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# THE FOUNDATION REPORT



## Music Therapy Brings Joy and Healing to Patients at Providence Care

At Providence Care Hospital on Lakeview 2, the Complex-Care Unit, the soft strum of a guitar means more than just music—it represents connection, healing and hope. The unit is home to patients with complex medical needs, including 10 long-term care patients who rely on ventilators to breathe. For many of them, mobility is limited, communication can be difficult and opportunities to take part in group activities are challenging.

That's why the new Music Therapy Program, funded through the support of University Hospitals Kingston Foundation (UHKF) donors, is so special.

The program was designed specifically for this unique population, people who may spend the rest of their lives at Providence Care, and provides a way to improve not only their physical health but their emotional and spiritual well-being.

"It really is a very lonely life to live on a ventilator," says Jamie Watson, Program Manager for Complex Medical Management and Palliative Care. "These individuals have unique needs and very

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**Music Therapist Elizabeth Heslinga (middle, with guitar) leads the sessions with patients and staff on Lakeview 2**

few opportunities to participate in programs. Music therapy provides joyful opportunities for patients to look forward to and helps us support their overall quality of life."

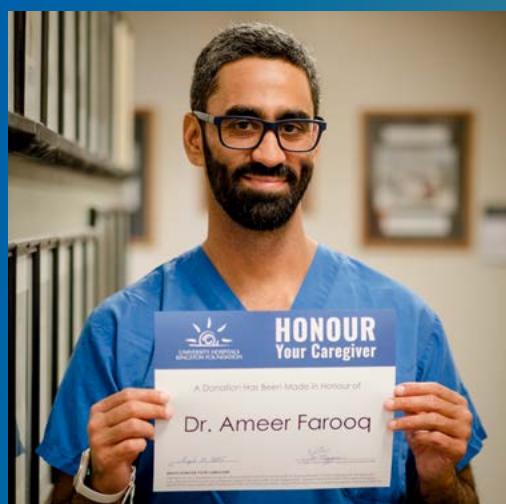
Certified Music Therapist Elizabeth Heslinga, with Find Your Voice Music Therapy, leads the sessions, bringing her specialized training and compassionate approach to each encounter.

"We use music therapy to work towards social, cognitive, emotional, physical and spiritual goals," says Heslinga. "Reaching for a drum or shaking an instrument can help with range of motion and physical goals. So, you're getting some physical activity out of it. The program is accessible to everyone because you can adapt it, even for people who lack verbal communication."

Sometimes patients sing along to their favourite songs. Other times, Heslinga places a maraca or tambourine in someone's hand, helping them participate in their own way. Each session is tailored to what the person can do—focusing on ability, not limitation. The program, which currently runs once a month, has already had a profound impact.

"Our values at Providence Care are about giving people life back," says Watson. "Without donor support, programs like this simply wouldn't happen. These patients deserve joy and connection just like anyone else."

Thanks to community generosity, the sounds of music, and the smiles that follow, are now part of life on Lakeview 2.



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**John Raymond, his partner  
Fiona Cooper and Skye**

## Prostate Cancer Patient Gives Back After Exceptional Care

When John Raymond learned he had prostate cancer, it came as both a shock and a strange familiarity because both his father and brother had faced the same diagnosis.

“You could say it runs in the family,” John says. “My father was diagnosed at 64, and I was diagnosed at 62, and my middle brother at 59. My father lived a full life until 96. That gave me hope.”

In early 2024, a high Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test result led John to Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC), where his journey began under the care of Dr. Robert Siemens. Over the months that followed, John underwent 25 sessions of radiation, under the care of Dr. Michael J. Kucharczyk.

Despite the intensity of treatment, he stayed committed to his work and positive outlook.

“I asked to have my treatments in the morning so I could keep to my regular work schedule,” he recalls. “It was good for my headspace. The health-care team was amazing—they always made it work for me. I’d walk in, everyone knew my name and they treated me like I was the only person in the world who mattered at that moment.”

John, who spent years working in the automotive industry, says he will never forget the compassion and professionalism he experienced at KHSC.

“I’ve spent my career in industries where customer service is everything,” he explains. “And the level of care I received at KHSC was as good, if not better than anything I’ve ever seen. Everyone, from reception to the radiation clinic, was kind, patient and professional. It was remarkable.”

Today, John’s cancer is under control, and the Gananoque resident is focused on giving back. Inspired by his care, he became a donor through University Hospitals Kingston Foundation and a member of the Power of Hope Golf Tournament committee (which raises money for prostate cancer care at KHSC).

For John, philanthropy isn’t just about writing a cheque—it’s a way of life. He grew up in a family that believed in supporting the community, whether it was donating their money or their time.

Through his generosity, John hopes to ensure others across southeastern Ontario have access to the same high-quality, compassionate care he received.

“Hospitals are community treasures,” he says. “We all benefit when we take care of them.”



## Corey Dunn Raised \$4,110 One Step at a Time

Corey Dunn was laying in a hospital bed in the summer of 2023 not knowing if he would ever walk again. Now healed and feeling much better, Corey has literally taken steps to help others who are facing similar health issues.

In September and October 2025, Corey transformed his recovery into gratitude, raising \$4,110 by walking 570 kilometres (10 kilometres for each of the 57 days he spent in hospital) for the Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC) Neurosurgery Department.

It all started in August 2023. After months of worsening back pain, Corey suddenly lost feeling in his legs and was rushed to the Emergency Department at KHSC. Doctors discovered a severe spinal infection that had eaten away at his vertebrae, leaving his

spinal cord compressed.

“I describe it as a beaver notching out of a tree,” Corey recalls. “It ate away at part of the bone of the spine, and once that notch was made, a cyst popped out and pinched off my spinal cord, which is how I lost the feeling.”

He underwent surgery in which two metal rods and 12 screws were inserted in his back. After his hospital stay, Corey spent many more months in rehabilitation at Providence Care Hospital. The 43-year-old—who had been training for a strongman competition and once pulled a fire truck for a charity fundraiser—now had to relearn how to stand, balance and take his first steps again.

“That first month I was in the hospital right after surgery, I didn’t know if I was going to be able to walk again or not until I stood up for the first time at Providence Care Hospital and took a couple of steps,” Corey says.

Corey, who works as an Environmental Services Attendant at KHSC’s Hotel Dieu Hospital site, decided to give back in honour of the health-care professionals who supported him throughout his recovery.

“I wanted to do a fundraiser. I didn’t have it easy, but I had it easier than other people,” Corey says. “So, I figured if me doing this makes what I went through easier for the next person, then it’s worth it.”

Walking is still not pain-free for Corey. He continues to experience constant nerve pain and knows his mobility will never fully return. But instead of focusing on what he lost, Corey chooses to focus on what he gained: the chance to walk again, and the opportunity to help others.



## From Dr. David Pichora

President and CEO of Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC)

As spring arrives at KHSC, we enter a new season of momentum and possibility.

We're already the region's premier teaching and research hospital, and we're continuing to push the envelope to find new treatments, make new research discoveries and develop health care innovations to benefit our patients.

This work is made possible through the support of donors like you. Your generosity not only helps strengthen care today, it leaves a legacy for future generations.

Over the last few months, we're proud to share that we have achieved several milestones which are already directly improving lives of patients across our region.

- Our second surgical robot is now fully operational, giving more patients access to

minimally invasive procedures that allow for faster recovery and shorter hospital stays.

- We recently unveiled our third MRI, this one located at our Breast Imaging Kingston site, to reduce wait-times and improve the early detection of breast cancer.
- In KHSC laboratories, new equipment is strengthening our role as one of Ontario's leading genomic sequencing sites, advancing our ability to diagnose and provide personalized treatments.
- We were once again named one of Canada's top 40 research hospitals, which reflects the impact of your support on discoveries that impact patient care.

Each of these initiatives would not have been possible without the incredible support of our local donors. Thank you for helping us shape the future of care in southeastern Ontario.



### YES! I want to support life-saving care!

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4-55 Rideau St Kingston ON K7K 2Z8 or visit [uhkf.ca/Donate](http://uhkf.ca/Donate)

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I have enclosed a **VOID** cheque (for monthly gift) or a **cheque payable to "UHKF"** (for single gift)

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**Dr. Jordan Leitch speaks at a Women's Giving Circle luncheon event**

## **Women's Giving Circle Funds New Prehabilitation Program for Ovarian Cancer Patients**

Women preparing for ovarian cancer surgery at Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC) will soon benefit from an innovative new pilot project designed to improve recovery before they even enter the operating room.

With the help of a \$43,738 grant from the Women's Giving Circle, KHSC anesthesiologist Dr. Jordan Leitch is launching a pilot Prehabilitation Program (PreHabKHSC) focused on fitness, nutrition, and psychological well-being ahead of surgery.

While rehabilitation after surgery is common, "pre-hab" before surgery is a relatively new approach in Canadian health care. The idea is simple: helping patients build strength and healthy routines ahead of time can improve surgical outcomes and support faster recovery.

"Three weeks (of pre-hab) is not enough to totally change your health trajectory, but it

is the right amount of time to form habits of consistent exercise, nutrition and psychological wellbeing," explains Dr. Leitch.

The PreHabKHSC grant will fund exercise equipment, protein supplements and the development of a mobile app to guide patients through the program. Dr. Leitch and her team also hope to use this pilot project to create a training pipeline for Kinesiology students, preparing the next generation of prehabilitation coaches.

Financial backing from fundraising groups like Women's Giving Circle is critical. Smaller research projects often struggle to secure grants, yet they play a vital role in shaping future medical treatments.

"Research is important. Every single sentence in every textbook that doctors read is based on knowledge learned from research studies," says Dr. Leitch.

Rachel Koven, Chair of the Women's Giving Circle, says the group was drawn to the program's innovation and potential.

"The Women's Giving Circle has the collective power to support new researchers. Grants at this level are hard to come by, especially if you're an up-and-coming researcher. So we give these researchers a chance to start their careers," says Koven.

The goal is to have a prehabilitation program that has shown proven results to improve patient outcomes by the end of 2027.

The Women's Giving Circle is a University Hospitals Kingston Foundation donor group of more than 100 women who raise funds to support world-class research at KHSC and Providence Care.

# Rose of Hope Strengthens Breast Health Leadership Through New Clinical Chair

Over nearly three decades, the Rose of Hope Golf Tournament has grown into one of Kingston's most influential philanthropic initiatives, raising more than \$3.5 million to advance breast cancer care and women's health through Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC), with excitement building for this year's event.

After years of fundraising to help purchase equipment such as a new MRI machine, organizers announced last year the creation of the Rose of Hope Clinical Chair in Breast Health, a position made possible through a multi-year \$1-million pledge supported in large part by Rose of Hope donors and volunteers.

This new leadership role represents a major investment in clinical excellence, research and aims to bring systematic improvements for patients across southeastern Ontario.

The inaugural chair holder, Dr. Doris Jabs, is a respected women's imaging radiologist with more than 20 years of experience. She has played a foundational role in building Breast Imaging Kingston into a leading national centre for detection and diagnosis.

For Dr. Jabs, the establishment of this chair position is not simply an honour—it is an opportunity to drive tangible improvements in care. Her priorities include reducing wait times, improving outreach to underserved communities and supporting innovation that enhances early detection and treatment.

“This position gives us the ability to look



across the entire breast-care journey and identify where we can make access faster, the experience smoother and pathways more patient-centred,” she says.

Dr. Jabs stresses that community support is what makes this new role possible.

“Rose of Hope has always been about bringing people together to make care better,” she says. “Their generosity now allows us to advance breast health in ways that will have a lasting impact, not just for patients today, but for many years to come.”

Sherri McCullough, Chair of the Rose of Hope committee and KHSC Board Chair, says the position will be transformational for women's health in southeastern Ontario.

“This is about changing the entire system,” says McCullough. “The Clinical Chair will help attract and retain top talent, support innovation, and ensure patients have a smoother, more supportive journey through diagnosis and treatment. I'm so proud of what our tournament has achieved over the last 27 years. We are grateful to every donor, sponsor and participant who has helped support breast cancer care in our region.”



## YGK Healthcare Champions Supporting Two Innovative Projects

The YGK Healthcare Champions have selected two transformative hospital projects that will receive support through the group's two fundraising events.

This year, critical care teams at Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC) and specialists advancing Alzheimer's diagnosis will see their work propelled forward thanks to the generosity of the Champions, a group of community volunteers who raise money in support of local health care.

Funds raised through Banding Together with YGK Healthcare Champions—a concert taking place on June 20 at the Broom Factory featuring a band made up of local doctors—will help purchase CuffGuard. It is an automated device designed to improve safety for patients in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) who require a breathing machine.

CuffGuard continuously adjusts the pressure in a patient's endotracheal tube cuff—an essential component

Last year's YGK Healthcare Champion's Banding Together concert raised \$33,500

that protects the lungs from harmful bacteria. Maintaining proper cuff pressure is difficult and requires frequent manual checks from staff.

"CuffGuard gives us real-time monitoring so we can prevent these complications before they happen," said Critical Care resident Dr. Michael Taylor.

It helps prevent material from entering the lung, which can lead to lower risk of pneumonia and shorter ICU stays, and freeing up staff time to focus on other patient needs.

Proceeds from the YGK Healthcare Champions Golf Tournament, taking place on August 20 at Loyalist Golf & Country Club, will support a groundbreaking project at KHSC's Cognitive Clinic: a simple blood test that can diagnose Alzheimer's disease with over 90 per cent accuracy.

Currently, patients often endure invasive spinal taps or face waits for specialized brain scans. The new p-tau217 blood test, which is widely used around the world and recently approved for clinical use, offers a faster and safer alternative.

"This test gives us clarity. It means earlier diagnosis, earlier treatment and less uncertainty for families," said Cognitive Neurologist Dr. Durjoy Lahiri.

YGK Healthcare Champions committee member Keagan Davis-Burns feels these projects will one day give patients faster answers and better care.

"When our community invests in health care, we're investing in every family who may one day need support," says Davis-Burns.



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