

BREAKTHROUGHS



**Calgary
Health
Foundation™**

*Relentlessly advancing
care, wellness & research*

COVID AND BEYOND:

**When symptoms
don't stop**

.....

**Mother's Day
marks a special
anniversary for
Rippy and Kaveer**

**A mom's rock
bottom with her
mental health**

**Getting
outdoors
thanks
to donors**



YOUR SUPPORT BRINGS NEW BEGINNINGS

Over the past two years, our health care teams have been tirelessly focused on caring for patients with COVID-19. Now, we are starting to see more of the long term impacts of this virus, and with your support, we can provide progressive treatments.

In this edition, I'm excited to share the work of care providers like Dr. John Chan and his team at Rockyview General Hospital who are focused on Long Covid syndrome. There are thousands of people in our community who are facing long term effects following their COVID-19 diagnosis.

Like spring, your support brings new beginnings. It's that time of year that makes us want to get outside and dust off our runners! Whether it's a few steps or training for a marathon, you can support the beginnings to our tiniest most fragile newborns with your family, or open important conversations around mental health, and give uplifting hope to moms like Laura.

With appreciation,



Mike Meldrum

President & CEO ■



FOR SOME, COVID-19 WAS JUST THE BEGINNING

Imagine living with chronic shortness of breath for months or even years. For many, this is their reality.

We've known that severe cases of COVID-19 can produce scarring and other permanent issues in the lungs, but we now also know that even mild COVID-19 infections can linger.

The World Health Organization (WHO) reported that approximately one in 10 people who are infected with COVID-19 will experience symptoms that can last beyond 12 weeks.

It's called Long Covid.

That's why we're working with Dr. John Chan, a Pulmonary Medicine Specialist and Respiriologist at Rockyview General Hospital as his team works tirelessly at the Long Covid Syndrome Clinic.

Jennifer is one of the clinic's Long Covid patients who lived an extremely active lifestyle before testing positive for COVID-19



Patients with Long Covid symptoms will greatly benefit from a new CPET machine, which will provide more precise data and advanced research around this complex illness.

in 2020. She regularly raced in marathons and used exercise as her daily outlet. Going from that level of activity to feeling breathless after a simple workout, was very worrisome for her.

Thankfully, Dr. Chan and his team at Rockyview General Hospital were able to provide Jennifer with a Cardiopulmonary Exercise Test (CPET) that provided her with the answers that she was desperately seeking for so long. Jennifer has since been diagnosed and will continue treatment for asthma.

The Long Covid Syndrome Clinic continues to provide

relief for post COVID-19 patients like Jennifer. But as more patients are diagnosed with Long Covid, the need to have an advanced CPET machine becomes more critical than ever before.

With the expended capabilities of new equipment and technology, Respiratory therapists at Rockyview General Hospital will have the tools to obtain more precise data, resulting in better personalized care and treatment for patients like Jennifer.

With a new CPET machine, Dr. Chan and his team can help even more patients put their COVID-19 symptoms behind them once and for all. ■

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Q: CAN I LEAVE A GIFT IN MY WILL OR ESTATE?

A: Yes! An up-to-date Will is essential. It protects your loved ones by ensuring clarity so that your assets will be distributed as you see fit.

A bequest is a gift specialized in your Will. It is a simple and valuable way to support the programs and facilities you choose. You can allocate a certain sum of money, a particular asset, or even a portion of your estate such as land or art. ■

YOUR SUPPORT IS A FIGHTING CHANCE FOR LAURA



Laura, a mother of two, realized she needed to prioritize her own health when her son began mimicking her own impatience, stress, and anger.

Laura, a mother of two and grade 5 teacher, was always hard on herself and didn't know why it took her a lot of mental energy and work to do well in school compared to her peers. But after the birth of her second child just prior to the pandemic, the pressures increased and she experienced a mental health crisis.

Laura was taking her daughter for a doctor's appointment when she recalls feeling very agitated that they were running late. Laura's distress was so apparent that when she walked in, the nurse asked how she was doing sensing that something was amiss. At first, Laura said she was fine, but as time ticked by and Laura felt more agitated, she changed

her mind and sought the support she was offered.

After a few appointments with a therapist, it was suspected that Laura might have ADHD and was referred to the Women's Mental Health Clinic to the care of Dr. Gagnon, who diagnosed Laura with ADHD and anxiety.

When Laura's maternity leave was over in

September 2020, she returned to the classroom, which due to COVID-19 was a rough transition. The transition back to work was very tough on Laura. Every single task required additional steps, additional planning, and additional stress.

“I was crashing and burning, but still standing. My kids needed me, my husband needed me, and I needed the good version of me. But I could not take care of myself,” Laura recalled.

The final push that Laura needed to finally take the time to care of herself and her family is still vividly etched in her mind; her son’s kindergarten teacher spoke to her about his behaviour at school. It was precisely mimicking her own impatience, stress, and anger.

“I left that meeting knowing that I needed to get better for my family and myself,” she remembered.

Laura took a few months off work to focus on herself and build a new, strong, foundation. She attended

regular counselling sessions at the Women’s Mental Health Clinic, took webinars, started walking every morning and meditating.

“The support, skills and framework I received at the clinic helped to provide clarity and answer questions I’ve had about myself for my whole life,” said Laura.

In Calgary, The LOVE YOU by Shoppers Drug Mart™ Run for Women supports the Women’s Mental Health Clinic and advancing care for women in need of crisis support from our hospitals. Now, Laura is looking forward to paying it forward, so more moms in crisis receive exceptional care by being a Team Captain at the 2022 Run for Women. ■



WHY WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

QUICK FACTS

Mental health disorders affect **1 in 5** women

Women are almost **2X** as likely to experience depression and anxiety as men.

2,975
Total number of sessions delivered by the Women’s Mental Health Clinic (2020-2021)

YOUR SUPPORT ONE YEAR LATER: A FIGHTING CHANCE FOR RIPPY AND KAVEER



When Rippy found out she had diabetes, she was pregnant. The diagnosis was a surprise to her and her family. Due to her diagnosis, her doctor told her that she would have a high-risk pregnancy, but when her cervix started dilating at just 20 weeks it was the second big surprise for Rippy during her short pregnancy.

Twenty weeks is an exciting time during the pregnancy and is usually when parents can find out the gender. At this stage, the baby is about as big

as a bell pepper with still a ways to go in development of critical organs and lungs. For Rippy, 20 weeks looked very different as she was sent to the hospital to have a Rescue Cervical Cerclage (RCC), where they attempted to keep her from dilating further and

give her tiny baby more time to develop.

Then, at 26 weeks, Rippy's water broke. Rippy gave birth at just 26 weeks and three days. It was quick labour, and teams of specialists quickly flooded the room as her baby boy, Kaveer, was



born at 10:14 am. Just as quickly, the team from the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) rushed Kaveer into their care to ensure that he had the immediate and critical support he needed from his very first minutes.

He was tall but skinny, weighing only 1.9 lbs. But, he was very active and that gave Rippy a lot of hope for a healthy future. However, the stress of it all was taking a toll on

Rippy and her husband.

“I felt like I failed my baby; I wasn’t able to keep him in for longer and I had a lot of guilt about it.”

While Rippy knows it wasn’t her fault, it was hard not to feel a sense of guilt. She also felt sadness knowing she couldn’t hold her baby right after he was born – something every new mom dreams of.

For four months - over 100 days - Rippy’s son was cared for by a team of specialists in the NICU.

Like with many preemies, his lungs took a while to mature. He was on a special ventilator called a CPAP for a little over three months. Finally, in May of 2021, Rippy would bring her son home for the first time; a day that still feels quite new for Rippy. ■

NEW WHEELS ALLOW MORE RESIDENTS TO HIT THE ROAD

Thanks to a donation from the community, more Carewest residents will be hitting the road to enjoy outings, increasing their quality of life. Having transportation that can meet the various needs of residents allows them to participate in many wonderful activities – picnics in the park, fishing trips, day trips to Banff, or visits to McMahon Stadium for football games.

For many Carewest residents, trips such as these are a luxury that can only happen with reliable transportation, such as the Carewest bus.

According to Natale Oliverio, Manager of Support Services and Transportation for Carewest, the bus is used for a variety of activities and experiences that give residents a lot of joy. “We can allow our residents to experience simple things like a drive in the country. They can participate in activities that they thought they would be no longer able to enjoy. Giving them that little bit of freedom is something they look forward to and brings back smiles and memories.”



The bus is customized to meet residents’ complex health and comfort needs. It is equipped to carry people in wheelchairs, ambulatory passengers, and those who can walk without aid. ■

Celebrating 25

TRAUMA
SURGERY



Kolton Dushanek and his son Pryce (centre) share a moment with trauma surgeon and researcher Dr. Chad Ball, and Calgary Health Foundation's Mike Meldrum in the Interventional Trauma Operating Room where Kolton's life was saved thanks to donors.

In 2013, Foothills Medical Centre opened a new operating suite called ITOR, or the Interventional Trauma Operating Room, thanks to your support. This was only the second of its kind in the world! It combined the capacity for traditional surgery, diagnostic imaging and angiography, a technique that enables surgeons to make repairs via blood vessels. This was a breakthrough concept. Prior to its existence

trauma surgeons dealing with multiple injuries would have had to choose which to tackle first – while the clock was ticking. Today, they no longer have to choose.

It is estimated that the ITOR's capabilities has saved one life per month. By 2019, just six years after its opening, around 80 patient's lives had been saved – 80 patients whose chance of survival would have previously been like flipping a coin.



In 2009, while the ITOR was under construction, the trauma team ran a simulated surgery in the space using mocked up equipment to ensure that everything is placed in the most effective position.

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403-943-0615 • 800-11012 Macleod Trail SE

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