

MEDIA RELEASE

‘Day of Giving’ for Cardiac Care is April 25, 2019 **Local family steps up to match all donations**

KELOWNA, BC, April 16, 2019 - Thursday, April 25 is the KGH Foundation Day of Giving, a call to the community to support excellence in healthcare, right here at KGH. Funds this year will go towards the KGH Foundation’s campaign to complete the cardiac program with the addition of Advanced Heart Rhythm Services.

It’s a cause all too familiar for Darrell and Margaret Porubanec, who witnessed their youngest son Trevor, just 22 years old at the time, fall to the floor unresponsive, later to be diagnosed with a life-threatening heart rhythm condition.

“It’s called Brugada Syndrome, and it causes the heart to race beyond its ability to pump blood,” explains Margaret. “As a parent you want to keep your children safe and protected, so when Trevor collapsed, I called 911 and started to administer CPR, but felt utterly helpless.”

Thankfully, trained medical staff in Kelowna saved Trevor’s life, but he required immediate diagnostic attention to determine the cause of his cardiac arrest and treat future episodes. Unfortunately, heart rhythm services are not currently available at KGH, so Trevor had to be airlifted to Victoria.

“It was a long journey into this world we knew nothing about, and one that was made equally more challenging by being away from home,” recalls Darrell. “When your child is leaving in a medi-vac jet and you don’t know what the future holds, you’d do anything to create one small element of normal. If we can help families at least not have to worry about travel and being away from home, I feel like we’re doing our part to help an already very difficult situation.”

Darrell and Margaret, with the support of their sons Trevor and Murray, will be matching all donations that come in on the KGH Foundation Day of Giving, April 25. Every call, text and online or in person donation will be doubled, thanks to this incredibly generous family.

“We’re amazed at the support in this community, especially when a family makes it their purpose to inspire others,” says Doug Rankmore, CEO of the KGH Foundation. “And now people who are thinking of giving, can know that whatever they donate will be doubled – it’s pretty powerful.”

The cardiac program at KGH rivals any of the best in the country. Now serving as the largest referral hospital for specialized care in the BC interior, Kelowna General is no longer just a community hospital. Of the hospital’s 400 beds, an estimated 100 are occupied by patients from out of town, many of them receiving care for cardiac conditions.

And now, with help from the community, the KGH Foundation has its sights set on completing the cardiac program with one final service: Electrophysiology.

It's a term relatively unknown, and it refers to heart rhythm, also known as the heart's 'electrical' system. When a cardiac episode occurs, be it a heart attack or cardiac arrest, specialists look to either the heart's vascular or 'plumbing' system, or the heart beat itself. Patients with heart arrhythmias often experience irregular heart rhythm, either too fast or too slow, which can lead to sudden cardiac death.

Currently, all patients requiring heart rhythm treatment, like Trevor Porubanec, must wait for a bed to become available in Vancouver or Victoria, a wait which takes its toll on the patient and their family.

Trevor required an Implantable Cardiac Defibrillator (ICD) to be placed inside his body, so that should another episode occur, the ICD could restart his heart instantly. And soon, with the addition of an Electrophysiology Lab, patients like Trevor can receive the specialized care they require, right here at KGH.

For more information on the KGH Foundation Day of Giving or to donate, please visit <https://www.kghfoundation.com/event/day-of-giving/>.

The KGH Foundation is an independent, volunteer-driven charitable organization committed to enhancing the delivery of healthcare to the patients of Kelowna General Hospital and its associated facilities.

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