

# You Are Vital

A \$3.5-million campaign for 100+ pieces of equipment that provide critical information to direct care

Produced in support of the Victoria Hospitals Foundation

## WHEN EVERY MINUTE MATTERS, EVERY DETAIL COUNTS

The beep of a monitor. The light of an X-ray. The hum of a microscope. For our patients and teams of over 6,500 physicians, nurses, therapists, pharmacists, technicians and support staff who make life-saving decisions each day, these are the vital sounds of life-saving technology.

To do their best work, to respond faster to what is happening right now inside a patient's body, they rely on advanced equipment that

allows them to make the right decisions, in the right moment, for the best outcomes.

Based on crucial data that signals any change in a patient's status, they make second-by-second decisions on our behalf every day, decisions that direct care, treatment and recovery. Decisions that even save lives.

Thanks to our community, the Victoria Hospitals Foundation's latest campaign, You Are Vital, raised \$3.5 million to fund more

than 100 pieces of equipment that will provide teams at Royal Jubilee and Victoria General hospitals with the important information they need to make critical decisions for patients in all areas of care, from newborns to seniors.

Ensuring caregivers have tools of the highest quality means the 200,000 Vancouver Island patients assessed or treated each year can continue to receive excellent care.

## Making magic, with your support



**STEVE MCKERRELL**  
Chair, Board of Directors,  
Victoria Hospitals Foundation

When our community unites, we make extraordinary magic happen.

We are stronger when we work together, and together we have achieved our goal for our You Are Vital campaign! Your commitment, enthusiasm and generosity have resulted in \$3.5 million raised for over 100+ pieces of urgently needed equipment.

It's because of our generous community that we celebrate this achievement; we simply could not do this without you.

When we pull together to improve health care in our community, we lift others up — we change lives.

To every one of you who supported our You Are Vital campaign to fund critical pieces of decision-making equipment across all areas of care at Royal Jubilee and Victoria General hospitals, thank you.

To the doctors and patients who shared their stories, you showed us all why compassionate, quality local patient care makes so pivotal a difference — to our neighbours, our families, ourselves. Thank you.

To our donors, you will equip caregivers with innovative technology that relays critically important information and makes possible immediate, informed action when every second counts. You are investing in the talents of our care teams. You are investing in the health of our community. Thank you.

To our many volunteers and sponsors that support events like Visions, our annual black-tie gala, your hard work and dedication have been instrumental in helping us to reach our goal.

To the *Times Colonist*, who tells the stories of our doctors and patients, you communicate so well the heart and soul of our campaign and spread it far and wide. Thank you.

To the Jawl Foundation, your impactful \$1-million gift in honour of the memory of Sohan Jawl completes this campaign and will help ensure excellent care for the 200,000 Vancouver Island residents treated each year. We are grateful and inspired by your profound, thoughtful generosity. Thank you.

Due to the success of the You Are Vital campaign, we are excited to announce that in a few weeks, we will be launching a companion campaign, You Are Vital: Pediatrics.

This initiative will aim to raise \$1.8 million throughout the spring to fund similarly crucial patient monitors in the Neonatal Intensive Care (NICU) and Pediatric Intensive Care (PICU) Units at Victoria General Hospital.

The campaign will help to alert our pediatric caregivers to any changes or trends in a patient's symptoms, so they can continue to provide remarkable and responsive care for our youngest and most vulnerable patients.

Thank you again for your outstanding support. What we achieve together is special and it changes lives.

For our patients, for their caregivers, You Are Vital.

With gratitude,  
Steve McKerrell  
Chair, Board of Directors,  
Victoria Hospitals Foundation



Rachel Leff and her son, Jasper, in Victoria General Hospital's Mother Babe Unit. ISLAND HEALTH

Vital tools help neonatal medical staff diagnose and treat babies with serious conditions

# Putting moms and newborns first

JEFF BELL  
Times Colonist

Rachel Leff had been through it all before when she went into the hospital to give birth to child No. 3.

This time, doctors decided to induce her at 36 weeks, meaning she would have a pre-term pregnancy. The Jan. 17 delivery of her son, Jasper, went well, but the baby was born with jaundice, a liver condition that causes yellowing of the skin and can lead to other issues — meaning Jasper would have to spend time in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

One in six babies born at Victoria General Hospital is treated in the NICU, ranging from premature infants to those with cardiac, respiratory and auditory issues.

As well as spending time in the NICU, Jasper was also in the Post-Partum Unit — often called the Mother Babe Unit.

VGH serves as the referral centre for maternity and pediatric care on Vancouver Island, and has one of four high-level NICUs in the province. About 3,000 babies are born each year at VGH.

Jasper's condition came about because his liver couldn't break down red blood cells fast enough, leading to the production of a substance called bilirubin, which makes the skin yellow.

"Having your newborn suffer from health issues is a terrifying experience," Leff said. "Not only was it hard for me to see my baby unhealthy, it was also heart-breaking to be away from my other children."

Jasper's condition, physiological jaundice, is one of the most common treated in the NICU. Treatment includes use of a bilirubin meter, a handheld instrument that monitors bilirubin levels without penetrating the skin.

Frequent measurements are taken at set intervals to ensure a



Clinical nurse educator Peggy Quigg with a bilirubin meter, a handheld instrument that measures the presence of bilirubin, a substance formed in the blood of babies with jaundice. ISLAND HEALTH

newborn's jaundice is being optimally monitored, said Peggy Quigg, a clinical nurse educator who has been in the nursing profession for more than 39 years.

"It is crucial to monitor bilirubin levels because persistent undiagnosed neonatal jaundice can cause serious conditions such as permanent brain damage," she said.

One of the items that will be purchased through the Victoria Hospital Foundation's You Are Vital campaign is a new bilirubin meter costing \$10,000 — something that Quigg is looking forward to receiving.

"Having an additional bilirubin meter in the units means we won't have to wait until this vital tool becomes available," she said. "It supports our team in ensuring we have enough bilirubin meters to conduct critical testing when we need to."

"It makes a difference for us nurses, but more importantly for the babes in our units."

Another key part of Jasper's

treatment was a bilirubin blanket, which tackles jaundice by sending out light to break down bilirubin in an infant's blood. The blanket wraps around the child while a fibre-optic light shines onto the skin.

Both the Victoria Hospitals Foundation and VGH Auxiliary have had a hand in funding these blankets.

Quigg said Leff was right there during the treatment with the bilirubin blanket.

"She didn't want to be separated from her baby, so we were able to provide phototherapy on our Mother Babe Unit."

Leff said that seeing Jasper receive his care gave her peace of mind.

"The fact that I was able to hold Jasper while the tests were being done and that the results were immediate made all the difference," she said.

"I was happy to know that Jasper did not experience any discomfort during the tests and that he was receiving the exact

care he needed."

Jasper's overall stay at the hospital was seven days. Leff is grateful for the treatment that was given to him, and is happy that the hospital had the important equipment it needed.

After receiving a clean bill of health, he was able to meet his siblings for the first time — four-year-old Oliver and two-year-old Spencer.

Leff said she and husband, Jason, were impressed with the way the time in the hospital went for Jasper.

"We were fortunate enough that he only needed to spend a few days there, but during that time we met many caring and knowledgeable nurses and other staff," she said.

"It is a scary and overwhelming environment for parents seeing their tiny babies hooked up to so many beeping machines, but everyone was so kind and did their best to help us understand what everything was for, as well as allowing us to be involved in his care as much as possible."

She said she is hopeful that sharing her story will help to show others how vital it is to support health care in the region.

Quigg also acknowledged those who step up with donations to help infants get a good beginning.

"I think that it's a very special time in a mom and a baby's life and their family's, and they all remember this time and the support that they're given as they begin their journey together," she said. "We want to make sure that they are well and healthy. They're just adjusting, mom's recovering from birth and baby is just starting out life."

The best equipment makes it all possible, Quigg said.

"That's just so important in our busy, clinical day," she said. "It's a huge component of our care to our moms and babies."

"We really thank any donors."

> [victoriahf.ca/vital](http://victoriahf.ca/vital)

# Robert Bateman takes hospital’s care to heart

## Artist credits Royal Jubilee doctors and medical facilities with saving his life

JEFF BELL  
Times Colonist

Robert Bateman’s emergency flight from Salt Spring Island to Victoria General Hospital wasn’t all bad. “A helicopter ride always has an element of ‘fun,’ ” quipped the internationally acclaimed artist, recalling his 2016 trip to Victoria for emergency treatment. Once at Victoria General, he was in good hands. “There they cauterized a bleeding ulcer and put a dam in an aneurysm to the liver to restrict the flow,” Bateman said. “And that seemed to fix the problem for a year and a half.”

He was back for more emergency treatment on March 26, 2018, after bringing up blood and hemorrhaging at 2:30 a.m. He ended up in Royal Jubilee via Salt Spring’s Lady Minto Hospital, and was put on a different regimen of drugs, then hemorrhaged again April 4 and was back at Royal Jubilee.

Bateman said that this time, Dr. Shung Lee and Dr. Darren Biberdorf — with the help of a great medical team — “took the risk of operating on this 88-year-old body for six hours, solving the problem.”

The two repaired an area of his duodenum’s wall and put a sheath over his aneurysm.

Bateman had high praise for his treatment.

“The care was wonderful,” he said. “I felt that everyone from the ambulance drivers to doctors, nurses, lab technicians, physiotherapists et cetera was professional, friendly and caring.”

“I am here today because of the care I received.”

He was released from hospital April 25.

“We both felt that everyone always did their best for him,” said Bateman’s wife, Birgit.

The Batemans — both artists, naturalists and retired high-school art teachers — live healthful,



Artist Robert Bateman: “I am here today because of the care I received” at Royal Jubilee Hospital. BIRGIT FREYBE BATEMAN

### ABOUT OUR DONORS

- 40 per cent of the equipment in our hospitals is funded by our donors.
- The support of donors lets us purchase equipment sooner and more often, ensuring leading-edge care for patients across Vancouver Island.
- Funds raised in this community stay in this community.

active lives. They have called Salt Spring home for 33 years and extol the benefits of being outdoors.

“Research has shown that spending time in nature has health benefits for the mind and body,” they said in a joint statement. “We encourage everyone to get out into nature as much as possible.”

Birgit said the care Robert received has allowed him to get back to painting and to maintain physical activity.

“We’re still doing our two-kilometre walks each day, which I never thought was possible for a man of 88!”

They said the walks allow them “to notice what birds or plants are thriving around us.”

The Batemans agreed to tell the story of Robert’s treatment as part of the Victoria Hospitals Foundation’s You Are Vital Campaign, which raised funds to

purchase more than 100 pieces of equipment for 11 key hospital areas, such as cardiac care and mental health.

Robert Bateman said it is important to support fundraising in the health field.

“I have high praise for our health-care system and particularly how the Victoria Hospitals Foundation works to gather funds for improving our medical-care facilities, as well as purchasing the latest equipment, which we know is terribly expensive.”

Birgit said Robert’s case was unusual.

“But you, too, may experience something so unusual that you’ll be grateful to be in one of our hospitals, where the care, attention and knowledge is superb,” she said.

Dr. Omar Ahmad, head of emergency and critical-care medicine for Island Health, said new monitors would benefit cases such as Robert’s.

Ahmad praised the Batemans for continuing to do things that benefit their well-being.

“They’re definitely role models of a real focus on quality of life,” he said. “Certainly, they derive pleasure out of their walks.”

Ahmad said that upgrading monitoring systems will be a positive step.

“The new systems are going to



From left, Dr. Brian Farrell, respiratory therapy student Emily Vanderhaven and Dr. Omar Ahmad run a resuscitation simulation in the Centre for Interprofessional Learning at Royal Jubilee Hospital. DARREN STONE, TIMES COLONIST

be offering significant improvements over the old systems, and as we move forward into an interconnected hospital system, this will be one of the first steps that allows us to meet that goal.

“It’s all about early detection, early recognition of changes in vital signs.”

The new systems, which need about \$2.4 million of the campaign funding, will be able to send potentially life-saving information to any monitor in any part of both the Royal Jubilee and Victoria General hospitals, Ahmad said.

Most patients who come to the hospitals will benefit. About 200,000 people from the Vancouver Island area are assessed annually at Royal Jubilee and Victoria General.

Ahmad pointed to the importance of monitors in a number of recent cases in the province where there have been carbon-monoxide exposures, including one in Port Hardy.

“These new monitors will be able to detect those levels, which is helpful, for sure,” he said, adding that the new equipment is more sensitive and more interconnected than what’s in place now.

Ahmad said the presence of carbon monoxide is often

under-recognized.

“Early detection is very crucial for therapy,” he said. “If you can’t detect it easily, it often goes untreated.”

That can lead to long-term effects.

New monitors will be “a powerful part of the tools” that the Victoria Hospitals Foundation campaign provides, he said.

A central monitor at various “hubs” in the hospital will display information from individual rooms, Ahmad said, “and then that will also be connected with patients as they leave the wards to go for imaging or for procedures.”

One factor in the need for new equipment is that technology changes and improves quickly, he said.

“The changes in any field are just so rapid it’s hard to keep up. We’re just trying to stay ahead of the curve.”

The equipment being sought has the capacity for upgrades, Ahmad said.

The old equipment works, “but improvements can definitely be had,” he said.

“They’re getting to the end of their lifespan, for sure.”

>[victoriahf.ca/vital](http://victoriahf.ca/vital)

# Royal Jubilee lung tests prove a lifesaver for asthma sufferer

LINDSAY KINES  
Times Colonist

Todd Wells is the first to admit that he didn’t always make the best choices when he was younger.

Despite battling asthma from the age of five — he ended up in hospital for nearly three months at one point — he still took up smoking when he was 11.

“Not the proudest moment,” he says. “A thousand people told me: ‘Don’t smoke when you’ve got asthma.’ I never thought anything of it.”

He didn’t have to, at first. He skateboarded and rode BMX bikes, and nothing seemed to bother him.

But, as the years progressed, his asthma got worse. Everyday allergens would set it off and leave him coughing and wheezing.

“It was just random,” he says. “It could be dust or cat hair. Something would go in my nose and make me sneeze and it would be over for me.”

His lungs would go “berserk,” his head would pound and he’d get so dizzy that he’d almost pass out.

By last fall, he knew that something was seriously wrong. Simple tasks became a struggle. A mild workout at the gym left him gasping for breath, and he was using his emergency inhaler up to 10 times a day.

He was 30 years old. “I went to the doctor thinking it was something extremely terrible, which it more or less was.”

The doctor referred Wells to the respiratory team at Royal Jubilee Hospital; it was a visit that would change his life.

His file landed on the desk of

Theresa Gilbert, one of 40 respiratory therapists at Royal Jubilee.

Although less well known than some of the higher-profile professions such as doctors and nurses, respiratory therapists have their hands in all areas of the hospital, from the emergency department to pediatrics to the intensive-care unit.

“Everywhere that somebody needs to breathe, you’ll find a respiratory therapist,” Gilbert says. “We deal with lungs and we work closely with the respirologists.”

For her part, Gilbert works in the pulmonary-function testing laboratory — a place that most people have never heard about, but where people with lung problems undergo rigorous testing that could end up saving their lives.

“It’s the one diagnostic test that people have to work hard at,” Gilbert says. “It’s not like going in for a chest X-ray where they get to stand and have an image done. They have to breathe in and out of our machines to get valid, reproducible data.”

The tests assess a patient’s lung capacity as well as lung function, which is how much air a patient can blow out in a second.

Gilbert has seen a lot of people with histories and symptoms exactly like those Wells had.

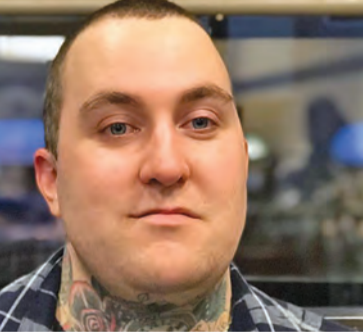
“I can’t tell you how many of these guys and gals that I meet,” she says. “I had a fellow Friday night and he was like another Todd Wells. Honestly, same age, childhood asthma, smoker, works in construction.”

And, like Wells, he was having trouble breathing.

In Wells’s case, testing showed that his lung function was shockingly low at just 45 per cent — a number that he says hit him “like



A woman undergoes a spirometry test, which measures how well the lungs are functioning. ISLAND HEALTH



Asthma sufferer Todd Wells: “I went to the doctor thinking it was something extremely terrible, which it more or less was.” ISLAND HEALTH

a ton of bricks.”

The test results — and Gilbert’s ability to explain what was going on in his lungs — persuaded Wells to change his life then and there.

“I think it was the day after that that I quit smoking,” he says. He hasn’t had a cigarette since.

From Gilbert, Wells got referred to Mark Finnis, a certified respiratory educator, who taught Wells how to use his inhalers properly and manage his medication.

The combination of quitting smoking and properly managing his asthma had a dramatic impact, Wells says.

Within six weeks, his lung function improved to 87 per cent and he felt better than he had in years.

“I can actually breathe,” he says. “I don’t get tuckered out



Respiratory therapist Theresa Gilbert: “I can’t tell you how many of these guys and gals that I meet” have impaired pulmonary function. ISLAND HEALTH

real fast. It’s weird because I never really noticed it until I quit smoking.

“Even waking up in the morning, I don’t feel like I have to cough or anything like that. I don’t have to hit the puffer.”

He still carries an inhaler, but says he can’t remember the last time he had to use it.

“It’s a total difference. Night and day. Ever since doing those tests, that has totally changed my life.”

Wells said he and his girlfriend are looking to the future and planning to have a family. “I feel like a million bucks,” he said.

About \$100,000 from the Victoria Hospitals Foundation’s You Are Vital campaign will go toward purchasing a new pulmonary function machine to diagnose 8,000 patients a year just like Wells.

It’s “insanely important,” he says, that professionals such as Gilbert have the equipment to do their jobs so that they can make a difference in other people’s lives.

“In my situation, it kind of saved my life,” he says. “I’m sure if it can save mine, it can save many more.”

>[victoriahf.ca/vital](http://victoriahf.ca/vital)

# Technology at Royal Jubilee Hospital helped pinpoint Dr. Paul Whelan’s diagnosis

## When the doctor becomes the patient

JEFF BELL  
Times Colonist

Dr. Paul Whelan, a urologist and executive medical director of the Island Health Surgical Program, has treated countless patients in a stellar career.

Becoming a patient himself wasn’t something he planned for. “This [past] summer, I found out I had brain cancer and suddenly, I was the one who needed care,” said Whelan, who is in his early 60s.

Until his diagnosis, he was exercising regularly and enjoying a healthy lifestyle.

“When you are active and healthy, you feel as though you could live forever,” Whelan said. “After I received news that two of my friends had cancer, I started training for a 100-kilometre bike race in their honour.”

He said he felt “strong and proud” after getting to 96 km one day during his August training.

“But the very next day, I collapsed on a golf course.”

He was taken to the emergency department at Royal Jubilee Hospital. They quickly ruled out a cardiac problem, Whelan said. “But CT and MRI scans identified what looked like a tumour in my brain.

“They scheduled a brain biopsy.”

He said that Dr. Steve Hentschel, head of neurosurgery, was sensitive but direct in delivering the news to him.

“I was diagnosed with glioblastoma, a cancerous brain tumour that advances fast,” Whelan said. “Immediately, I knew the significance and gravity of what he was telling me.

“I have no doubt it was hard for Steve, too. Not only was I his boss, this would affect my life.”

It turned out that his collapse had nothing to do with the tumour and was triggered by something else. But if he hadn’t collapsed, the tumour wouldn’t have been found when it was, he said.

Whelan related his experience as a patient to bring attention to the Victoria Hospital Foundation’s You Are Vital campaign, which raised funds to allow the foundation to buy more than 100 pieces of equipment.

“Equipment alerts us to a problem that our care teams can rem-



Dr. Paul Whelan went from training for a bike race to a brain-cancer diagnosis in just 24 hours. He credits medical staff and the diagnostic equipment at Royal Jubilee Hospital for identifying and helping treat his tumour. ADRIAN LAM, TIMES COLONIST



Dr. Steve Hentschel, head of neurosurgery at Victoria General Hospital: “Two decades ago, we would have had to operate blind and search for the tumour.” ISLAND HEALTH

edy,” he said. “That is why I am so fortunate to work with the Victoria Hospitals Foundation to ensure we have the equipment our teams need to do their best work.

“I have supported the work of the foundation for many years and have been grateful to our community for their generosity to our hospitals.”

Whelan said his situation really

brought the foundation’s work home.

“Now, especially, I am grateful to the donors who come together to support excellent health care on Vancouver Island.”

When assessing the possible treatments for his condition, Whelan knew he wanted the most aggressive approach — removal of the tumour.

That would require a three-hour surgery.

“When I got into the operating room at Victoria General Hospital, everyone was so nervous,” he said. “There were nurses and doctors I work with every day, my colleagues.

“I wanted the team to be calm, I wanted to be calm and the only way we could find calm was through humour.”

Whelan said he was able to share a pre-surgery laugh with Hentschel, anesthesiologist Dr. Tom Ruta and the nurses.

“It was very strange to reverse the roles and be a patient in the operating room I work in every day.”

Hentschel called Whelan “an exceptional colleague” and said he is appreciative that neurosurgery has advanced the way it has over the past 20 years.

“Two decades ago, we would have had to operate blind and search for the tumour,” he said. “Nowadays, we can know precisely where it is, which is particularly helpful in cases like Paul’s,

### ABOUT OUR PATIENTS

- 25 per cent of the Vancouver Island population is assessed and/or treated each year at the Royal Jubilee and Victoria General hospitals.
- Patients benefit from the latest equipment: it allows them to be diagnosed, treated and rehabilitated so that they may live life to their full potential.

since his tumour wasn’t easy to access.

“We are grateful this technology allowed us to give him the best chance at recovery.”

Whelan said he was well aware of the risks posed by the surgery — including infection, vision loss, stroke — but the operation went well. He was full of praise for Hentschel and Ruta.

“I am here today because of them, accurate diagnoses and skilled decision-making.”

Whelan said he is ready for the next step.

“Whether or not my health journey is over, that’s a story for my next MRI scan to tell,” he said. “For now, I am down to one job — getting better.”

Whelan said he is undergoing radiation and steroid treatment, and finds it frightening.

“Due to side-effects, I have short-term memory loss, and that makes you really humble because you realize how fragile life is,” he said. “Cherish moments with loved ones and have these moments more often. Don’t wait for a medical emergency to realize what’s precious.”

He said he believes what happened to him came about for a reason.

“My story could be yours, and without extraordinary diagnostic and surgical equipment, I would not be here to tell it,” Whelan said.

“Funding advanced equipment for our hospitals will save lives. I know this because it is technology that lets my medical team know what is going on inside their patients right now. You are vital to ensuring our teams have access to this technology.

“Last summer, I thought I was training for a bike ride. I had no idea I was training for the ride of my life.”

>[victoriahf.ca/vital](http://victoriahf.ca/vital)

## ‘Keyhole’ video system allows doctors to perform minimally invasive operations

# High-tech tool aids thoracic surgery

LINDSAY KINES  
Times Colonist

In some ways, it’s fortunate that Pete Kenyon caught that cold back in 2008; it might just have saved his life.

The 74-year-old retired mill worker, who enjoyed travelling, figured he had picked up a bug on an airplane. But when two doses of antibiotics failed to clear the infection, his doctor sent him for a CT scan.

One test led to another and eventually alerted Kenyon to the fact that he had cancerous growths in his left lung.

Enter Dr. John Samphire, a thoracic surgeon at Royal Jubilee Hospital and a key member of its Centre for Excellence in Thoracic Surgery — the only such service on Vancouver Island.

Thoracic surgeons specialize in treating the lungs, trachea and esophagus and other organs in the chest, which is why Kenyon’s case ended up on Samphire’s desk.

“At that time, there was just two of us that practised on the Island,” Samphire said in an interview. “And [Kenyon] came with a lung cancer and was staged and we operated on him.”

The surgery removed about 50 per cent of Kenyon’s left lung and he underwent weeks of chemotherapy at Cowichan District Hospital.

“He did very well from that and we followed him for a number of years,” Samphire said.

Kenyon was unavailable for an interview, but he provided details of his experience to the Victoria Hospitals Foundation, which is highlighting his story as part of its You Are Vital campaign.

The foundation says Kenyon was “on edge” after the surgery, but eventually regained his strength and resumed golfing and gardening. He remained cancer-free for the next eight years.

Then, in 2016, he disclosed to his family doctor on a regular visit that he had been having night sweats for the past three months. He was sent for another CT scan,



Dr. John Samphire: Keyhole surgery “makes it a lot safer for the patient and it makes it much more of a thorough process.” ISLAND HEALTH

and a tumour was discovered in the same lung.

Kenyon, who was 82 by then, faced the prospect of further surgery. In the past, surgeons were less likely to operate on people at that age, but medical advances have changed all that.

This time, Samphire was able to use newer technology such as the internal thoracic video system, which allows surgeons to operate through a tiny “keyhole” in a patient.

“Although we’ve been able to do that for a while, the equipment that we’ve used for the longest time has been relatively limited in

terms of its visualization,” Samphire explained.

“We’re looking through a little hole in a device that’s about eight inches long.

“Now we’ve translated that to using the screens. Now, on large TV or large screens, we can see all the anatomy. It makes it a lot safer for the patient and it makes it much more of a thorough process.”

Of particular benefit for patients, such minimally invasive surgeries eliminate the need for large, open incisions in the chest.

“Chest incisions are amongst the sorest incisions that you can get, and so to be able to get in

there with small incisions, use the cameras, sort of duck in and duck out if you will, is a huge advantage to a patient,” Samphire said.

The benefits for Kenyon were immediately obvious.

“At 82, for him to have a big incision again would have been potentially far more problematic,” Samphire said. “So to see him at four weeks or six weeks, bouncing back, almost back to normal by then, is pretty cool.”

Samphire said equipment purchased thanks to the Victoria Hospitals Foundation’s You Are Vital campaign — including a new internal thoracic video system —

is vital to the work that he and his colleagues do.

“We do, I suspect, 90 per cent of our surgery now with cameras and scopes,” he said.

“I think without it, we would be doing things all in our old ways, which would be manageable, but clearly without all the benefits that we’ve seen develop.”

Donations through the hospitals foundation make a huge difference, he said.

“It’s critical because health care is a challenging thing. It’s a complicated process that requires a lot of money.

“We don’t always get the equipment as fast as we’d like, and these are some opportunities that let us get up to the standards and exceed the standards for care often much more quickly.

“So we are really dependent on people’s generosity to provide the best care possible.”

Kenyon is living proof of the impact from that care. The hospitals foundation says that two years after his second surgery, he and his wife, Doris, continue to spend time with their three children, eight grandchildren and five — soon to be six — great-grandchildren.

Samphire says he takes satisfaction from many aspects of his job.

“But, at the end of the day, it’s how that other person does,” he says. “What’s kind of neat about a story about a guy like Pete is that you get to know him for a long time, because we see him every four months or so for many years.

“You hear about the holidays, you hear about the family, you hear about all the stories.”

Samphire said he was always struck by the warmth and positive attitude that Pete and Doris displayed.

“So to see somebody like Pete be alive and doing well, so long after his first surgery and again after his second, is pretty impressive.

“It’s so rewarding and that’s what it’s all about.”

>[victoriahf.ca/vital](http://victoriahf.ca/vital)

WE ARE GRATEFUL!

Thanks to over 2,600 donors — community members like you — the You Are Vital campaign has raised its goal of \$3.5 million.

To the donors who have supported this campaign, thank you! Alongside the 6,500 talented staff and physicians at Royal Jubilee and Victoria General hospitals, you are making a significant impact on patients in our hospitals. We are grateful.

We also acknowledge the skills, expertise and deep compassion of our care teams. You are extraordinary in what you do for our families, friends and colleagues each and every day.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

The Jawl Foundation has generously donated a \$1-million gift in honour of the memory of Sohan Jawl.

This inspiring gift completes the You Are Vital campaign, and helps place crucial technology in the hands of doctors, nurses and caregivers, so they may continue to make the right decisions in the right moment, for the best outcome.

We are inspired by your generosity.



At Royal Jubilee Hospital, a procedure in the heart health unit uses a critical diagnostic piece of equipment called a heart catheterization laboratory C-arm.

ADRIAN LAM, TIMES COLONIST

Heart attack  
a timely wake-up call

A hospital visit for ‘heartburn’ saved man’s life, and alerted him to deadly condition

LINDSAY KINES  
Times Colonist

**I**t all started with a strange sensation in his chest. Heartburn. Or so Matt Oliver thought.

He was 44 at the time. Fit. Watched what he ate. Owned a business — Bike Tours of Victoria — that allowed him to stay active. No way it was anything too serious.

He went to work as usual that day, Dec. 23, 2017, but when the heartburn began getting worse by the end of the day, his colleagues suggested that he dial 811 and speak to a registered nurse.

Oliver waited until he got home and then called. He remembers the woman on the other end of the line was diligent, running down a checklist of his symptoms and making him promise to call an ambulance when he got off the phone.

“Of course, I was like: ‘Oh yeah, no problem,’” he says. “In my head, I was thinking: ‘For heartburn?’ I was totally fine. I was squeezing my hands, and it just felt like something was off.”

If it was a heart attack, he thought, he would be experiencing crushing pain in his arm, wouldn’t he?

Instead of calling an ambulance, he packed up a few things for what he assumed would be a long wait in the emergency department at Victoria General Hospital.

“You know? Near Christmas. For heartburn. In the emergency room. Probably not top of the list.”

He drove himself to the hospital without any problems, but everything changed as soon as he stepped into the waiting room.

“The world started getting



Matt Oliver, owner of Bike Tours of Victoria, on Royal Jubilee Hospital's cardiac equipment: “If that money hadn’t been donated before, I might not be here today.”

LYNDSAY EDEN

really small,” he says.

The receptionist asked for his health card, and the last thing Oliver remembers is fumbling for it in his wallet and then handing it over to her.

The next thing he knew, he was waking up in a bed across town at Royal Jubilee Hospital surrounded by medical staff, telling him that he had had a heart attack.

Dr. Chris Franco remembers the case well. He was the cardiologist on call at Royal Jubilee that night and oversaw Oliver’s care in the Coronary Care Unit before and after a procedure in which a stent was inserted in one of his heart arteries.

“A young guy whose life you’re trying to save on Christmas Eve is



Heart Health nurse educator Judy Nevett shows a patient-monitoring system at the launch of the Victoria Hospitals Foundation’s You Are Vital campaign at the Royal Jubilee Hospital on Oct. 25.

DARREN STONE, TIMES COLONIST

Franco and Oliver are speaking out in support of the Victoria Hospitals Foundation’s You Are Vital campaign to raise \$3.5 million for more than 100 pieces of equipment — including the monitors that helped save Oliver’s life.

Medical conditions are getting more complicated as the population ages, Franco said, and it’s crucial that medical teams have the best available tools to do their jobs.

Oliver knows that first hand. He says his parents flew out from Ontario after he suffered his heart attack and they bumped into a nurse on the plane who assured them their son was in good hands if he was at Royal Jubilee, the referral centre for cardiac care on Vancouver Island.

“They were relieved even before they landed that I was at Jubilee,” he said.

Indeed, from the moment he called 811 until today, Oliver says he has received first-rate care that allowed him to resume his

life, albeit with a slightly different outlook. He tries to worry less now, he says, in an effort to reduce the stress that he suspects played a role in his heart attack.

“[I’m] living more day-to-day now, and being more grateful for what I have,” he said.

This Christmas, having spent the previous one in hospital, he made a point of connecting with family and friends. It’s a second chance at life that he owes, in part, to the medical teams at Vic General and Royal Jubilee, but also to those who have donated money to equip the hospitals with the latest technology, he said.

“No donation is too small,” Oliver said. “Everything counts. You never know. It’s not just giving money. You’re actually saving people’s lives.

“I’m a testament to that. If that money hadn’t been donated before, I might not be here today.”

>[victoriahf.ca/vital](http://victoriahf.ca/vital)

ABOUT THE VICTORIA HOSPITALS FOUNDATION

The Victoria Hospitals Foundation raises funds for priority equipment that contributes to faster diagnosis and more efficient treatment at Royal Jubilee, Victoria General, and Gorge Road hospitals in every area of care. The Foundation also raises funds for special projects that help advance care, education and research, ensuring our medical professionals are at the top of their fields.



Every year, your donations help purchase hundreds of important pieces of equipment that ultimately benefit the more than 767,000 Vancouver Island residents our hospitals serve.

For more information on what we do

- Go to [www.victoriahf.ca](http://www.victoriahf.ca)
- Call us at 250-519-1750
- Visit us at Wilson Block, 1952 Bay St., Victoria, B.C., V8R 1J8

Canada Revenue Agency Charitable Registration #10793 5637 RR0001

You Are Vital  
WHAT’S NEXT

Every year, the Victoria Hospitals Foundation works with Island Health to determine priority equipment needs in our hospitals. From their list of priorities, we identify fundraising campaigns that reach the community in a variety of ways.

Since its launch in October, the You Are Vital campaign has been impactful and far-reaching. Now that it’s successfully completed, the Foundation will launch a companion campaign, You Are Vital: Pediatrics, aimed specifically at enhancing care for our tiniest and most fragile patients at Victoria General Hospital. Donations to this \$1.8-million campaign will support crucial patient monitors that allow our specialized pediatric caregivers to take immediate, informed action and will ensure the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) at Victoria General Hospital stay at the forefront of newborn and pediatric care.

This is for the 98 per cent of pediatric cases that are treated right here at home, at Victoria General Hospital. This is for the one in six newborns who spend time in our NICU. This is for the 200 to 250 children who require care in our PICU every year. And this is for the more than 5,000 infants and children at Victoria General Hospital every year that could require critical care. This is for their caregivers, their families and their friends. This is for our community and our future. Stay tuned!