

Inspire

FALL 2021

STORIES FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Crucial Technology *Safely Transports Pre-mature Baby to Regina*



Baby Alexia safe at home

From happy and excited, to nervous or scared. These are all feelings new parents may go through, and something Sophie and Vincent of Moose Jaw experienced first-hand with their newborn daughter Alexia, who was born seven weeks premature.

Sophie and Vincent were eagerly looking forward to starting the next chapter of their life with their new baby. That is until Sophie's ultrasound at 28 weeks revealed an anomaly and she was told to go directly to the hospital in Moose Jaw for further tests. While there, she was advised that her baby presented a risk of premature birth at

any time, and she was to be on bed rest to delay labour as long as possible.

"The doctors advised me that I may need to travel to Regina for labor, as the hospital there was better equipped for premature births." Sophie tells us. "Hearing that, I had to start preparing mentally for the idea of potentially having to travel to give birth for the safety of my baby."

At 31 weeks Sophie went into labor quickly and suddenly. There was no time to drive to Regina, and despite the excellent care they provided to Sophie, the Moose Jaw hospital was not equipped to deal with such a premature birth. However, our special Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) transport team from Regina's General Hospital was dispatched to Moose Jaw to help. They would safely transport baby Alexia to our NICU in the Rawlco Centre for Mother Baby Care for the care she needed to survive.

Alexia made the journey to Regina in a transport isolette, a mobile mini NICU that allows the medical transport team to provide the baby with a variety of breathing supports, cardiac monitoring and adjustments to temperature and humidity. It is a crucial piece of

technology that provides premature babies born outside of Regina with the best chance of survival as they are transported to our NICU.

"The technology used to transport Alexia was simply amazing. Without it, I'm not even sure how we would have gotten her to Regina for the care she needed." Sophie says. "The entire medical team from top to bottom were amazing in their care, and very well organized. The work that Hospitals of Regina Foundation is doing to invest in new isolettes will be life changing for families and makes a stressful time for us as parents just that much easier. I can't thank you for that enough."

"Hospitals of Regina Foundation is committed to investing in priority technology such as neonatal transport isolettes so that babies from across southern Saskatchewan who need specialized care in our NICU receive the care they need on their journey to Regina," says Lisa Green, senior vice president, Hospitals of Regina Foundation.



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The End of an Era, but a Legacy that Lives on



Rawlco Radio's CC and Lorie

2021 marked the end of an era in Regina broadcasting, and in the history of one of the premiere annual fundraising events held in support of Hospitals of Regina Foundation. The 2021 Z99 Radiothon was the last one for the popular morning team of CC and Lorie Lindsay. The dynamic duo left a lasting legacy in our community when they turned off their microphones for the last time and stepped into well-deserved retirement. This legacy includes close to \$10 million raised for our neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) in the Rawlco Centre for Mother Baby Care at Regina General Hospital over the past 33 years.

Our NICU sees approximately 500 babies each year. Many arrive prematurely, often with several serious health challenges. Their stories are the main reason why CC and Lorie have

hosted the Radiothon all these years, forgoing sleep for up to 36 hours at a time.

"We met so many families whose stories we've shared on air at the Radiothon over the years," Lorie reveals. "One that sticks out is the mother and father who brought their eight kids to see us. Half of those eight kids started out their lives in Regina's NICU, so that really brought it home for us, and our listeners."

CC has been involved with the Radiothon since day one in 1987. Lorie came on board two years later, after joining the morning show at Z99. In a way, it seems fitting that the 2021 Radiothon was one of their last broadcasts together, considering how synonymous they have become with the event.

"We are so grateful for the incredible efforts of CC, Lorie, and the entire Rawlco radio team. Their hard work on the Z99 Radiothon has helped save the lives of countless babies. "

Dino Sophocleous

"I'm proud to have been involved in every Radiothon," says CC. "But really, it's the people – the donors, the sponsors and the staff at the Foundation and the NICU, and of course our colleagues at Z99 - that made it what it is. That's what I'll miss most; that team atmosphere and shared sense of accomplishment."

"We are so grateful for the incredible efforts of CC, Lorie, and the entire Rawlco radio team," says Dino Sophocleous, president and CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "Their hard work on the Z99 Radiothon has helped save the lives of countless babies. We look forward to working with the new Z99 morning team to continue their legacy of caring. Meantime, we wish CC and Lorie the very best in retirement, and we offer our sincere thanks for everything they've done for our community."

CC and Lorie's last Z99 Radiothon was held on April 15th, raising a total of \$416,938 in support of our NICU.

HRF Supports the Formation of Canada's Centre for Pandemic Research

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us all a few harsh lessons, and our experience is not over yet. To protect Saskatchewan residents from emerging disease threats, Hospitals of Regina Foundation has invested \$150,000 to help establish Canada's Centre for Pandemic Research at the University of Saskatchewan's Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization, otherwise known as VIDO.

Our investment will support crucial vaccine research and development right here in Saskatchewan, strengthening frontline health care and helping to reduce the impact of both COVID-19 and future infectious diseases and pandemics.

This new funding will help expand VIDO's ability to develop new vaccines. With the addition of global scientific leaders and enhanced training, VIDO will be poised to lead Canada's response to future pandemic threats.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, University of Saskatchewan's VIDO took a national leadership role, and the organization recently announced positive Phase 1 test results for COVAC-2 - one of VIDO's COVID-19 vaccine candidates.

"VIDO already operates Canada's largest high containment facility, one of the most advanced in the world. By becoming Canada's Centre for Pandemic Research, we will use and expand this unique infrastructure to develop new vaccines from research to



production", says Dr. Volker Gerdts, President and CEO of VIDO.

With support from Hospitals of Regina Foundation, other private donors and all levels of government, Canada's Centre for Pandemic Research will soon be up and running.

"We are pleased to be investing in this new vaccine research centre in our province to support the research and

development of a made-in Saskatchewan COVID-19 vaccine, as well as other vaccines that will positively impact the health of our southern Saskatchewan community and prepare us for the next pandemic," said Hospitals of Regina Foundation president and CEO Dino Sophocleous. "With what we've experienced over the past year and a half, this is a needed step in building our capacity to deal with future pandemics."

Fellowship Program

A Game Changer for Specialty Care in Regina

Regina's hospitals are major health care referral centres for approximately half a million people in southern Saskatchewan, and access to medical specialists is a critical component of care. However, Regina has not always been able to attract and retain the range of subspecialty care physicians that are available in larger Canadian centres. Subspecialists are highly trained experts within an already small group of specialists. For example, pediatric psychiatry is a subspecialty of psychiatry.

Without subspecialists to train our physicians, as well as treat complicated conditions, Saskatchewan is unable to run subspecialty training (fellowship) programs in order to grow our own subspecialist cohorts. When talented medical residents are identified as a good fit for subspecialty training, they currently must leave the province, often for two years, to complete a fellowship. While the resident is in training for an in-demand subspecialty, they often receive a job offer from the hospital they are training at. After calling a new city home for two years, it is difficult to encourage a new subspecialist to relocate to Regina.

Hospitals of Regina Foundation's new Fellowship Program is designed to help our hospitals and our community deal with this challenge.

In 2020, the Foundation initiated a Fellowship Program, in collaboration with the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA), to identify needed subspecialties and potential fellowship candidates.



Fellowship recipient, Dr. Ernesto Figueiró-Filho

Under this program, the Foundation provides financial support to a resident while they undertake their fellowship training, in exchange for a commitment to practice in Regina for a number of years upon completion of the fellowship.

Our first fellowship was provided to Dr. Ernesto Figueiró-Filho in late 2019. Dr. Figueiró-Filho is in his final year of training for a subspecialty in Maternal-Fetal Medicine, at Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto.

“Without the fellowship funding from Hospitals of Regina Foundation, I wouldn't have considered setting up a practice in Regina,” notes Dr. Figueiró-Filho. “The city just wasn't on my radar. Now, I'm so thrilled to be joining the Maternal-Fetal Medicine team and building a life in Regina”.

One of the three Regina specialists in this field is Dr. George Carson, who has been practicing here since 1989. Dr. Carson treats women experiencing high-risk pregnancies; he has about 2,000 patient visits each year, and that number is growing. He was instrumental in identifying Dr. Figueiró-Filho as a fellowship candidate, and convincing him to consider practicing in Regina.

“The Fellowship Program allows the SHA to identify a resident with great potential, the Foundation provides funding to support their fellowship, and we can be assured of a return of service back to the Regina community,” says Dr. Carson, who plans to retire at the end of 2021. “The support from Hospitals of Regina Foundation is a game-changer”.

In 2021, Hospitals of Regina Foundation has approved funding for an additional three residents undertaking fellowship training, two in pediatric psychiatry and one in cardiac anesthesiology.

“We are pleased to invest in the recruitment of the next generation of medical specialists to Regina,” says Dino Sophocleous, president & CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. “Our goal is to support our hospitals' priority needs so they can provide the best care possible to our southern Saskatchewan community. Through our new Fellowship Program, we will attract new subspecialists to Regina to help provide better lives for our families, friends and neighbours.”

First Virtual Event *Raises \$243,000 for Local Pediatrics*

After cancelling our 2020 Four Seasons Ball due to the pandemic, we held a “virtual” event for the first time on June 12th, 2021. Thanks to our wonderful sponsors, supporters and community, we raised \$243,000 for our kids. We invite you to view it for yourself by visiting our YouTube page and clicking on the Virtual Four Seasons Ball link in the menu. Enjoy!

THANK YOU



Virtual Four Seasons Ball

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It was a great evening, in support of our children. Thank you to SO Asher, our presenting sponsor, and all our sponsors for their leadership in pediatric health care. Despite the pandemic, they helped make this year's Virtual Ball a tremendous success.

Through the dedication of our sponsors, donors, supporters, volunteers and our community, the 2021 Virtual Four Seasons Ball raised more than \$243,000 which will help us meet our commitment to Regina's Pediatrics this year. Together, we are making great strides in creating better health care and better lives for our children in southern Saskatchewan. Because good health care is local.

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Mark and Tanya Jakubowski enjoying a hike

Mosaic Heart Centre

A Life Saver for Regina Woman

June 20, 2020 was a typical COVID-19 pandemic day for Regina's Tanya Jakubowski. She spent the day at the lake, enjoying the company of family. However, everything changed that night.

"I was sitting around the fire with a few family members, when I felt a sudden pain in my chest and upper back," Tanya recalls. "I thought it might be heartburn, but this pain was unlike any heartburn I'd ever experienced."

That's because the sensation was caused by a heart attack, brought on by a rare condition called spontaneous coronary artery dissection (SCAD). Essentially, SCAD involves a sudden tear within one or more arteries to the heart, leading to a heart attack. Not much is known about SCAD, other than it predominantly affects otherwise healthy women aged 50 or younger, and pregnant or post partem women.

Tanya's husband Mark drove her to the emergency room at Regina's Pasqua Hospital. After a series of tests, it was determined that Tanya was experiencing

a cardiac event, and she was quickly transferred to our Mosaic Heart Centre at Regina General Hospital (RGH).

"Once we got to RGH, they prepped me for an angiogram, and also tested me for COVID-19 because I had been out of province earlier in the week," Tanya explains. "I was at a celebration of life for my aunt, and the doctors think the stress from that may have triggered the arterial tear and the heart attack."

Tanya was taken to the Cardiac Catheterization Lab (Cath Lab) at the heart centre, where Dr. Payam Dehghani performed the angiogram, which confirmed the SCAD diagnosis. An angioplasty procedure followed, which involved inserting a balloon into Tanya's artery to keep it open and ensure the blood flow followed the correct path. Following that, Tanya was wheeled back to the Cardiac Care Unit to begin the recovery process under the care of our highly-skilled and compassionate staff.

"I can't say enough good things about the staff at the Mosaic Heart Centre,"

Tanya says. "From my cardiologists to the amazing nursing team, everyone was just wonderful and so caring. I'm also grateful to the Hospitals of Regina Foundation supporters, who ensure the cardiac teams have the best possible equipment and technology with which to perform their life-saving work."

Today, Tanya deals with some side effects from the various medications prescribed to manage her condition. However, she is otherwise back to leading a normal life, including going on several challenging hikes with her husband.

"Each year, one out every five visits to Regina's emergency rooms is cardiac-related," says Dino Sophocleous, president and CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "Thanks to ongoing support from the community, the Foundation is able to invest in priority technology and equipment for the Mosaic Heart Centre, helping medical teams deliver the best possible cardiac care for residents of southern Saskatchewan. In turn, that care is helping people live better lives."

World Class Saskatchewan Clinical Research *Helps B.C. Resident*

A teacher by training, a passionate cook and an amazing mom to three active boys, Chelli Morris has always been on the go. Whether it's volunteering at her kid's school or spending time with her boys and husband Dan, she is always active. On September 2, 2016, this would all change suddenly and mark the beginning of a 4 year and 3 month battle with debilitating chronic pain. While driving with her three boys to Kelowna from her home in Nanaimo, Chelli felt an intense, sharp stabbing pain in her back. Not knowing what was wrong, and the level of pain being excruciating, Chelli sought medical attention. She was treated at the Nanaimo General Hospital by nephrologist, Dr. Naomi Glick, although it took months and many tests to secure a diagnosis of Loin Pain Hematuria Syndrome (LPHS). With no known causes or cure, treatment options for LPHS are primarily limited to pain management with opiates. Many sufferers are unable to work, are in constant and unending pain and ultimately suffer from depression.

"Simple things like a sneeze, or hitting a bump in the road could trigger a massive pain spasm out of nowhere" Chelli explained. It changed every moment of every day for me."

Around the same time in 2016, a team of medical professionals in Saskatchewan, led by nephrologist Dr. Bhanu Prasad and radiologist Dr. Kunal Goyal, were completing a successful first phase of a research project that was testing the benefits of renal denervation. This is the minimally invasive process of

introducing a catheter into the blood supply to the kidneys to deliver thermal energy across the blood vessel wall to interrupt the pain signal to the brain. This procedure can be life-changing for those with LPHS. Unfortunately for Chelli, the first phase of the research project had just ended and she had to wait.

It took four years before Drs. Prasad and Goyal and their team were able to get the necessary approvals to start the second phase of the clinical research and, with that in place, receive research funding from granting agencies and Hospitals of Regina Foundation. Chelli finally received the phone call she had been waiting for. She would be part of the study and her procedure would take place on December 4, 2020.

"This procedure was the only hope at that time of relieving my ongoing pain." Chelli says. "If it was successful, I would no longer need the many medications, or have to worry about how an average, every-day event might trigger an unbearable pain spasm."

Chelli arrived in Regina and was admitted to the Regina General Hospital where Dr. Goyal and his medical team performed a successful renal denervation. When she awoke after her procedure, she couldn't help but cry tears of joy. After four long years, there was no more pain. After a few days of recovery she flew home, eager to get back to life without the debilitating, chronic pain of LPHS. She was ready to start living again.



Tears of joy from Chelli Morris, finally pain-free after successful procedure

"From the moment I arrived in Regina, Dr. Prasad, Dr. Goyal and the medical team were so full of care and compassion." Chelli says. "Without the support of Hospitals of Regina Foundation none of this would have been possible. It has been completely life changing for me, and for that I am forever thankful. Thank you just doesn't seem adequate."

"Chelli's story is a fantastic example of the importance of investing in cutting edge medical research, right here in Regina. This procedure is not being tested anywhere else in the world. Doctors Prasad and Goyal may have developed a less invasive, more effective treatment for this terrible disease, saving so many from a life of endless pain and opiate dependence," says Lisa Green, senior vice president, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "We are committed to investing in innovative local medical research that may lead to better care for our southern Saskatchewan community."

Celebrating *Our Community's Giving Spirit*



As the country opens up from the COVID-19 restrictions, the giving spirit of individuals, organizations and businesses that support Hospitals of Regina Foundation is undiminished. Despite the uncertainty of pandemic guidelines, caring and generous event organizers planned and hosted excellent events. We are so grateful for their support. These are the events which ran from June to September this year.

The Motorcycle Ride for the Boys on Saturday, July 10 raised over \$9,500 in support of the Prostate Assessment Centre at Pasqua Hospital. On Friday, July 23, the Eric Calibaba Memorial Classic at Katepwa Golf Course raised \$5,000 in support of our NICU at the Rawlco Centre for Mother Baby Care at Regina General Hospital.



To learn how you can host your own fundraiser, visit our website at: hrf.sk.ca/Events/Host-An-Event, or contact us at (306) 781-7500.



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#225-1874 Scarth Street Regina, SK S4P 4B3

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