

Your IMPACT

2018

Knocking Out Parkinson's Disease

Kim Petrie, patient and creator
of fundraising event Let's Shake

Your IMPACT

Welcome to the inaugural issue of Your IMPACT magazine where we highlight some of the amazing and unique ways donors like you support advanced treatment, education and research at London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC).

All of the items and projects featured in this magazine were bolstered by the generous support of you, our donors. As you will read, the effects of these contributions were tremendous in enhancing patient care and moving forward life-saving research.

Quite simply, you are making an incredible difference to the patients and families LHSC cares for each and every day.

Thank you.



Specialized equipment boosts health care quality

Specialized equipment boosts health care quality **pg 3**

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Dr. Inderdeep Dhaliwal and the Pleuroscopy team with donor-funded equipment

We all know how improvements in technology can make a big difference in our day-to-day lives. For patients with cancer, it can mean less time in the hospital and getting back to their family and loved ones sooner.

Until now, at LHSC, the only way to assess certain types of cancer that may be spreading around the lung was for patients to undergo invasive surgery performed in the operating room. This meant a lengthy and uncomfortable hospital stay, recovery from anesthesia and additional stress for the patient.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, a new minimally invasive tool called a Pleuroscope can take tests and treat patients sooner without an operation or staying in the hospital.

This multifaceted tool provides biopsies, can remove small tumours, and remove excess fluid from the chest – all through one simple incision. This means patients can be diagnosed and cared for in an outpatient setting and return to the comforts of home the same day.

Thanks to donors, our hospital is a leader in cardiac care

In 2018, Cardiac Surgery Chair/Chief Dr. Bob Kiaii and a team of specialists performed several minimally invasive surgeries that wouldn't have been possible without the visionary support of donors.

In a Canadian first, patient Herlinde Poeltl had a new replacement valve called the Medtronic Evolut Pro Valve inserted through her thigh up to her heart. In a world first, Rosa Mascherin was in need of a similar valve replacement, but the artery in her thigh was too small so it was implanted directly through the aorta. Both Herlinde and Rosa avoided open-heart surgery, meaning a faster recovery time and better long-term health.

"I knew I wouldn't be able to manage much longer without surgery to fix my heart. I couldn't believe how much better I felt when I woke up from surgery," Herlinde says.

Thanks to donors to the Innovative Valve Fund, the Cardiac Care team began performing minimally invasive valve surgeries like Herlinde and Rosa's in 2008 – a full four years before they became covered by the province.

"The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care did not fund the procedure, so donor dollars provided the proof of concept that led to an increase in funding. Now, more patients like Herlinde and Rosa can receive the most effective care possible," Dr. Kiaii says.

In yet another world first, Dr. Kiaii and the team used the da Vinci® robot to replace the aortic valve of patient James Fuller, who suffered from a calcified, narrowed aorta. James is now fully recovered and says he feels like a young man again.



Dr. Bob Kiaii, Herlinde Poeltl and Rosa Mascherin

"The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care did not fund the procedure, so donor dollars provided the proof of concept that led to an increase in funding."

The da Vinci® was purchased in late 2012 with the support of many generous donors to London Health Sciences Foundation, and is used for minimally invasive surgeries across various disciplines, such as for minimally invasive hysterectomies within the Women's Care Program.



Members of the London Telecom Pioneer Club with their handmade pillows

Gifts from the heart



The rings are blessed on the heart pillow during Cindy and Zoran's wedding in 2017

When patient Cindy Waddick was recovering from a complex heart surgery performed by Dr. Michael Chu just before Christmas of 2016, her care team gave her a special red pillow to hold to her chest to relieve some of her discomfort. She was touched by the gesture, and that pillow would go on to hold a meaningful place in her heart long after she recovered.

While she was still in the hospital after her life-saving heart surgery, Cindy's partner Zoran proposed to her. Her care team was there to witness the memorable moment, so she updated Dr. Chu and the team a year later.

"Zoran and I got married in September, thanks to my new valves and excellent surgical care!" Cindy wrote. "We even used our red 'heart' pillow for the blessing of the rings."

This is exactly the type of story that Barb Robinson, who coordinates the volunteer heart pillow program, and her fellow volunteers like to hear. It's what inspires them to sew hundreds of pillows throughout the winter months.

The volunteer group is made up of retired Bell and Nortel employees, known as the London Telecom Pioneer

Club, who meet in the former Bell Canada building on Colborne Street in London.

"My dad was always doing the heart pillows and that's how I got involved," Barb says. "When he passed away, I took on his role. I think my mom got one of these pillows as well when she had heart surgery."

Barb is among many of the volunteers who have been touched by cardiac care in some way. Allin Sharp, one of the founding members of the heart pillow program from the 1980s, said his daughter had a heart attack at 57 and received a stent to increase the blood flow in her heart.

"Heart problems can happen at any age," Allin says. "So we make these pillows to give people a little bit of comfort during a difficult time."

The group produces an average of 2,000 pillows each year and delivers them to LHSC's University Hospital for cardiac surgery patients like Cindy, who was so grateful for her care that she made a significant donation to Dr. Chu's cardiac research.

Fun, ambitious, caring – community events

LET'S SHAKE



When Kim Petrie of Hamilton was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease at just 45 years old, she was in shock. As a fitness and boxing enthusiast and mother of three, she was faced with the sudden reality of how this diagnosis would affect her life.

However, she wasn't going to deal with it quietly. Despite the new health challenges she faced, Kim used her Parkinson's news as a jumping-off point to help others, by serving as an empathetic listener for people facing a diagnosis, and by raising money for the cause.

She founded the event Let's Shake, an annual fundraising gala held each spring that attracts more than 600 guests with top-notch entertainment, food and auction packages. The event's success is a true testament to the community in Hamilton rallying around the cause, as well as the work of the dedicated planning committee.

"Let's Shake is meant to be fun and I think people with Parkinson's appreciate that it's not all taken seriously," Kim says. "The serious side is that we're raising money and trying to give a better quality of life to people with Parkinson's."

The event has raised more than \$240,000 in six years for Dr. Mandar Jog's research at the Movement Disorders Centre at LHSC, which includes the novel spinal cord stimulator project described on the next page. Community events like Let's Shake are truly changing lives.

The seventh annual Let's Shake is coming up on April 12, 2019 at Michelangelo's in Hamilton.

MULTIPLE MYELOMA WALK OF CHAMPIONS

For the past 10 years, a passionate group of individuals and families have been walking every September in support of multiple myeloma, which is the second most common blood cancer after non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. The Walk of Champions has grown tremendously since its inception, raising more and more each year, with \$91,000 raised at this year's walk alone. The cumulative total is now nearly half a million dollars, which has gone to support crucial research with the goal of improving the lives of those with multiple myeloma.

Though some patients can live for many years with the disease, their treatment puts them at a greater risk for blood clots. Dr. Martha Louzada, a clinical hematologist at LHSC, is determined to minimize that risk through her research and clinical trials, while keeping quality of life and patients' emotional and mental well-being top of mind.



"Support through this event has substantially improved our ability to conduct local myeloma studies and answer important research questions that may lead to practice changing in the management of multiple myeloma," Dr. Louzada says.

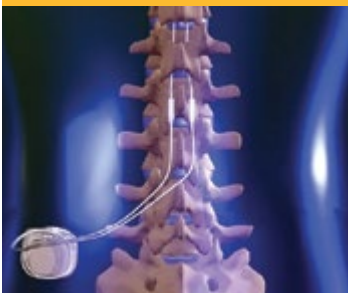
The 11th Annual Multiple Myeloma Walk of Champions will be on September 8, 2019.

Helping patients with Parkinson's disease walk with confidence



Dr. Mandar Jog, Director of the Movement Disorders Centre at LHSC

Can you imagine walking down the street when suddenly your feet feel glued to the ground?



You may stumble, be completely immobilized for several minutes, or even fall. It's painful, disorienting and an all-too-common symptom of Parkinson's disease – 'gait freeze' occurs when our brain circuits cannot easily switch between motor functions. Normally our gait circuits in our brain function like the automatic transmission of a car. If the automatic transmission stops working, your car may stall, just as your body stalls during gait freeze, often leading to a painful and potentially dangerous outcome.

While often used to reduce chronic back pain, a spinal cord stimulator is now being studied as a possible treatment method for gait freeze. Dr. Mandar Jog and his neurosurgeon colleagues at the Movement Disorders Centre (MDC) at LHSC are using stimulators to activate and wake up spinal cells. They are currently the only group in the world to be piloting this project, which is funded by generous donor dollars.

"The idea is that instead of getting only brain resources to get people to walk, why not spinal cord resources? They play a very large role in walking," Dr. Jog says.

The MDC team tested this method in five patients in a clinical trial with resounding success. The number of gait freezing episodes the patients experienced went from an average of 16 to 0 over six months. In two cases, patients in wheelchairs were even able to get up and walk again.

Dr. Jog and his team are testing the method with 20 more patients, and if the results continue to prove successful, this novel treatment could become common practice for Parkinson's patients, giving them a much-improved quality of life.

Funding a Canadian first



Dr. Alison Allan, Senior Oncology Scientist at LHSC's London Regional Cancer Program (LRCP) with the Parsortix

Donors funded the **Parsortix** and **VeinViewer II** – new equipment that is more accurate in detecting and treating cancer.

Imagine if a simple blood test could show the spread of cancer and determine which treatment will be most effective for the patient. This would transform how we conduct research and care. Thanks to donor funding, we are doing just that.

LHSC is the first centre in Canada to have acquired the Parsortix, an instrument currently used in research labs and soon to be available for use in clinical care.

Technology that provides the ability to do more research is vital – it is how we make breakthroughs that improve the lives of cancer patients.

On the horizon, the Parsortix will be part of an international trial launching in 2019. Patients from Canada, Europe and Australia will have their blood samples sent to LHSC for analysis on the machine to determine which patients have cancers that are more likely to return in other parts of the body.

“The VeinViewer makes IV starts much easier for our chemo patients... this helps them have a better experience while receiving treatments.”

Jackie Brindle, Coordinator, Chemotherapy Unit, LRCF

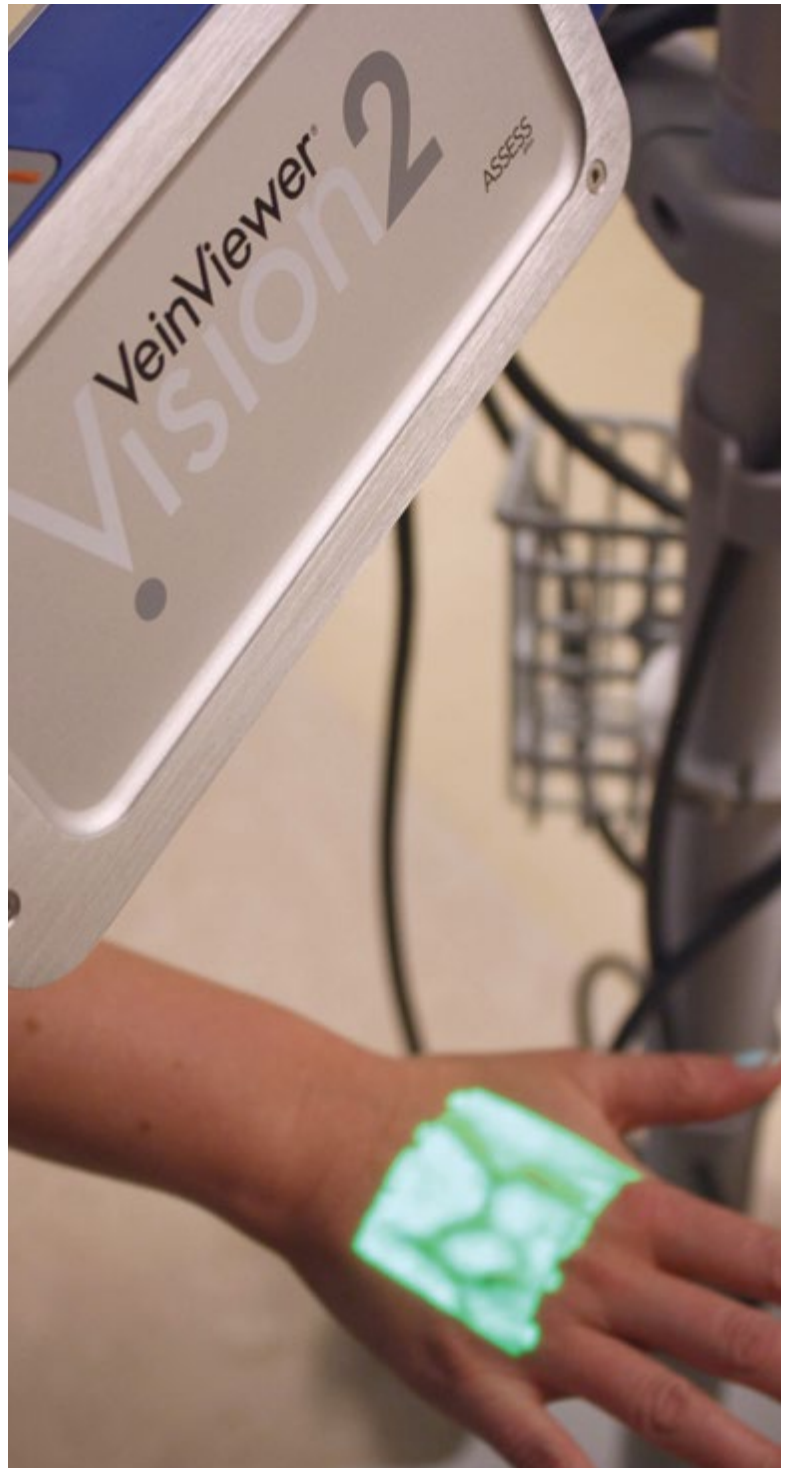
VEINVIEWER II

For cancer patients, being poked with a needle is a regular, uncomfortable occurrence. The medicine (chemotherapy) to treat them is administered through their veins using intravenous (IV) therapy. Often, just finding the vein so that the IV can start is a real problem if a patient's veins are not easily seen through their skin. Thanks to donors, the purchase of a portable machine is making an already trying time more comfortable.

Aptly named, the VeinViewer allows the team in the Chemotherapy Unit to 'light up' and effortlessly find the veins. This equipment is helping patients feel less like a pincushion and allows them to be more comfortable and focus on getting well.

The VeinViewer is easy to maneuver and position. The imaging device allows the clinician to see patients' veins in detail, making it easier and safer to administer treatment.

Thanks to proceeds from the Glen Little Charity Golf Tournament, this seemingly simple piece of equipment is now used daily in the Chemotherapy Unit to assist patients in getting their IV started.



Youth-led change for mental health care services

When Scarlett Davidson moved to London for university, she thought it would feel like a second home, having previously received treatment at the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Care Program. As an adult, though, she felt lost and soon found herself in crisis.

“All of us at YMHAC believe and stand by ideology that we are speaking for the youth, by the youth and giving the youth the chance to create change... and all of us, if you give us the opportunity, will produce outstanding results.”

Rachel Skedgel

She was at an age in which she could no longer access children's care, but she didn't know where to access appropriate adult care.

Alec Cook lived in London as a teen, but travelled to Toronto frequently to receive support and care at a transgender youth clinic. As with Scarlett, once Alec turned 18, this support was no longer available to him.

Rachel Skedgel was in and out of foster care as a child. When she moved to London, she also felt alone, prone to crises and barely able to afford food.

Fortunately, all three have connected with LHSC's donor-supported Transition Age Program (TAP) which provides services such as a youth mental health and addictions service, through Cornerstone Counselling, as well as ensuring authentic youth participation in service and system transformation.

TAP's programs help youth in the 16-25 age group receive care and support that's appropriate to them, so that people like Scarlett, Alec and Rachel get the help they need when no other help can be found. As a youth-focused program, it's of the utmost importance to TAP that services are also guided and governed by the youth.

The Youth Mental Health and Addictions Council (YMHAC) is a council of 10 to 12 youth, along with one or two adult allies from LHSC and mindyourmind, that provides a platform for youth engagement in services throughout the city. Scarlett, Alec, Rachel and the other council members contribute their expertise, time and energy as advocates in bringing best practices, with a mental health focus, to youth services.

“All of us at YMHAC believe and stand by ideology that we are speaking for the youth, by the youth and giving the youth the chance to create change,” Rachel says. “And all of us, if you give us the opportunity, will produce outstanding results.”



Youth Mental Health and Addictions Council (YMHAC) members Rachel Skedgel, Scarlett Davidson and Alec Cook

YMHAC has also helped with programming at MINDS (Mental Health Incubator for Disruptive Solutions) – a research lab that seeks to promote the mental and emotional well-being of transition-aged youth. MINDS is a youth-forward program that, along with TAP and the First Episode Mood and Anxiety Program (FEMAP), is partially funded by generous donor dollars raised at Country Classic Auction, LHSF's largest signature event.

The overarching goal of all these community-based programs is to fill gaps in access to services and to create a continuum of care from childhood to adulthood, so that no young person is left in crisis with nowhere to turn for help. With passionate and informed youth voices backing the programs, and your generous donations supporting their efforts, the landscape of youth mental health care is rapidly evolving to support more young people in need.

“This is the youth voice that any group needs to improve the system, and it’s incredibly powerful.”

Jill Lynch, Project Facilitator for TAP and YMHAC





L-R: Service League volunteers Chris Hawcutt, Cathy Pettit and Mary Jane Rivard with Raj Sousa, Coordinator, Mother/Baby Care Unit and Michelle Basacco, Manager, Mother/Baby Care Unit

Enriching the family experience

Every hospital department has a “wish list” of items and needs that could enhance care for their patients. These range from items like a thermometer to a new lab to house millions of dollars in state-of-the-art imaging equipment.

For the nurses in the Mother/Baby Care Unit, a mother and her newborn’s safety and happiness is of the utmost importance. Their wish list includes quality items that help make the profound experience of childbirth a memorable one for new families. One such item is the Joey BabyBed – an ergonomic infant care bed created specifically to facilitate close interaction between a mother and newborn after birth.

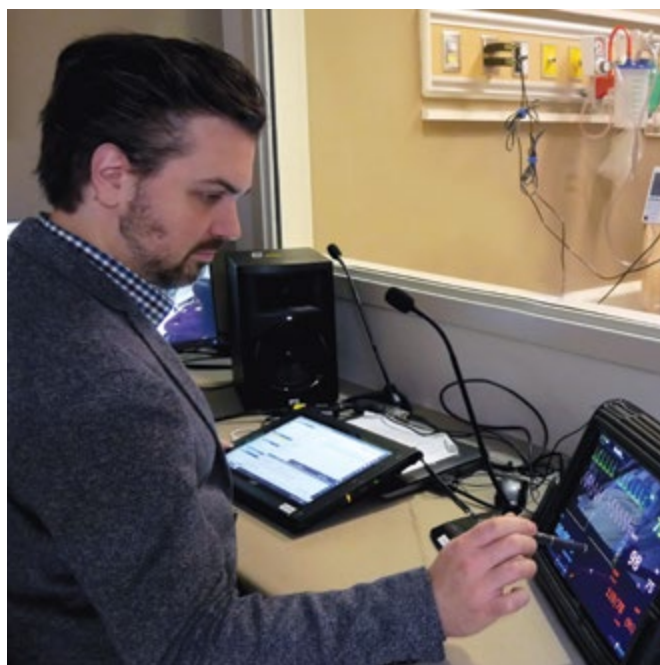
The Service League of London sees firsthand the need for items like the Joey BabyBeds through the group’s work in the unit running a newborn photography program called Debut Baby Photos. So through the proceeds from the League’s

photo packages, the volunteers give back to support various needs within the Women’s Care Program, including through the recent purchase of new baby beds. The Service League is a philanthropic group that formed in the 1930s to support patient care through initiatives such as social work and the purchase of new equipment like the Joey BabyBeds.

The new beds have customizable heights to encourage comfortable mother-baby interaction. With sturdy, ergonomic construction, the beds are built with patient safety top of mind.

“Here in the Mother/Baby Care Unit, we feel incredibly blessed to have this generous group of women who unselfishly donate their time to our patients and families. Every year, their financial support allows us to purchase not just what we need, but what we wish for to support our patients and families here at LHSC. They are an integral part of our team,” says Michelle Basacco, manager in the Mother/Baby Care Unit.

Inspiring confidence during emergencies



For many mothers, meeting their new baby for the first time is one of the happiest moments in their lives. LHSC's goal is to ensure both mother and baby are healthy and safe during this time.

Though emergencies are rare in the Mother/Baby Care Unit, one of the most common crises is postpartum hemorrhage (PPH) – when a mother experiences significant blood loss after giving birth. It's imperative in this situation that the care team remains calm and clear-headed in order to provide the best care. That's why preparing in advance for any scenario equips the team with practical skills, including the ability to quickly take action.

The Michael Gunning Simulation Centre is exactly where this type of invaluable training takes place.

Through hands-on practice with realistic mannequins that can breathe, speak and simulate bleeding; medical residents, nurses and other specialists learn to respond to health care emergencies just as they would in a real-life situation. In a simulated environment, the focus is on learning proper techniques and communication in a safe and encouraging setting.

Michelle Basacco, manager in the Women's Care Program, says staff feel well-prepared to respond to emergencies such as PPH after having been trained in the simulation centre.

"A well-trained and calm care team ultimately leads to improved patient care for mothers and families," Michelle says. "And we have donors to thank for that."

Donors provided the support to pay for the renovations and equipment needed to open the Michael Gunning Simulation Centre in 2017. Part of this donor-funded equipment includes nearly \$100,000 in exceptional audiovisual (A/V) equipment which is fundamental to the Centre's operation.

"A well-trained and calm care team ultimately leads to improved patient care for mothers and families, and we have donors to thank for that."

Michelle Basacco, Manager, Mother/Baby Care Unit

Solving the complexity of the spine



Engineer Aaron Gee with the Instron mechanical testing system

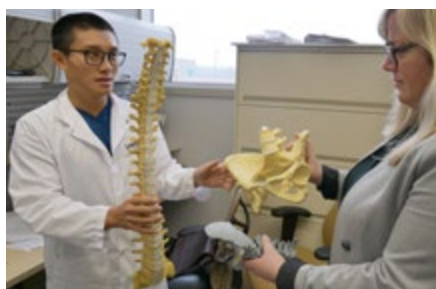
The spine is one of the most complex systems in our bodies, requiring careful treatment. Thanks to donor support, a team of engineers, physicians and rehabilitation therapists are researching the intricacies of the spine, and translating their findings into better patient care.

This world-class research is being performed within LHSC's Spine Biomechanics Laboratory. Findings from this research help surgeons determine the best course of care for patients in need of surgery, ultimately returning them to a better quality of life.

The following equipment, showcased here by research engineer Aaron Gee, is vital to life-changing orthopaedic research:



Scientists use these machines to create tools or implant models immediately, avoiding subcontracting time and costs that delay research. Having this equipment on-hand means discoveries are fast-tracked to patient care.



Donor-funded artificial bones and joints are used daily for testing surgical techniques. By donating a simulated spine for research, donors give the gift of a better quality of life to a spine patient.



The Instron machine tests the wear properties of bones like the spine, as well as implants and joints. This piece is necessary to researching ways of improving spinal surgeries for patients.

Guests at Country Classic Auction are changing lives

Since its humble beginning over 30 years ago, funds raised at Country Classic Auction have supported dozens of programs across the hospital. From improving mental health care for youth, to supporting women's programs, to renewing much-needed equipment and renovating critical care units, guests have had fun and made a real difference. Learn more at lhasf.org/patient-impact

Join us next year on November 2, 2019





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