patients undergoing hip and lower limb surgeries, leading to less invasive procedures and much faster recovery times. We entered the year in dire need of another bed to handle increasing demand, so we asked the community for help – and you answered! Contributions in response to our spring direct mailer, fundraising initiatives like the Community Cares Gala, and the first annual "Driving Donations for Local Healthcare" vehicle raffle helped make this purchase a reality. The new Hana table has been funded and just arrived!

Health Inside and Out

Mental Health Support in Medicine Hat

Local Health Resources

The Pediatric Mental Health Room Thank You to our Donors

In years past, youths struggling with mental health conditions would be assessed and treated in either pediatrics or the adult psychiatric unit, depending on their size and age. This could lead some young people, already experiencing trauma, to feel discomfort and anxiety in a strange adult environment. With the opening of this new specialized pediatric mental health room, these children and youth now have a dedicated space for their needs, no matter their age.

This room is the first of its kind in the region. It has been designed as a calming and welcoming space that allows vulnerable children to have a safe place to talk about their troubles. Helping with this are the hand-painted custom murals by local artist Paintergirl – artwork that makes the room more interesting, serene, and inspiring.

The Foundation is grateful to all donors that helped make this room a reality. In particular, we would like to thank Methanex, Cancarb, the Medicine Hat Lions Club, and the Strikeout Stigma Foundation, our signature sponsor. Strikeout Stigma honours late athlete Mason Close and supports the mental well-being of youth and young athletes, working to end negative stigma around the topic.

Pediatric Mental Health Room



General Resources

- ahs.ca/helpintoughtimes
- Mental Health Helpline: 1-877-303-2642
- Provincial resources: call 211 or visit ab.211.ca
- Reach out to Health Link by calling 811 within Alberta (free 24/7)

Addictions Help

- A list of programs, counselling, and treatment options is available at ahs.ca/amh
- 24/7 Addiction Helpline at 1-866-332-2322
- Access Addiction & Mental Health line at 1-888-594-0211
- Medicine Hat and Area AHS Addiction & Mental Health office: 403-529-3500 (adult), 403-529-3582 (child, youth, and family), 403-529-9021 (Recovery Centre)

Crisis Prevention

- Crisis Text Line: Text CONNECT to 741741 (adult) or 686868 (youth)
- Suicide Crisis Helpline: dial 988
- 24/7 Suicide Prevention Service: 1-833-456-4566
- Hope for Wellness for Indigenous People: 1-855-242-3310, or online at hopeforwellness.ca
- Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868
- 24/7 Distress Centre Crisis Line: 403-266-HELP



Hospital Resources

The 5 North Nutrition Center (Psych and Addictions)

With renovations funded by Canadian Natural Resources Ltd. and supported by MHHF, this area provides appliances, amenities, and space for patients to keep snacks and drinks. This "coffee area" brings a little bit of normalcy to patients' lives, and doubles as a visiting space when they have guests.

5 North Patient Lockers (Psych and Addictions)

This department had very limited space for patient items. These lockers now provide peace of mind when storing personal belongings, such as purses.

Christmas Gift Bags (Addictions & Mental Health Outreach Services)

This year, our Outreach Services provided holiday gift bags and backpacks for 240 individuals struggling with complex addiction and mental health issues. These bags and packs are an opportunity to extend kindness, and to enhance the lives of many marginalized and vulnerable people with little external support. The packs include hygiene items, socks, mitts, and Christmas treats.

Patient Hygiene Packs

Being in the emergency room is hard enough, but it's even more difficult to stay overnight without basic items like toothbrushes. We work with the hospital to provide these hygiene necessities to patients, mental health patients, and vulnerable populations, free of charge. It's a small gesture that can make a world of difference between comfort and unease. This year, the Packs were supplied by Methanex.

Infertility, Pregnancy Loss, and Infant Loss Support Group

Once per month, Medicine Hat Family Services and the Medicine Hat Health Foundation offer a free support group for women struggling with pregnancy issues. The next four meetings are on March 13, April 10, May 8, and June 12, taking place at the Chamber of Commerce from 6:30 to 8:30 PM. For more information, contact Medicine Hat Family Services at (403) 504-8026.





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