

*In*Touch

THE VICTORIA HOSPITALS FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER | SUMMER 2021



A Critical Achievement

VHF donors, together, gave more than \$7 million to advance critical care—the greatest showing of support from our giving community in one year

In a year like no other, our donors gave their all

Exceeding \$7 million for local critical care is no small feat.

You made this happen. Whether you donated directly, gave at the till, bought a 50/50 ticket, participated in an employee giving campaign, or created your own fundraiser—you helped advance healthcare on the Island.

Your giving to *It's Critical* is already enhancing care at Royal Jubilee Hospital. In addition to providing local caregivers with new critical care equipment, your generosity has helped open an interim High Acuity Unit (HAU). Since opening, the interim HAU has helped care for more than 325 patients.

And now, as our community has generously given more than \$7 million to help build the permanent Seaspans Victoria Shipyards High Acuity Unit, our hospitals have the means to care for our friends, families, and neighbours for generations to come. More than 20 registered nurses, five critical care physicians, seven respiratory therapists, and other specialists have been hired.

“You’ve made a reality out of a dream we’ve had for some time now,” says Dr. Omar Ahmad, Department Head, Emergency & Critical Care Medicine, Island Health.

Thank you for changing critical care for Vancouver Islanders.

UNPRECEDENTED SUPPORT:

Just a few of the ways our community supported *It's Critical* and raised over \$7 million in just one year

Over 4,000 donors showed their support for the *It's Critical* campaign and its goal to equip and build the Island's first permanent High Acuity Unit at Royal Jubilee Hospital. We couldn't have made an impact without each of you—every gift helped make a difference.

**It's
CRITICAL**

Our donors took up the cause and **started their own peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns** for *It's Critical*, raising over \$72,000 combined.



Community leaders saw the importance of the HAU for Vancouver Island. Seaspan Victoria Shipyards and the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation made a **transformational \$2.65 million gift**.



There was good will at the till. **Save-On-Foods store teams championed *It's Critical***, pledging \$300,000 to the campaign.

Caregiver champions took us inside the hospitals at a time when we couldn't go ourselves. They illustrated the great need for our support and cheered our donors on with gratitude for their gifts.



Our donors were "in it to win it" when they gave as part of our **first-ever public lottery**. The *It's Critical* 50/50 jackpot climbed to an astounding \$258,010, with half going to one lucky winner and half to the campaign. Thanks to all who played!



On the cover (left-to-right): Heather-Ann Heyd, Dr. Omar Ahmad, Joe O'Rourke, and Carrie Homuth in the Seaspan Victoria Shipyards High Acuity Unit



When BC declared a state of emergency in March of 2020, I received a call from the Foundation. "**What do you need? Our donors want to help.**"

And help you did. You went above and beyond to support our critical care teams. Almost immediately, you helped us expand our capacity to help people. And you didn't stop there—throughout the year, with your donations and your messages, you made it loud and clear that our mission was your mission too. In raising over \$7 million (and counting!), you truly inspired us. You kept us going. From every one of my critical care colleagues, thank you sincerely for supporting our work, and in turn supporting our patients.

Dr. Omar Ahmad

Department Head, Emergency & Critical Care Medicine, Island Health

Critical care patients—like COVID-19 survivor Frank from Alert Bay—**shared their deeply personal and inspiring stories.** Through their journeys, we saw the critical importance of helping. And through your gifts, you made a critical difference.



A caring grandmother read about *It's Critical* and was **inspired to make a \$1 million gift.** "My donation is a way for me to be a part of the COVID-19 response."



No gala? No problem. Our *Visions* guests and *Hospital Visionaries* **still created impact, even without our signature fundraising event.**



Your generosity and their encouragement was a perfect match! **Donation-matching initiatives by local families and local companies matched over \$350,000** in gifts for *It's Critical*.

We celebrated with our Island Health colleagues at the **opening of the interim High Acuity Unit in October 2020.** Just six months into *It's Critical*, donor-funded equipment was helping Island patients.



Our community's giving spirit buoyed the campaign as people and groups used their talents and networks to help our hospitals. Your efforts were inspiring!



Donors learned more about our hospitals' needs through **Doc Talks—a new webinar series** that kept us connected to our caregivers when we couldn't hear from them in person.



Critical care needs remain a priority in our hospitals—it's not too late to give: victoriahf.ca/critical

Save the date: Donor Recognition Event | Wed., September 1 2021, 12:00 p.m.



Please join us!

Please RSVP online at victoriahf.ca/thank-you for a celebration of your impact through *It's Critical* and our donors' most transformative year in VHF history. Event details forthcoming based on current guidelines.

Introducing a new \$1 million campaign for Mental Health: *Equipped to Heal*

Mental health affects us all. And it affects us right this moment, right here in Greater Victoria. Our community is raising the alarm, our caregivers are pleading for support, and our donors are seeking ways to help. We hear you, we see you, and we are responding to you.

For the first time in our history, the Victoria Hospitals Foundation is embarking on a community-driven fundraising campaign to support pressing mental health needs within our hospitals. Through ***Equipped to Heal***, we are looking to you to help fund at least \$1 million of priority needs for the Mental Health and Substance Use (MHSU) programs at Royal Jubilee Hospital (RJH).

When you join **Island Savings**—lead donor to this campaign—you help increase access to hospital mental health care for South Vancouver Island. **You will make a tangible impact on mental health resources, care, and innovation.** Your donation will support a new Sub-Acute Unit at RJH, increasing mental health capacity by 35%.

The time to support mental health is now. Supporting *Equipped to Heal* is how.

EQUIPPED TO HEAL

Enhancing Mental Health
Services in Our Hospitals

How you can help address this hidden health crisis with a gift:



EQUIP OUR HOSPITALS TO HEAL

- Fund a new level of care—the MHSU Sub-Acute Unit—and help reduce patient re-admission rates
- Fund specialized rehabilitation beds, medication dispensers, a treatment room, and other high-priority needs



FOSTER RESEARCH & INNOVATION

- Fund research into innovative made-in-Canada treatment models for mental health and substance use services
- Help our hospitals attract and retain the best and brightest talent

Learn more and please give today: victoriahf.ca/equipped

For too long, people experiencing mental health emergencies have struggled to access the services they desperately need. Our hospitals are a vital part of a comprehensive system of mental health and addictions care, and I applaud this campaign to support people in Victoria on their wellness and recovery journey.



Sheila Malcolmson,
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions for British Columbia



We are deeply grateful to **Island Savings** for leading *Equipped to Heal* with their commitment of \$120,000 toward the campaign.

Mental Health
is *everyone's*
health.



Canadians will
develop a mental
illness in their
lifetime

17%

of British
Columbians—
about 800,000
people—
are experiencing
a mental health
or substance use
issue today



190,000

people turn to the
mental health and
substance use services
in our Island hospitals
each year



Existing MHSU beds
in our hospitals are
at capacity. There is
an urgent need to
expand

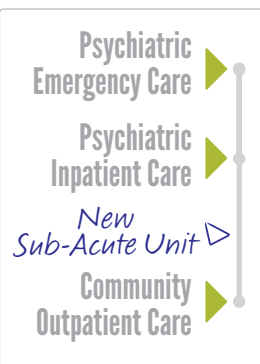
Our hospitals
help people heal.

*But they need
your help!*

The Sub-Acute Unit: *A New Level* of Care

Existing Mental Health and Substance Use beds in our hospitals are at full capacity. Through **Equipped to Heal**, you can support a new MHSU Sub-Acute Unit that increases inpatient bed capacity and aims to decrease hospital re-admission rates.

With up to 19 beds, the Sub-Acute Unit focuses on **patients' psychosocial rehabilitation as they prepare to reintegrate into their community**. Located on the 5th floor of Eric Martin Pavilion on the RJH campus, it began accepting patients in March of 2021.



In supporting *Equipped to Heal*, you can help fund high-priority enhancements and equipment. The individualized, connection-based approach employed by the unit's caregivers is key to ending the cycle of re-admission for patients. A wide range of mental health and substance use disorders are treated, including concurrent disorders, eating disorders, schizophrenia and other psychosis mood disorders, and severe anxiety.

By choosing to support this important need, you are helping establish **a new level of care for local patients**. You are also equipping our care teams to meet unprecedented demand during two health crises our local hospitals continue to face.

The unit is truly equipped to heal, offering psychosocial rehabilitation programming

- ☐ Goal setting
- ☐ Problem solving
- ☐ Behavioural activation
- ☐ Mood management
- ☐ A feasible recovery plan with strategies to achieve goals
- ☐ Connecting to community services for continuity of care
- ☐ Engaging family, friends, & peers for ongoing support
- ☐ Social skills
- ☐ Motivation strategies
- ☐ SMART recovery

Bill's Story

Bill, a grateful patient and Caring Spirit donor, has entrusted us to share his powerful story. We are deeply grateful.

If it hasn't helped you, you might not know what "psychosocial rehabilitation" means. It might just sound like a bunch of words. But to me, it was really valuable. It helped me so much.

I come from a long mental health journey of getting sick and getting better.

I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and then schizoaffective disorder.



I'm 61 now and I've had a lot of support from the community along the way. And from the hospitals too.

After I came to Victoria, the psychoeducational program at Eric Martin Pavilion at Royal Jubilee Hospital **helped me learn balance and gave me the confidence to get out into the community**. I was like a turtle in a shell, and that support was so important in starting my healing journey.

Today, I'm a housekeeper for seniors in assisted living. I really love being part of the community, sharing life with the residents and the staff, and making it a nice place for people to live. I never would have been able to do that without the help I received at Eric Martin Pavilion. My life would be totally different.

I learned that keeping my balance is like the tides—going out and coming back in a little bit at a time. Mentally absorbing the environment and new situations. You don't want to go too far out with the tide, because that's going to come back in with the storm, if you know what I mean.

Last year when COVID-19 hit and we all had to isolate, things got pretty bad for me. Because of the restrictions, I lost my connection to the community and my church and I turned to the masses that were on TV for comfort. I guess I learned that too much of a good thing isn't good either. I watched 120 masses in six weeks and I got really manic. I couldn't sleep for two weeks and I had massive separation anxiety.

That was when a concerned workmate took me to the hospital. I am so thankful they had a room. It took me two more weeks to get back sleeping.

If you haven't experienced being manic before, how I would describe it is like I was an eagle flying high in the sky. Or like a helium balloon way up in the air on a string, and you have to gradually pull the string back down to the earth without popping the balloon.

That's how I would describe **the care and support I received at Royal Jubilee Hospital**. I came down and got grounded. But only because of the help of the nurses and doctors. I think the turning point was when I met nurse John. He talked to me, and he really listened. I got to express my faith. I thank the caregivers very much for taking care of me and getting me grounded again, and listening to me and being there. I found it very supportive.

I know that it takes a lot of people working together for healthcare to work. An awful lot of people. It also takes people and companies donating. Not only donating money but also their time and their willingness to talk about and get involved with mental illness.

It's quite a blessing when people get involved to take care of one another. The programs in our hospitals do that for people; I know because I'm one of them. Thank you for your support of mental health care; **it really does make a difference in people's lives**. Thanks to my many caregivers, I now have a beautiful garden of friends.

—Bill, Victoria

Celebrating National Nursing Week 2021

In honour of this year's National Nursing Week theme, "We Answer the Call," several local nurses shared their thoughts on nursing and how grateful they are for your support.

Krista Allan, RN

Vice President, Knowledge, Practice and Chief Nurse Executive, Island Health

Our nurses are also parents, friends, partners, neighbors, and family members.



In addition to managing COVID-19 at work, our nurses are role models at home and in their communities. It hasn't been easy. Resilience in the face of a world-changing pandemic has been a challenge for nurses around the world. I have heard from so many of my colleagues this year that it has been their teams of fellow nurses who have kept them going. At every turn, they have "answered the call."



Read the full profiles:
victoriahf.ca/nursingweek

Corey Hollick, RN

5-North COVID-19 Unit & Clinical Teaching Unit, Royal Jubilee Hospital



What do you wish people knew about being a nurse?

That the role of nursing is so much more than what is perceived on TV shows and has evolved majorly over the years. **Nurses are like the eyes and ears for physicians, and we are important advocates in patient care.** We spend the most time with patients compared to any other healthcare provider in the hospital.

What would you say to donors to our hospitals and people thinking about giving?

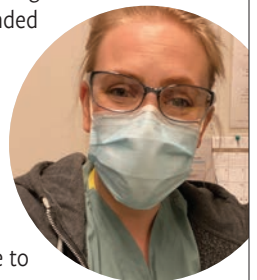
Any donation big or small goes a long way. By donating, healthcare teams are getting the tools we need to better serve the people in our community, which allows us to provide the best patient care.

Chelsea McNeil, RN

Labour/Delivery & Mother/Babe Units, Victoria General Hospital

Who or what inspires you?

Witnessing the incredible team that I get to work with. There are so many players in the interdisciplinary team who are rooting for these patients and **go the extra mile to make a difference for these families;** I can't express just how proud I am to be a part of the perinatal team! Working on a specialized unit surrounded by such strong women who choose to be here every single day to help empower these families makes me especially proud.



I feel so lucky to be able to help these incredibly strong women and families realize their potential and their inner superhero as they battle everyday struggles of being a new parent.

Uplands Golf Club members and local business leaders *Play Fore Hearts*

Hitting the greens again after last year's virtual outing, our community recently **supported local cardiac care through the Uplands Golf Club Annual Heart Tournament.** Raising more than \$2.97 cumulatively, the Tournament is BC's longest-running charity golf event. Tournament proceeds benefit the Heart Health program at Royal Jubilee Hospital. This year's funds will help purchase instruments designed to perform mitral heart valve surgeries.

The Foundation sincerely thanks the Heart Tournament organizers, players, and local business sponsors for supporting this year's event.



New for this year's Tournament was the *Play Fore Hearts* public lottery and 50/50 raffle.

2021 Premier
Tournament & Lottery
Sponsor:



2021 Tournament
Presenting Sponsors:





The new donor recognition wall at Royal Jubilee Hospital

New twin donor walls honour your generosity

For the first time in 20 years, the Foundation's twin donor recognition walls at Royal Jubilee and Victoria General hospitals are all new. The updated walls make much-needed space for our growing community of donors, include a digital screen and storytelling components, as well as archival hospital images.

Developed with the guidance of a volunteer recognition committee, the new walls are a much-needed update.

Be sure to visit the new donor recognition walls on your next visit: at VGH next to the Tim Hortons at the main entrance, and adjacent to Medical Imaging at RJH.

Thank you to the volunteers who helped make our new donor walls a reality

VHF sincerely thanks the donors who generously share their time and expertise with our Recognition Committee:

Sunny Bawa | Lise Gyorkos | Dr. Christine Hall | Al Hasham | Eric Holden

Cognitive Health Initiative

The **Neil and Susan Manning Cognitive Health Initiative** is embarking its fifth year of supporting an important collaboration between Island Health and the University of Victoria. Led by a \$2.5 million, five-year pledge, the initiative focuses on research and innovation to improve cognitive health care—the Specialist Memory Clinic model at RJH being just one example. We thank Neil and Susan Manning and the caregivers and researchers who are changing cognitive health care for future generations.



Legacy gift helps Island's youngest, most vulnerable

World-class compassionate care for our most vulnerable patients is a reality because Patricia cared and chose to champion pediatric equipment needs on Vancouver Island with a generous bequest in her will.

A nurse and midwife from Saskatchewan, Patricia Lehmann retired to Victoria and knew a gift in her estate could help so many young families. Patricia's generosity funded vital equipment for patient care in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Victoria General Hospital (VGH). The NICU is a 22-bed unit that provides medical and surgical care for vulnerable infants and families from Vancouver Island and across the province. This includes care for premature infants and babies experiencing complications from cardiac, respiratory, ophthalmological, or auditory issues. VGH—the referral centre for maternity and pediatrics on the Island—is at the forefront of newborn and child care and is the essential care hub for babies, children, and teenagers.

Patricia spent her career helping kids start life healthy and happy. **Her gift has helped to ensure that our pediatric care teams have the vital neonatal equipment needed to perform life-saving work every day.**

Patricia's support will bring children and their families comfort, hope, and strength during some their hardest times. On behalf of dedicated teams in neonatal and pediatric care at VGH, we cannot thank her enough.



Patricia Lehmann, left, with Gillian Kozinka, Victoria General Hospital Site Director, and Sarah Davis, Clinical Nurse Educator, in 2015.



Learn more about how you can impact care in our hospitals with a gift in your will: victoriahf.ca/legacy

Yana runs again, inspiring community with incredible 30 marathons in 30 days

Local runner and VHF champion **Yana Hempler** impressed and inspired us in 2020 when she ran 12 marathons in 12 days to raise money for *It's Critical*. This year, she set her sights on an even bigger goal—more than doubling that feat with **30 marathons in just 30 days**. On May 30, Yana crossed her 30th marathon finish line and ran into the VHF history books.

With a sign pinned to her running shirt, Yana raised awareness and encouraged donations to her online fundraising page for the Foundation's *Hospital Heroes of Victoria* initiative.

Thanks to hundreds of community donations—including a \$30,000 gift from a group of local businesspeople led by Tecnet President Ed Life—Yana has now raised over \$89,000!

Thank you, Yana, for inspiring us and honouring the dedication of our hospital teams. We can't wait to see what you do next!



Yana crosses the finish line of her 30th consecutive daily marathon at the offices of Victoria's Tecnet, May 30th 2021.

"All the sacrifices that our healthcare workers have made over the last year and a bit, like spending time away from home and working extremely long hours—I want them to know what they are doing is not going unnoticed by people in the community." —Yana



Create your own virtual fundraiser in just four steps

Just like Yana, you can raise money for our hospitals. VHF and JustGiving—an online platform for personal fundraising—are partners in helping people benefit the causes they are passionate about. Set up your own fundraising webpage in minutes and raise money celebrating a birthday or wedding, taking on a fitness challenge, or paying tribute to a loved one. **Make your unique fundraising idea come to life today—here's how:**



1. Sign up

Find out more & create an account: victoriahf.ca/peer-to-peer.



2. Choose a campaign

Or an area of hospital care that's meaningful to you to support.



3. Pick a challenge

What goal, tribute, or celebration will engage your friends and contacts?



4. Tell everyone!

Use social and email sharing tools to tell the world!

We are committed to protecting your privacy. In accordance with the *BC Personal Information Protection Act*, we only retain information regarding your gift history and relationship with us. For complete information on our privacy policy, visit victoriahf.ca/privacy-policy or call 250-519-1750. The Foundation does not sell, trade, or rent its donor information. Thank you once again for your contribution to our hospitals.

Help us reduce our newsletter costs! **Sign up for our digital newsletter at victoriahf.ca/newsletter**



VICTORIA HOSPITALS
FOUNDATION

Thank You!

Have feedback? Know anyone who would like to read this newsletter?
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