

BREAKTHROUGHS



**Calgary
Health
Foundation™**

*Relentlessly advancing
care, wellness & research*

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

How your donations are helping
patients experience joy again

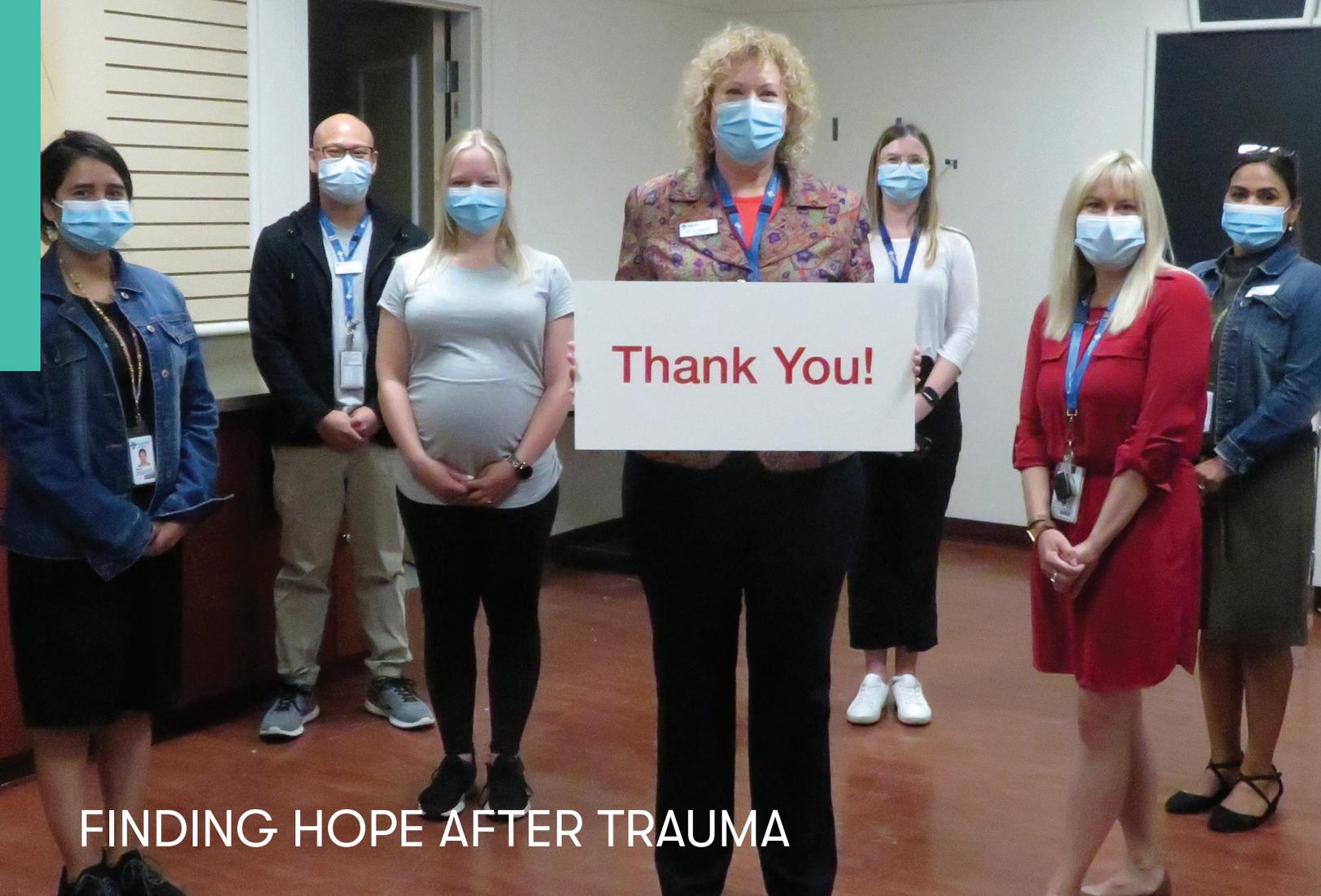


**Hundreds of students
join forces for Project Hope**

**A mother's emotional
postpartum journey**

**Brain investments save lives,
improve patient outcomes**





FINDING HOPE AFTER TRAUMA

The rTMS team stands in the shelled space that will be transformed into the new rTMS Clinic at Rockyview General Hospital.

Sara was working as an emergency dispatcher when she experienced a trauma that flooded her emotions. She attended professional counselling and was involved in a very extensive Traumatic Psychological Injury program that included two hours of group therapy and occupational therapy every week. She worked incredibly hard to get through the treatments, but unfortunately, her overwhelming feelings of sadness continued to take over her life.

Her doctor recommended

a therapy she hadn't heard about: Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS), a treatment used for depression in patients who don't respond well to medication. Within a few sessions, Sara started to feel a real difference.

"Conversations were lighter, my irritability went down. Near the end I really did feel better. I had moments of calmness which is not something that I was familiar with," says Sara.

At one point in her journey, Sara did feel suicidal, something she

knew she had to seek out help for. She shares that when she was an adolescent she was in the hospital for mental health support and in the decade since she's seen a big difference in stigma going down, openness and access to mental health supports as well as advocacy.

Her advice to anyone who is struggling with their own mental health is, "If you're not feeling well, get the help and reach out. It's so common."

Reaching out for help was one of the best things she did for herself. "We don't need to lose

“rTMS, for many people, is a life-changer. It has provided me with the opportunity to see changes in patients that I have never seen before,” says Dr. Harpur.

any more people to suicide. We don't need people to become another statistic.”

Dr. Lisa Harpur has been using rTMS therapy at Rockyview General Hospital. While this treatment may not be the solution for everyone, approximately two-thirds

of the patients she treats have noticed radical improvements in their mood.

With donor supported treatments like rTMS, clinicians are hopeful they can help more patients get better and return to their lives. ■



Scan to watch rTMS

Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS) painlessly delivers a magnetic pulse that stimulates nerve cells in the region of your brain involved in mood control and depression.



WHY MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

QUICK FACTS

In any given year,

1 in 5

Canadians experience a mental illness

Nearly **2/3**

of surveyed Albertans reported a decline in their mental health throughout the pandemic

The total cost from mental health problems and illnesses to the Canadian economy is estimated to be at least

\$50 BILLION

per year

A PROJECT UNLIKE ANY OTHER

Dr. Heather Patterson and the staff and students of Calgary Academy collaborated to create “Project Hope,” a school-wide project that celebrates literacy, community and healing. Dr. Patterson is an emergency physician and photographer who donated original photographs she took during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I hope that this celebration of our shared humanity

generates empathy and inspires others to see what we can accomplish when we work together,” says Dr. Patterson on why she wanted to be involved in Project Hope.

The students were asked to create pieces of art or literature inspired by 21 raw and powerful black and white images of frontline healthcare workers. The question posed to the students was,

“How might we reflect on the past to inspire HOPE for the future and bring our community back together?”

The 329 students who participated from kindergarten to grade 12 created essays, poems and artwork all based on their individual experience with the pandemic. Some provided their own mental health struggles while others expressed their gratitude



Attendees take in photos, art and messages from students inspired by Dr. Heather Patterson’s photographs of healthcare workers on the front line.



Students showcased their expressive creations based on their own experience from the COVID-19 pandemic.

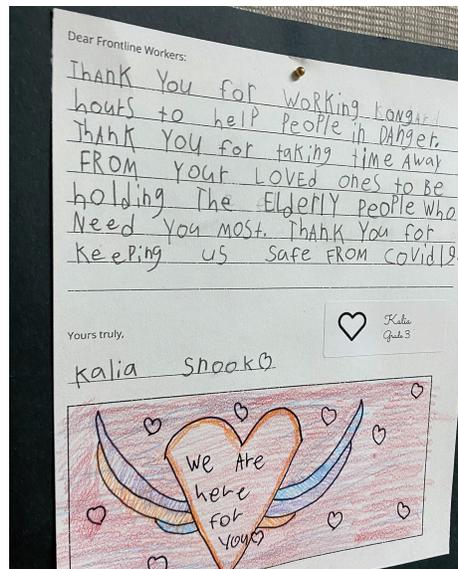
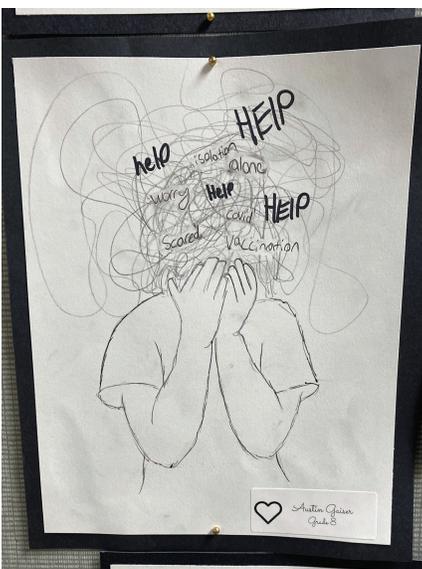
for healthcare workers. Their pieces were put on display throughout the halls of the Calgary Academy, which attracted educators, parents, and fellow classmates to read, reflect, and understand the impact the pandemic has had on everyone. The work is both inspiring, touching and heart-breaking.

Project Hope was not only a bonding, but a healing experience for the staff and students at Calgary Academy. Voices were heard, struggles were shared, and the hallways were flooded with hope. ■

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Q: I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE MY STORY OF GRATITUDE. HOW CAN I DO THAT?

A: We would love to hear your story! Every year, thousands of lives are impacted by the care they receive at one of Calgary's hospitals. We often feature patient and family stories on social media and as part of our communications to show donor impact and encourage support. Simply fill out the form on our website to share your story with us. We will contact you for prior consent if we plan to include it in future publications. ■



YOUR SUPPORT HAS GIVEN KRYSTIN A NEW OUTLOOK ON LIFE



Krystin Buffam's experience becoming a mom didn't go as she expected, but thanks to the Women's Mental Health Clinic, she has two amazing kids and spends her time advocating for mental health!

We have over one million reasons why women's mental health is taking huge strides thanks to your support!

Through the LOVE YOU by Shoppers Drug Mart Run for Women, the community has raised over \$1.2M dollars since its inception and given an important voice to women's mental health. For women like Krystin, the support has meant a life-changing difference.

Krystin Buffam's postpartum story is one that she openly shares in hopes of changing the stigma against mental health. Her focus is on Women's Mental Health as she's seen both the disparities and incredible work being done to advance the care for people struggling with mental illness in Calgary.

In April of 2016, her entire world changed as she gave birth to her son. A short 24 hours after

the new family was home, Buffam knew right away that something was wrong.

"The congratulations flowed, and the comfort food came. The feelings of joy and bliss you see in the movie scenes, however, didn't come."

Overwhelmingly, the feelings were of fear, anxiety, and depression. She notes that at the time she didn't know how

to sort out those feelings. In the first three weeks of her son's life, she did not sleep more than a few hours a day or eat solid food. She survived only on a single protein drink a day.

Buffam is a Registered Nurse, and with her training, she could recognize that what she was feeling was not normal. When she started having "dark, scary thoughts" she knew she had to make a change and go to where she could get help. "As scary as deciding I needed help felt, the peace we also received was a complete blessing. We felt going to the emergency department was the best way to access help."

During her time at the hospital, she met Dr. Lisa Gagnon, a

psychiatrist who helped her get the help she needed to return to being a mother, wife and her normal self again. Through the help of a network of people she had therapy, medications, a postpartum support group and her faith to help her through the incredibly difficult times.

In January of 2019, she welcomed a baby girl with her husband. With her medical history top of mind, she knew she was at high risk of developing postpartum anxiety again. She chose to go back on medication days after her birth in hopes she would not have as difficult a postpartum journey as she experienced with her son. Unfortunately, the fear came back, and she developed Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

alongside her Postpartum Depression.

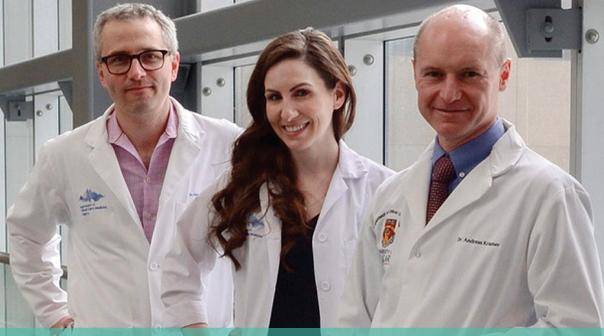
She sought out help again and has made it her mission to help other mom's by volunteering as a peer supporter for rural moms. She has also been the media spokesperson for the Shopper's Drug Mart Run for Women and an ambassador for the Canadian Perinatal Mental Health Collaborative.

Krystin's goal is to change the world with mental health and to help as many people as possible realize they are not alone and that there is hope and help out there.

Today, she enjoys spending time with her family and has plans to return to her nursing career in the fall. ■



THE DEMAND FOR NEUROCRITICAL CARE



The neurocritical care team looks at each patient's activity to ensure critical interventions can give a second chance to patients like Kael (R).

For Kael Bernard and his family, life could look a lot different following a 2019 car accident that left him in a coma with a severe, traumatic brain injury. For weeks his parents sat diligently at his side as Kael was connected to life-support with special monitors in his brain as it began to heal, uncertain what the future would hold for their 17-year-old son. The neurocritical care team worked to reduce the threat of ongoing brain damage that could leave Kael with life-altering and life-threatening outcomes.

“The care Kael received was the difference between what is and what could have been,” says Kael's dad, Tim Bernard. Following his discharge from the hospital, Kael graduated high school and is now in university.

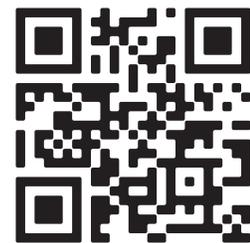
Like Kael, more than 900 patients are admitted to Intensive Care Units (ICU) throughout Calgary and Southern Alberta each year because of life-threatening nervous system disorders, making up almost 20 per cent of ICU admissions. These patients face severe brain, spinal cord, nerve and muscle injuries from trauma, stroke, heart attack, seizure, infection, and other conditions.

One of the Calgary Health Foundation's newest priorities reflects that demand with a goal to raise \$2.5M to expand neurocritical care specialty services, resulting in a 10 to 15 per cent increase in the odds of survival among patients.

Increasing accessibility to neurocritical care, updating

equipment, and developing clinical strategies to minimize neurologic injury are a few of the focus areas surrounding this lifesaving donor-funded project.

“Neurocritical care helps the sickest patients who have the most to lose, including their life, and if not their life, much of what they value,” explains Dr. Julie Kromm, a neurology and critical care physician at Foothills Medical Centre and Rockyview General Hospital. ■



Scan to watch Neurocritical Care

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