

Lifelong Friends Donate \$2.4 Million to Advance Cancer Care— and Encourage Others to Give Back



Craig Combe and Ken MacMaster. *(Photo courtesy of LHSC)*

Craig Combe and Ken MacMaster's remarkable gift through London Health Sciences Foundation will help advance cancer care while inspiring others to give back and support the future of health care in Southwestern Ontario.

LONDON, Ont. — What began as a friendship has grown into a shared dedication to helping others.

Today, that dedication is reflected in an extraordinary \$2.4-million gift from the Combe and MacMaster families to expand access to specialized cancer treatment at the Verspeeten Family Cancer Centre at London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC).



Their desire to support better cancer care was inspired by seeing how the disease has touched their friends and loved ones. Long-time supporters of London Health Sciences Foundation (LHSC), Ken and his wife, Barb, have been giving back to LHSC and the community it serves for more than 20 years. As previous owner and long-time leader of MacMaster Chevrolet Cadillac Buick GMC, a family-owned and operated dealership, Ken has long been committed to supporting the communities his business serves.

"I took it in my heart to help people if I could," says Ken. "If we can eliminate some suffering or grief for families, then it'll be worth it."

Together, they saw an opportunity to make a meaningful difference by helping ensure patients have access to the latest cancer treatments in the area.

"I wanted to see this advanced way of treating people brought to London," says Craig. "Our physicians already have the expertise, but this helps ensure they have the tools to match. If we can help give patients even greater peace of mind during one of the most difficult times in their lives, that's worth investing in."

Their gift will support the purchase of LHSC's second Varian Ethos therapy system, an AI-driven linear accelerator and the introduction of the AlignRT radiation therapy and HyperSight imaging system across the hospital's fleet of linear accelerators (LINACs). Donor-funded upgrades to medical technology are crucial to helping LHSC deliver faster, more precise and personalized radiation therapy while expanding capacity to meet the needs of a growing number of patients.

Linear accelerators are used to treat many types of cancer, including prostate, bladder and lung cancers, as well as some blood cancers. Together, these software upgrades will enhance the precision and efficiency of radiation treatment in London, helping clinicians deliver even more accurate, personalized radiation treatment while improving each patient's experience.



AlignRT allows continuous monitoring of a patient's position throughout treatment, helping clinicians maintain accuracy during radiation delivery. For many patients, it can also eliminate the need for the small permanent tattoos traditionally used to guide treatment—a lasting reminder of one of life's most difficult chapters. Hypersight gives a sharper, faster picture of the patient on the machine for clearer visualization of the tumour and nearby organs.

LHSC provides radiation treatment to approximately 300 patients each day across 9 linear accelerators (LINACs). As patient demand continues to grow, the hospital is working to expand access to new advanced technology, with donor support playing a critical role in completing specialized software upgrades for its linear accelerators (LINACs). Craig and Ken's gift is a significant step toward that goal. They hope it will inspire others to help complete the remaining upgrades so more patients can benefit from this technology. Donations of every size will help bring these innovations to more treatment rooms, improving care for people with cancer across the region.

Thanks to Ken and Craig's generosity, these innovations will help clinicians deliver faster, more personalized radiation treatment by allowing them to adapt treatment plans in real time, improve precision and better protect healthy tissue. The technology is designed to target tumours with exceptional accuracy while minimizing radiation exposure to surrounding healthy tissue—similar to treating only the yolk of an egg without affecting the white or shell.

"This remarkable gift will help ensure our patients continue to benefit from some of the most advanced radiation technologies available," says Dr. Michael Ott, department head of oncology at LHSC. "By giving our clinical teams greater precision and flexibility in how we plan and deliver treatment, this investment will enhance the care experience for thousands of patients in the years ahead. We are deeply grateful to the Combe and MacMaster families for helping shape the future of cancer care in our region."



As longtime supporters of London Health Sciences Foundation (LHSF), the two friends believe investing in local health care strengthens the entire community. They hope their gift will encourage others to help fund the remaining funding needed to upgrade LHSC's linear accelerators. Donations of any size will help bring these improvements to more treatment rooms and improve care for current and future cancer patients.

"Craig and Ken's generosity is already changing what's possible for cancer patients in our community," says John H. MacFarlane, president and CEO of LHSF. "Donor support helps make innovations like these possible, ensuring more patients across Southwestern Ontario can benefit from the latest developments in cancer care."

It is estimated that over two in five Canadians will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime, a reality the Combes and MacMasters hope will inspire others to give back. While their gift will help shape the future of cancer care, they believe every donation can make a meaningful difference. Together, gifts of every size help bring new advancements to LHSC and ensure more patients can receive the care they need.

About London Health Sciences Foundation (LHSF):

For 30 years, [London Health Sciences Foundation \(LHSF\)](https://www.lhsc.on.ca/foundation) has been committed to advancing health and improving lives across our region. Thanks to your generosity, we support critical initiatives such as groundbreaking research, state-of-the-art equipment, specialized care with personalized treatment options and the education of future healthcare professionals. It is through the hope and kindness of our donors that lives across Southwestern Ontario are being transformed—today and for generations to come. We are committed to honouring your compassion with acts of gratitude, stewarding with respect and reporting with honesty, transparency and accountability. As a Canada Revenue Agency registered charity accredited by



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