



Impact
Report
2020

First and foremost, we'd like to thank you for your commitment to healthcare and services in Southeastern Alberta through a chaotic and unprecedented year. We are pleased to share some of the Medicine Hat & District Health Foundation's highlights of the 2019-2020 fundraising year.

Introduction

Our original plan was to present this report to you at our annual Friends of the Foundation event, but as with many events throughout 2020, that was not to be. Even though our plans have changed (and changed again), we are determined to remain resilient and continue to move forward. Our Board of Directors, staff and volunteers are honoured to share the significant impact of your donations, stories about our donors, and the reasons they support the Health Foundation.

Behind the scenes, we have been building our team's capacity and modernizing our philanthropy knowledge. We spent the last year investing in our governance practices and establishing a solid financial foundation to support local healthcare for years to come. You may have also noticed the Health Foundation invested in a brand refresh, with a move to a more digital platform as so many of us have had to quickly adapt to.

We have always strived to develop diverse revenue sources. The 2019-2020 fiscal period proved to be one of the Health Foundation's most successful revenue years to date, and we so looked forward to an even stronger 2020-2021. Although our drive to exceed last year's pace is moving slower than anticipated due to the economic climate, we continue to work daily with our healthcare professionals to enhance healthcare in Southeastern Alberta.

Now more than ever, we are incredibly grateful for the support and generosity of the community around us. While each of us may be as individual as a drop of water, when we come together, we form an ocean – capable of changing the world and creating an undeniable impact on the lives of everyone.

Please enjoy the 2019-2020 Donor Impact Report. We appreciate each and every gift that is directed our way, and we look forward to another year of improvements and giving back to the community.



Chris Hellman
Board Chair



Heather Bach
Executive Director



Seeing the *Light*

The Kinsmen Club of Medicine Hat have been generous supporters of the Medicine Hat & District Health Foundation since 1996, giving more than \$23,000 to enhance the quality of local healthcare.

In the summer of 2020, these donations directly contributed to the improvement and beautification of the patio in Unit 2 North of the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital. This unit is focused on the care, treatment, and ultimate rehabilitation of geriatric patients, and the average stay is about three months long – with numerous check-ups, assessments, tests, and other activities that can cause stress or anxiety. During these extended stays away from a familiar place, spending time outdoors, under the blue sky in the fresh air and sunlight, can have immeasurable benefits to a patient's well-being. Thanks to the Kinsmen Club, this new space now has a small garden and a better outdoor seating and relaxation area.

While this development may seem small, it is a welcome quality-of-life upgrade for patients who would otherwise get little reprieve from being indoors for months at a time. And, for those who like to stay busy, being able to grow and nurture plants and flowers offers a major boost to mental health and self-esteem. We often see that such “small” changes can have long-lasting and positive impacts. On this patio, every dollar made a difference – and those differences add up in ways far beyond the monetary value.

TESTIMONIALS

“I enjoyed the atmosphere of the patio and the opportunity to plant flowers and vegetables during my stay there. Through that experience, my time and recovery went by a lot faster.”

“Thank you for giving my husband the opportunity to explore his interests on the patio. It gave him a lot of joy that I could see on his face, every time I came to visit.”

“This is the first time I have felt fresh air in so long – the sun feels amazing on my skin. I feel like a new person in many ways.”

“I was so grateful for the patio – it got me out of the four walls that I had been in for so many months. I loved to sit out there and watch the sunset.”





Fresh Paint and Refreshed Passion

Community Health Services, located on Dunmore Road, provides many services for new moms, families, and individuals in need of immunizations. For young children afraid of needles, it can be a scary and anxious place. Our staff, concerned that these children would only remember the fear, decided to rejuvenate the interior and create a more welcoming and friendly atmosphere.

Thanks to our generous donors, Enerplus Corporation and South Rock Ltd. Employees' Charitable Foundation, the common areas, waiting areas, and client rooms of the unit received a major refresh with child-friendly artwork and murals, leading to a big boost to patient and staff morale. In addition,

each child now receives a colouring and activity book to occupy them while they wait after their immunization, or before their dental appointment. The transformational piece pictured here, created by local artist "Paintergirl", is sure to put smiles on faces for many more years to come.

TESTIMONIALS

"We are getting so many comments about how happy the painting makes patients feel. We as staff are also impacted by this on a daily basis. Thanks so much for funding this project!"







A Bed Almost as Good as *Your Own*

When it comes to surgery, the actual operation is only the first part of the process – a process that, depending on the details, can mean a long and sometimes painful recovery. LaDonna Hammel knew this in November 2019 as she prepared for orthopedic surgery, and after researching further into her options, decided to specifically ask for one of the latest acquisitions of the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital – a trial Hana Medical Bed.

Hana beds are specially designed to allow orthopedic surgeons better anterior access for operations, minimizing the damage to surrounding muscles and vastly improving pain management and recovery times. It can also be used for other orthopedic purposes, like assisting in the process of setting fractures. In the past, patients in the Medicine Hat area who

wanted to use this type of bed needed to make the trip to Calgary, but thanks to the generosity of the community here and the donors of the Health Foundation, the MHRH now has one to call its own.

LaDonna was lucky enough to be one of the first thirty patients to have surgery on the trial bed, calling her experience “absolutely phenomenal”. Of those patients, 27 of them were home and recovering within 24 hours. Now, with the bed as a permanent fixture, this kind of experience can become more commonplace, with reduced wait times, infection rates, and recovery periods. We are endlessly grateful for this major improvement to the quality of care in our community.

Give the Gift of *Understanding*

As you read these words, think about how crucial the ability to understand them really is. Chances are, once you learned to read and speak, you never paid much mind to how incredible and complex the language comprehension process really is, or how critical it is in expressing your needs, concerns, and desires, and to be able to listen to those of others. Being able to use language is a gift that many people take for granted, so this year, we were ecstatic to bring additional speech pathology and communication equipment into the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital.

Thanks to community donations through initiatives like the Tim Hortons Smile Cookie campaign, we provided new Assistive Technology equipment to Children's Allied Health for families to trial so they can find the best fit for their child before making their own investment. With new tools like tactile switches, eye trackers, smart software, and other non-traditional communication methods, this equipment has not only reduced overall clinical wait times, but it has helped to unlock the power of interaction to those who cannot verbalize their own inner thoughts.

This directly contributes to more independence, more communication capabilities, and an incredible boost to morale. For many non-verbal people who can use these alternative methods to finally be able to connect with the people around them, this is, quite literally, a life-changing development.

As humans, we are meant to be socially interactive and to laugh, communicate, and learn with others. The new potential available through cutting-edge, non-verbal communication devices allows previously unheard voices to be heard, and enables the full bloom of wonderful personalities that can go on to live satisfying and fulfilling lives.









Practice Makes Perfect

Healthcare professionals occupy a field of constant innovation – all the time, practices and technology are improving, and new trainings are released as medical science makes new discoveries. But just as no musician is perfect immediately, these workers need a place to roll up their sleeves and practice new or unfamiliar techniques before implementing them on real patients. And that’s why the new eSIM program lab at the Medicine Hat Regional Hospital is so exciting.

eSIM – Educate, Simulate, Innovate, Motivate – is a provincial program that provides a safe learning environment for healthcare workers, where they can develop critical skills for patient care in a non-threatening setting. Identified by the Canadian Patient Safety Institute as a core strategy for increased education and safety, it is crucial for ensuring consistent quality of care and providing the best possible outcome for patients. “Simulation-based training has become an essential tool in the professional development of frontline staff,” says Dr. Vincent Grant, Medical Director for the provincial eSIM program. “Lessons learned are on an

individual, team, and systems level, as the simulations can also identify issues in the care processes and environments that can be corrected.”

With donations from Drowning Ford Grazing Association and the Medicine Hat community, a former NICU space at the hospital was renovated into a state-of-the-art eSIM lab, with three patient spaces, a dedicated debriefing area, and full video/streaming setups so that staff can fully review their performances. This lab can simulate many major areas of hospital operations, including pediatrics, obstetrics, emergency and trauma care, operating rooms, ICU, and others.

When it comes to medical staff, you want your care and results to be as close to perfect as possible. And as the saying goes, the only way to get there is with practice – and now, thanks to the incredible support from our community, the frontline staff in Medicine Hat can take that practice further than ever before.



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