

Summer 2026

aspire

Today's Stories, Tomorrow's Care.

Big steps forward for little patients

Making hospital care
more comfortable for kids



Contents

-
- 03 Reimagining Parkinson's care and research**
How the Humphreys Family Movement Disorder Clinic is transforming care across the Interior
-
- 06 Advancing movement disorder care**
Bringing leading-edge neurophysiology to patients in the Southern Interior
-
- 07 Big steps forward for little patients**
Making hospital care more comfortable for kids
-
- 09 Turning a corner**
A promise to our little ones: The future of pediatric care starts today
-
- 10 A record-breaking day**
How the 10th annual KGH Day of Giving brought showers of support
-
- 13 A place to call home**
And the comfort of knowing they're not alone
-
- 15 Home is where the healing is**
How Hospital at Home is bringing KGH to patients' front doors
-
- 17 Slices of Gratitude**
Celebrating the businesses and community champions turning passion into action!
-
- 18 Odds are we *all* win!**
The Heart of BC 50/50 Lottery puts the *fun* in funding healthier communities
-

We humbly recognize and acknowledge that Kelowna General Hospital (KGH) and the KGH Foundation operate on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of Syilx Okanagan Peoples.

Front Cover:

Local grade 1 students, Owen and Lily, learning how to listen to heartbeats at the Teddy Bear Clinic — future health care workers in the making.

Thanks to our contributors for their work on Aspire.
Cover & Select Inner Photography: Noah Van der Eerden
Select Inner Photography: Darren Hull
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A letter from the CEO



The most human thing we can do is care.

As I reflect on this edition of *Aspire*, I can't help but feel an immense sense of gratitude and pride for the people behind every story. The health care leaders pushing boundaries in patient care and research, the donors whose generosity turns possibility into reality, and the patients who share their experiences to help others feel seen, understood, and hopeful.

All these people are collectively transforming health care here, in the Southern Interior.

In a time heavily influenced by technology, what inspires me most is humanity itself. The compassion and connection woven throughout these pages remind me that meaningful change has only ever started because one person, or a group of people, felt deeply enough to act.

In this issue of *Aspire*, you'll learn more about what we're doing at KGH to take care of our littlest patients. You'll read about the KGH Teddy Bear Clinic, spearheaded by Regional Pediatrics Educator and Registered Nurse, Lesia Rainville, and how it's helping children become more comfortable in the hospital. Dr. Jeff Wong, KGH's new Head of Pediatrics, shares his aspirations for the future of pediatric care in the Southern Interior.

We'll also introduce you to Dr. Talyta Grippe, who's leading groundbreaking neurophysiology research right here at KGH. And you'll learn more about the remarkable progress being made at the Humphreys Family Movement Disorder Clinic, where Dr. Daryl Wile and his team

are changing the way in which we think about and care for people in our region living with Parkinson's disease.

Not to mention, the record-breaking KGH Day of Giving! We didn't think it was possible to surpass what was accomplished last year with our surgical robot, 'Vinni'. But our 10th annual one-day fundraising extravaganza exceeded all expectations. It was a powerful reminder that so often, it is the deeply human moments we experience in the capable hands of compassionate care teams that inspire such profound gratitude that, well, make anything feel possible. And now, that gratitude will have a visible, tangible impact in the Emergency Department right here at KGH.

This momentum is worth celebrating because it's powered by people. It's the imaginative thinking of our care teams — and the support of people like you — that inspires meaningful change.

At the Foundation, we are honoured to help connect caring donors with the individuals aspiring to bring world-class health care closer to home. Thank you for being part of a community that continues to show what is possible when people come together to care for one another.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Allison (Allie) Young
Chief Executive Officer
KGH Foundation



HUMPHREYS FAMILY MOVEMENT DISORDER CLINIC



The last great frontier of science is the brain.

While this statement holds a beautiful promise, it also contains a hard truth for physicians. Neurological conditions such as Parkinson's disease are complex, unpredictable, and affect nearly every part of daily life.

Across the Southern Interior, thousands of individuals and families live with the disease, and cases are expected to rise 50% over the next decade, yet highly specialized treatment is normally only found in larger centres.

Thanks to donors and passionate local leaders, this is changing.

With a vision to transform care for those living with Parkinson's disease, Neurologist and Movement Disorder Specialist, Dr. Daryl Wile, established the Okanagan Movement Disorder Clinic when he moved to Kelowna in 2015. What began as a much-needed specialist clinic has now grown into a leading regional hub for innovation, research, collaboration, and compassionate, patient-centred care.

In 2024, a transformative \$1 million commitment from the Humphreys family helped expand and reimagine the clinic as the Humphreys Family Movement Disorder Clinic (the Clinic) at KGH.

"I am incredibly grateful to the Humphreys and the community," shares Dr. Wile. "Their support has allowed us to evolve our clinical and research capabilities, recruit more team members, and help more patients access specialized care."

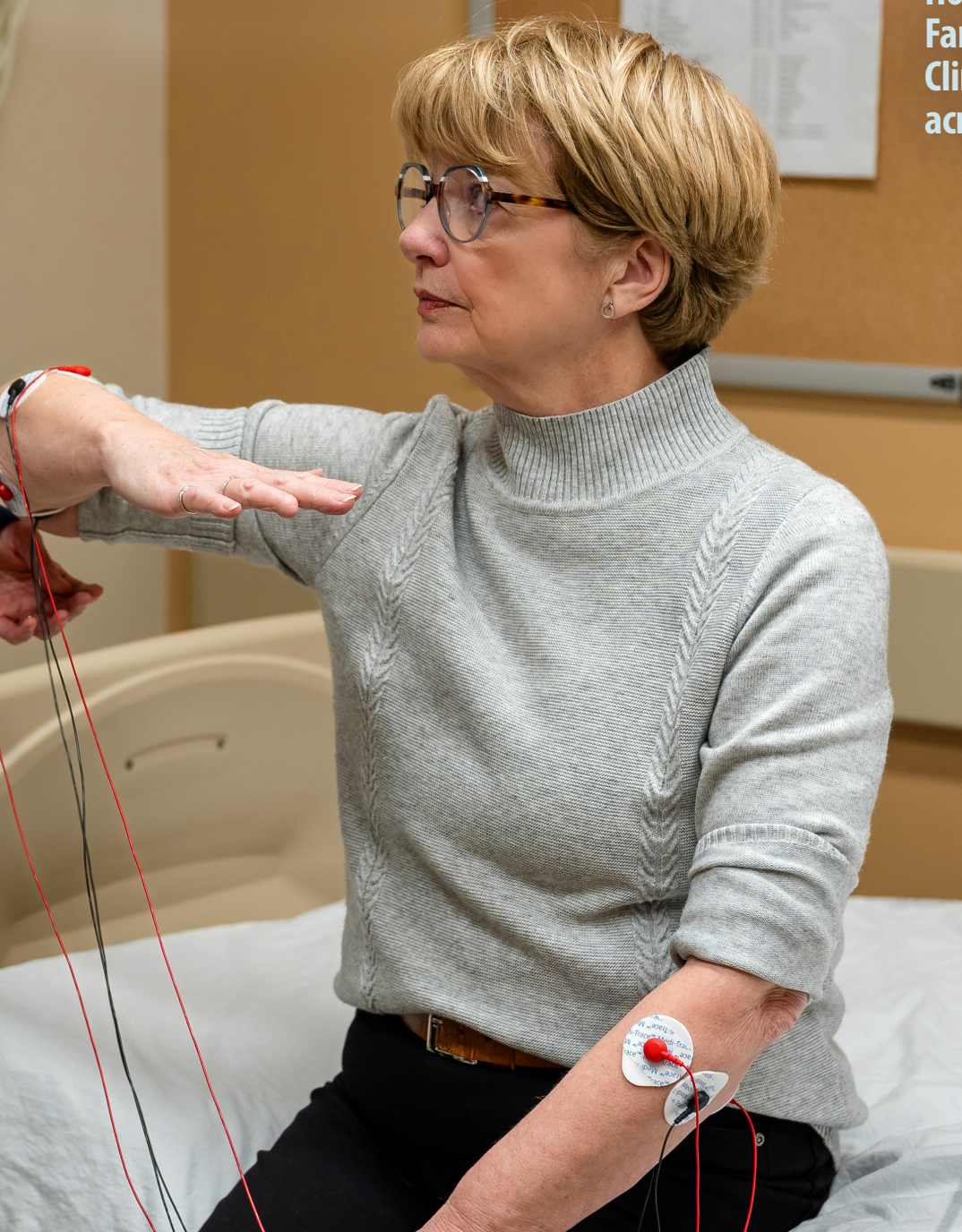
"Donors are truly helping drive the future of Parkinson's care here in our region."

That future is already taking shape.

Perhaps the most exciting addition made possible through philanthropy is the recruitment of Movement Disorder Specialist, and highly published researcher, Dr. Talyta Cortez Grippe. Moving from Toronto, Dr. Grippe is among the few researchers exploring electrophysiology for movement disorders, specialized work previously available only in larger centres.

Reimagining Parkinson's care and research

How the Humphreys Family Movement Disorder Clinic is transforming care across the Interior



2,965

residents in the Interior Health region live with Parkinson's Disease

1,864

new Parkinson's diagnoses annually in BC

893

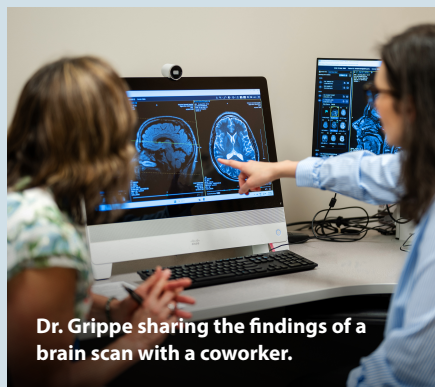
**total cases at
the Clinic in 2025**

800

**wait-listed cases at
the Clinic (as of Nov. 2025)**

Through the donor funded EVOLVE Award (Encouraging and Valuing Ongoing Leadership, Vision, and Engagement), Dr. Grippe has protected research time for two-years to support program development, mentorship, quality improvement, and collaboration with the Clinic's multidisciplinary team and health authority partners. The rest of her role is dedicated to clinical care, helping address the Clinic's 800-person waitlist.

Her decision to come to Kelowna was rooted in the rare opportunity to advance her research while still caring directly for patients. A combination she believes yields much better results for both the scientific and human sides of her work.



Dr. Grippe sharing the findings of a brain scan with a coworker.



**Scan the QR code to learn more
about the important work being
done at the Humphreys Family
Movement Disorder Clinic**

"We are extremely grateful to have Dr. Grippe's renowned expertise, unique perspective, and energy on our team," shares Dr. Wile. "She brings such innovative and fresh ideas to our Clinic and has truly reenergized our team, but we could not have recruited her if it weren't for donor support."

The Clinic is also partnering with the Jim Pattison Centre for Health Systems Learning + Innovation (the Centre) to strengthen brain health care across the region. Through the Centre, Dr. Monique Walsh has been contracted for her expertise in connecting clinicians, researchers, health authorities, and community partners—helping turn promising ideas into real-world solutions for Parkinson's patients across the region.

Connections are already taking shape with Dr. Robin Bessemer in Kamloops. Together, the teams will share knowledge, strengthen referral pathways, and build a more connected network of care across the Interior.

Both Dr. Wile and Dr. Grippe are also strengthening ties with UBC through Clinical Faculty Appointments and collaborative research. With newly acquired neurophysiology sensors, the Clinic is now better equipped to conduct movement disorders research.

To enhance the work of the Clinic, cutting edge equipment has also been funded by KGH Foundation donors. One example is the addition of a state-of-the-art Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Voice and Swallowing (FEEVS) machine, which allows the Clinic's Speech-Language Pathologist to assess swallowing and vocal function onsite. For those living with Parkinson's, these functions are critical to safety and independence. Previously, patients often waited six to eight months for similar testing elsewhere but now, assessments can be completed much sooner, reducing wait times and improving access to care.

The Humphreys family's \$1 million matching commitment continues to amplify the impact of community generosity. With continued momentum, donors are helping more talent to be recruited, more connections to be developed, and

more patients to be treated.

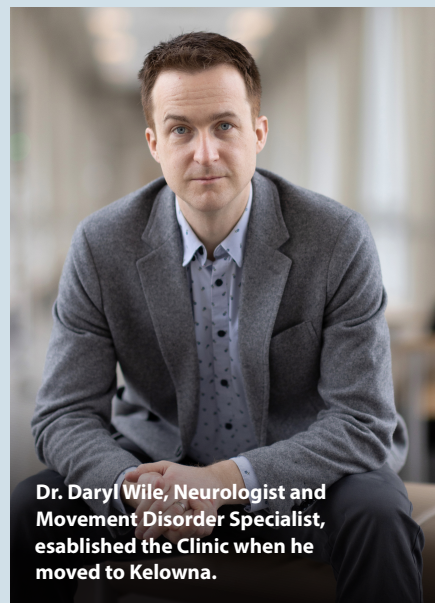
**Today, the
Humphreys Family
Movement Disorder
Clinic is emerging
as a recognized
leader in Parkinson's
innovation.**

The brain may be the last frontier, but thanks to donor generosity, more of that frontier is being explored right here at home. Together, we are gaining traction and building a future where high quality Parkinson's care is more accessible, more connected, and more hopeful than ever.

+ Listen Now



**Get to know Dr. Wile
beyond the practice on
the w(healthy) podcast**



**Dr. Daryl Wile, Neurologist and
Movement Disorder Specialist,
established the Clinic when he
moved to Kelowna.**

Advancing movement disorder care

Bringing leading-edge neurophysiology to patients in the Southern Interior

Story by **Dr. Talyta Grippe** | Neurologist, Movement Disorder Specialist, KGH

Dr. Grippe shares her unique path and experience in Neurology while shedding light on her research in emerging diagnostic and treatment options for those living with movement disorders.

I am a neurologist with a special interest in movement disorders, neurophysiology, and diagnostic accuracy. My passion for neuroscience began during medical school, when I became involved in research focused on Parkinson's disease and neurophysiology. That early exposure shaped the direction of my career and my commitment to improving how we diagnose and treat patients with complex neurological conditions.

After completing my neurology residency, I pursued a Master's degree investigating diagnostic methods to differentiate Parkinson's disease from similar conditions. I then undertook specialized training in movement disorders in Brazil, along with advanced clinical neurophysiology training, focusing on integrating electromyography into the assessment of movement disorders.

However, I soon realized that these experiences, while valuable, were not enough. I wanted to train in a setting where neurophysiological studies of movement disorders were not only performed regularly but deeply integrated into clinical decision-making by experts in the field.

This led me to Toronto, where I completed five years of advanced clinical and research training. During that time, I performed 197 neurophysiological studies

of movement disorders and was exposed to a range of complex cases. What struck me most was the tangible impact these studies could have. They helped clarify a patient's diagnosis, directly influenced treatment decisions, and even helped predict whether a patient's tremor would respond well to surgical intervention.

It became clear to me that neurophysiology is not just a complementary tool, it is a powerful, underutilized resource with the potential to significantly improve patient outcomes.

Alongside my clinical training, I completed a PhD in partnership with the University of Minas Gerais, focusing on non-invasive neurophysiological techniques in the treatment of Parkinson's disease. There I was introduced to therapeutic ultrasound—an emerging technology that remains in the research phase but is rapidly evolving. Its potential to become a part of routine clinical practice is both exciting and promising.

Now based in Kelowna at the Humphreys Family Movement Disorder Clinic, I am thrilled to be a part of a multidisciplinary team. A central goal of my work is to make neurophysiological diagnostic tools for movement disorders accessible to patients in our region. This would make us the third centre in all of Canada to have this tool available clinically. At the same time, I am working to develop research initiatives focused on non-invasive neuromodulation as a potential therapeutic avenue.

Through this work, I hope to bridge gaps in access, bring innovative diagnostic and treatment approaches to underserved regions, and contribute to a future where precision in movement disorder care is the standard rather than the exception.



+ Listen Now



Get to know Dr. Grippe beyond the practice on the w(healthy) podcast

Big steps forward for little patients

Making hospital care more comfortable for kids

The Pediatric Department at Kelowna General Hospital is entering a new chapter shaped by resilience, momentum and commitment to the children and families in the Southern Interior.

Just last year, the department faced a difficult period when staffing shortages led to a six-week closure. For families across the region, that uncertainty was deeply felt. When a child is sick, injured, or in need of urgent care, parents want to know that help is close by and ready. For the pediatric team, the closure was a reminder of just how essential their work is to the community.

Today, there is a renewed sense of energy and possibility within the department. With the arrival of Dr. Wong as the new Head of Pediatrics, along with five additional physicians, KGH is once again providing consistent, 24/7 pediatric care.

And while strengthening the medical team has been a critical step forward, the department's vision extends beyond clinical care alone. Pediatrics is also focused on creating experiences that help children and families feel safer and more supported in what can often be an overwhelming environment.

One of the most endearing (and cutest) examples of this work is the launch of the Teddy Bear Clinic, made possible by a four year commitment from Kirmac Cares for Kids, of Kirmac Collision and Autoglass.

For many children, hospitals can feel unfamiliar and frightening. The sounds, the equipment, the unknowns. It can be a lot to take in. But what happens when a child's first visit comes with an exciting field trip and a new teddy bear? What happens when Teddy gets a check-up, a cast, an X-ray, or an IV before they do?

Staffed by real health care professionals, the Teddy Bear Clinic offers children a safe, welcoming, and playful space to explore medical care on their own terms. Young Elementary students guide their stuffed "patients" through seven interactive stations, including vitals, heart sounds, X-rays, IVs and bloodwork, MRI, casts and bandages, and scrub preparation. Adding to the magic are miniature replicas of imaging equipment, handmade by the organizers, helping bring the experience to life in a way that feels approachable and fun.

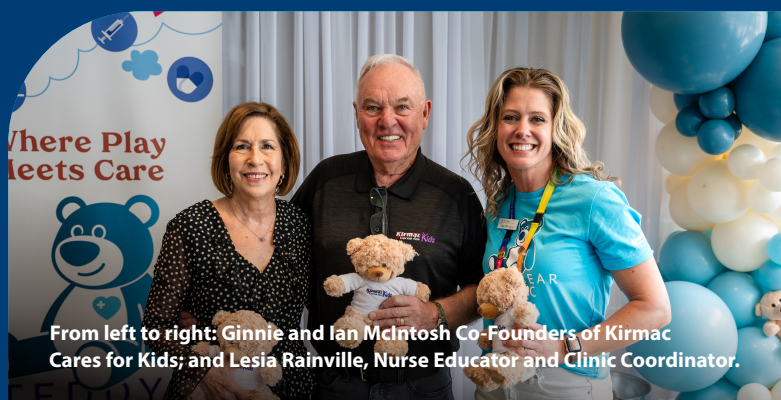
At each station, children are invited to ask questions, touch equipment, listen, learn, and imagine. They become the caregivers to their stuffed animals. And in those moments, fear is overtaken by curiosity.



Bob Somerville, Acute Respiratory Therapist Supervisor, shows children how a stethoscope works.



Garden of Relatives rug for the Pediatrics unit.



A child who may one day need care at KGH can begin to see the hospital not only as a place where scary things happen, but as a place filled with kind people who are there to help.

The clinic also creates a special opportunity for health care staff. Outside of the usual pace and pressure of the clinical setting, they can connect and build trust with children and families through moments of laughter.

Alongside these efforts, the department is also undertaking important work to indigenize the Pediatric Unit, with the goal of creating a more welcoming, culturally safe, and inclusive environment for Indigenous children and families.

Planned enhancements include incorporating a land acknowledgement at the unit entrance, integrating nsyilxcən language throughout the space, adding Indigenous children's books, and transforming three patient rooms with Indigenous artwork. Each of these changes is more than decorative. Together, they help create a space where Indigenous families can see their language, culture, and identity reflected. For a child receiving medical care, the environment matters. The sights, words, images, and stories around them can offer a sense of recognition and belonging.

By creating a space that feels more familiar, the Pediatric Unit is working to improve access to care and ensure more children and families feel supported when they need it most.

14+
Clinicians
volunteered to
share their
knowledge



90%
of children report
being afraid of
at least one thing
in a hospital*

Together, these advancements represent far more than updates to a hospital department. They represent a renewed promise to the children and families of the Southern Interior.

From rebuilding a dedicated care team, to introducing imaginative programs like the Teddy Bear Clinic, to creating spaces that honour culture, safety, and belonging, the Pediatric Department at KGH is reaffirming what families have always needed to know: when their children need care, they are not alone. They are welcomed. They are seen.

*Source: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19916342

Turning a corner

A promise to our little ones: the future of pediatric care starts today

Story by **Dr. Jeff Wong** | Physician, Head of Pediatrics at KGH

Dr. Wong reflects on his journey to KGH and his aspirations for the future of pediatric care in the Southern Interior.

As a father of two young children, I know that when your child is sick, your entire world narrows down to their bedside. This personal perspective is what drives me every day. Before I officially joined Kelowna General Hospital as the Department Head of Pediatrics this past September, I worked at BC Children's Hospital in Vancouver. It was there that I met families from our region who had traveled hundreds of kilometers to find care. Seeing the added burden on those parents—the exhaustion and the distance from their support systems—was a clear signal to me: I wanted to be part of a

long-term solution right here in Kelowna.

I believe that we have truly turned a corner. While every journey has its challenges, I see the hurdles of the past as the foundation for a much stronger, more resilient department. We have learned that by keeping communication channels open, maintaining active dialogue and transparency between our doctors and administrators, we will build a home for pediatric excellence. My focus is now entirely on the horizon, fueled by a shared sense of hope and a commitment to ensuring our services are as reliable as they are exceptional.

The energy on the ward today is incredible. I am thrilled to share that we have

successfully welcomed a few more new pediatricians to our full and dedicated team. This isn't just a number; it's a promise of continued and uninterrupted care.

In the coming years, I envision KGH as an important hub for pediatric care in the Okanagan region. And in the long run, I hope that there will be establishment of a Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) right here in Kelowna. This would be a life-changing advancement, providing critical, life-saving care without the need for a flight to the coast.

These dreams are within our reach because we aren't walking this path alone. The progress we have made is accelerated by the incredible generosity of our donor community.

Your partnership turns our highest aspirations into reality, helping us recruit the best talent and acquire the latest technology. I am deeply honoured to lead this department as we write this hopeful new chapter. Together, we are ensuring that for the children of our region, the best care isn't just a possibility, it is a promise.

"Our vision for the future is rooted in the unwavering goal of providing stable, high-quality pediatric care that grows alongside our community."

Dr. Jeff Wong



Listen Now



Get to know Dr. Wong beyond the practice on the w(healthy) podcast

A record breaking day

How the 10th annual KGH Day of Giving brought showers of support



Before the day had even begun, the community's support for the launch of our spring campaign in support of KGH's Emergency Department was already extraordinary.

In many ways, people were telling us what we already knew. Nearly everyone, at some point, has relied on the Emergency Department. They know what it feels like to sit in the waiting room, to wait in triage, or to be cared for by an emergency physician, nurse or member of the care team. And they understand the importance of rallying behind them.

Our community raised a staggering
\$2,533,995
to support the ongoing need of our
Emergency Department

Thanks to the generosity of local families and their matching gifts, the impact was already building before KGH Day of Giving even officially began. What started as an incredible \$550,000 in matching funds grew to \$800,000 through additional gifts from several generous local donors. Then, in a Foundation first, an anonymous donor stepped forward with an extraordinary additional \$700,000 match for all gifts made on KGH Day of Giving itself.

That meant, for one remarkable day, every \$1 donated became \$3 for emergency care at KGH.

Like any unpredictable morning in May, the day arrived with heavy rain and wind, but the weather did nothing to dampen the determination of the KGH Foundation team, volunteers, and community partners.

Vista Radio stations broadcast live from the hospital starting at 6 a.m., sharing stories and helping rally the community around the cause. Tim Hortons sold a limited-edition hot pink 'Day of Giving' donut in support of the campaign and also donated 10% of sales from their Lakeshore, Powick, Hollywood and Leckie locations. Black & McDonald sold the donuts at KGH and were enthusiastic sponsors. Save-On-Foods hosted a fund-raising BBQ and spin-to-win prize wheel.



Our Drive Thru RBC team welcoming donors with smiles.



**Rain couldn't dampen this team's spirit!
The KGH Foundation crew bringing the energy.**

The Sprott Shaw College "Change Bandits" braved the rain, collecting donations from drivers passing by. KGH Foundation staff and volunteers bundled up under blankets at donation stations, ready to greet anyone who came by on foot or by car to give.

And behind the scenes, the finance team stayed up counting until the wee hours of the morning to ensure every single dollar was accounted for.

In 2025, KGH Day of Giving raised more than \$1.2 million to help bring robotic-assisted surgery (Vinni) to KGH, a record-breaking result at the time. This year, by midday, that record had already been surpassed and then some.

It was raining. It was windy. But as donations continued to come in, the excitement only grew.



By 6 p.m., the total had reached \$2.1 million, a truly unprecedented number. Still, the gifts kept coming until midnight. The final total? An incredible \$2,533,995.17 for emergency care at KGH.

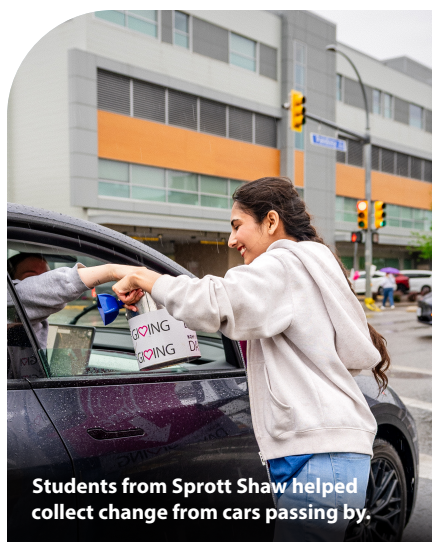
The community showed up in every possible way. People drove in. People donated online. People phoned in. People gave what they could. Together, they raised an unbelievable amount in support of KGH's ED.

These funds will support the most immediate and urgent needs of the department, with targeted improvements focused on equipment and the front end of the Emergency Department.

These investments will help optimize patient flow, enhance safety, support faster diagnostics, and help reduce wait times for patients and families across the region.



The Save-On-Foods team fired up the grill and flipped burgers for us at the courtyard BBQ.



Students from Sprott Shaw helped collect change from cars passing by.



Scan the QR code to witness giving in action from KGH Day of Giving 2026



Dr. Neil Long promised to shave his head if we hit \$1.5 million... little did he know!



The Vista radio team broadcast from KGH all day from 6 am–6 pm.

This historic total was made possible by thousands of donations received throughout the day, and by a community that recognized the urgent need to support KGH's Emergency Department, the second busiest in British Columbia.

The work ahead is significant, but so is the momentum. Together, we are helping shape and decide what health care can become, closer to home than you think.



JoeAnna's House



Scan the QR code
to virtually tour
JoeAnna's House

Cheryl stayed close to her husband at KGH,
finding refuge and support during a critical time.

A place to call home

And the comfort of knowing they're not alone

An accident on a distant highway. A call in the middle of the night. A sweaty-palmed, anxiety filled drive from one's rural hometown to the 'big' hospital in Kelowna, hours away. Lights, doctors, machines, questions, waiting.

No one ever plans a trip to JoeAnna's House. But every single guest who arrives needs only two things. A quiet place to rest. And the comfort of knowing they are not alone.

"It has a real community feel and people are very friendly here because they're all in the same situation," says Les, who became a guest of JoeAnna's House after his wife was involved in a head-on collision near their hometown of Nelson, BC, and was transferred to KGH for complex trauma care. Les expected JoeAnna's House to be fairly basic, just a place to stay between hospital visits. Instead, he says JoeAnna's House became a place of solace, to decompress and share quiet conversations with others who understood what he was going through.

Cheryl's journey began when her

husband was suddenly transferred from Shuswap Lake General Hospital in Salmon Arm to KGH's cardiac unit in critical condition. Family came into Kelowna from all directions, filling hotel rooms for a few uncertain days. Until, when visiting at the hospital, they were told about JoeAnna's House. What began as a place to sleep became a gathering place for children, grandchildren, and loved ones as they came to visit Cheryl during her stay.

"There's a real sense of community here," Cheryl shared. "Everyone speaks to one another, and everybody's going through something."

Elaine arrived at JoeAnna's House from the quiet, rural community of Scotch Creek. She initially wanted isolation, a motel room to come and go as she pleased, to retreat from everything unfolding around her husband's heart surgery. After that first night, she moved to JoeAnna's House because, very practically, it was so close to KGH. Elaine was immediately surprised by how different it felt.

"It felt like being in your own house," she said. "It actually gave me the space I didn't know I needed to just breathe. This along with the convenience of being a short walk from the hospital, having access to a kitchen, laundry, and the freedom to come and go without any added stress."

One in four beds at KGH are occupied by someone who's come from outside the Central Okanagan. Since opening in 2019, JoeAnna's House has become a soft-landing spot for their loved ones. Over 2,500 guests, people just like Les, Elaine, and Cheryl.

Though they all arrive at JoeAnna's House under different circumstances, they shared the same experience – a sense of community, a place they can call home.



During her husband's open-heart surgery, Elaine travelled from Scotch Creek to find support and stay close by.



Les arrived at JoeAnna's House from Nelson seeking comfort while his wife recovered from a head-on collision.

Home is where the healing is

How Hospital at Home is bringing KGH to patients' front doors

As patient volumes continue to rise at KGH, an innovative and internationally recognized model of care is bringing hospital level treatment to the place patients feel safest: home.

Hospital at Home (HaH) is a patient centered program providing 24/7 medical supervision through a combination of remote monitoring, virtual consultations, and in-person visits from a multidisciplinary health team. Eligible patients must first meet a selection of criteria, such as location and clinical needs.

Lauren Morrison, Manager of the HaH program shares, "Better sleep, being closer to your loved ones, and the comfort of your own space and food all sound wonderful, but they can also help people heal faster."

"Just imagine how different your experience would be if you were facing a lengthy hospital stay and had the option of receiving the same care from your own bed,"

Benefits for patients include improved outcomes, enhanced satisfaction, and minimized risk of hospital related complications such

as falls and delirium. The program is also contributing to significant staff satisfaction and retention, an important factor in today's health care environment.

HaH launched in 2025 thanks in part to donor support, which helped fund the acquisition of essential equipment. In just a short time, demand has grown and HaH has yielded such great results, that two more vehicles are now needed.

Donor generosity will fund the additional vehicles as well as a portable Point of Care Ultrasound, allowing clinicians to perform real time imaging in patient homes. This technology will enable faster answers, quicker decisions, and better outcomes, all while minimizing the need for patients to return to the hospital.



Jack Proseilo, a local Kelowna retiree experienced the benefits of HaH in March after ending up at KGH with an infection in three of his vertebrae. He was facing over one month in a hospital bed, when the

program was suggested to him.

"Initially, I wasn't sure how HaH would work, but I really wanted to return to my own bed. After the team set me up with equipment to monitor my vitals, direct access to an emergency line, and a clear care plan, I felt confident and happy leaving KGH," Jack recalls.

Jack's story is just one example, but the impact of HaH reaches far beyond the individual.

"From the beginning I felt fully taken care of. A nurse visited me every 12 hours to administer antibiotics, and there were physician check-ins, all in my own home. I received the same level of care, but without the noise and disruption of the hospital. I am so grateful to the wonderful Hospital at Home team, and to all the donors who helped make this program possible. I am positive I healed faster because of it."

KGH typically operates around 108–113% capacity, meaning it's consistently caring for more patients than it was designed to hold.



Every patient safely treated at home helps free up a hospital bed for someone in urgent need, easing pressure on the system while improving care for all.

"We are keeping people happy, not just healthy," adds Morrison. "This is a forward-thinking solution that's enhancing the mental health of our patients and our staff."

Although KGH often operates beyond capacity, Hospital at Home is increasing the number of hospital beds in a profoundly patient-centred way, by bringing care home.

This unique and compassionate program positively impacts individual patients, but it also supports care teams and strengthens the broader health care system as well. All thanks to donor generosity.

3,174
total Hospital at
Home bed days*

515
total Hospital at
Home admissions*

*As of March 31, 2026

Slices of Gratitude

Celebrating the businesses and community champions turning passion into action!

Story by **Bettina Muller**: Director of Philanthropy, Corporate & Community Giving

In this work, I'm often reminded that some of the most meaningful impact begins with a group of people who simply decide to show up. Year after year, businesses and community champions bring their creativity, commitment, and heart to making health care better for everyone in our region, often while running businesses, leading teams, and serving customers.

In 2025, through community fundraising events, corporate initiatives, third-party fundraisers, and sponsorships, an incredible \$785,112 was raised in support of local health care.

There were golf tournaments organized after long workdays, cooking competitions brought to life by passionate teams, co-workers and customers who rallied around a cause, sponsors who stepped forward, and community members who chose to support an area of care that mattered to them.

In total, 59 unique events supported 14 different areas of care across our region.

Last year, we launched Slices of Gratitude at Red Bird Brewing as a way to bring everyone together, thank them in person, and celebrate the heart behind their efforts. Turns out pizza, beverages, and community impact are a perfect combination.

What made the evening so great was the opportunity to shine a light on the creativity and dedication that our fundraisers bring to the table by presenting them with awards to recognize their efforts. Of course, this always makes the festivities more fun!

It is amazing to see a network of people who care deeply about improving health outcomes for their community, and that collective impact is growing.

To everyone who has organized an event, rallied a team, signed on as a sponsor, or showed up to support, thank you! You are helping bring world-class care closer to home in ways that reach far beyond a single event, and your impact means everything.



Community partners gather in Red Bird Brewing to celebrate.



The Kelowna Canadian Italian Club "The Nonnas" accepting their award for most creative Fundraising Event/Initiative.

Community Partners Awards



Top Fundraiser: Parade with a Purpose

Festive holiday parade raised over \$170,000 for youth mental health



Rookie of the Year: Black Box Competition

Cooking competition led by Cairry Holtby



Most Enthusiastic Fundraiser: DAS Weekend

Epic three-day Euro car event led by Ryder and his team



Best Team Spirit: Prestige Hotels and Resorts

Led 3 fundraising events for JoeAnna's House



Most Creative Fundraising Event or Initiative:

Kelowna Canadian Italian Club
The Nonna's "Sauce for Smiles" raised funds for pediatrics



The Above & Beyond Award: Save-On-Foods

Ultimate corporate partner: till campaigns, in-kind support, and more!

Our community fundraisers
raised a staggering

\$785,112

in support of health care,
right here at home



Odds are we *all* win!

The Heart of BC 50/50 Lottery puts the *fun* in funding healthier communities

Every day in the Southern Interior, many people are working to stay healthy long before they ever need a hospital bed. In community spaces, schools, wellness programs, and early supports that often operate out of sight, health prevention and promotion plays an essential role in keeping our health system strong.

Which is precisely why the Heart of BC 50/50 Lottery focuses its impact on supporting health prevention and promotion efforts right here in our local communities.

The odds of winning? Pretty good if you consider that every ticket sold helps fund programs that keep people well, while giving one lucky winner the chance at a life-changing cash prize.

Funds raised through the Heart of BC 50/50 are dedicated solely to proactive, upstream health programs throughout the Interior. In partnership with the YMCA of Southern Interior BC and hospital foundations across the Interior Health region, proceeds are supporting wellness initiatives that help people build healthy habits, stay active, and access early supports close to home. The goal is to promote healthy communities, reduce pressure on hospitals and urgent care centres, and strengthen

the health system in the process.

The impact is already being realized. In the Central Okanagan, Heart of BC 50/50 proceeds helped bring programs like Sport for Life into elementary schools, introducing physical literacy at a critical stage in children's development. Focused on inclusive, accessible opportunities for people of all ages and abilities, Sport for Life encourages lifelong participation in physical activity, not just high performance. Proceeds from the lottery supported students where they had the opportunity to build confidence, develop movement skills, and lay the foundation for healthier futures.

The lottery will also help expand support for youth and young adults living in West Kelowna. The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) is currently fundraising to bring Foundry services to West Kelowna. Foundry provides integrated support for youth and young adults aged 12 to 24 and offers access to vital resources such as mental health care, peer support, primary care, and resources for education and employment.

And with each draw, the momentum continues to build.

Since launching, the Heart of BC 50/50 has grown from a promising new fundraiser into a powerful regional investment

channel. After partnering with the Heart of BC, Vernon Jubilee Hospital Foundation received a \$17,957 distribution which was used to fund a new tympanometer for the Audiology department at the Vernon Health Unit. This is an essential tool used daily to diagnose hearing loss in the community and is used on six to eight patients every single day. Tickets bought in the community made an immediate impact where it was needed.

Because what makes Heart of BC 50/50 such a rare opportunity is that one person may take home the jackpot, but every ticket helps build a healthier community.

The most recent draw reached a jackpot of more than \$685,000, proving that when a community comes together around a shared goal, the returns go far beyond the prize.

Odds are, we all win.



Scan the QR code to purchase your ticket

Big Cash Prize. Big Impact for Health in BC.



Purchase your
tickets today

HeartofBC.ca



*Know your limit, play within it. Must be 19+ to play. Full rules of play available at heartofbc.ca. BC Gaming Event Licence # 73550. Problem Gambling Help Line: 1-888-795-6111.



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