

Inspire

FALL 2024

STORIES FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Kipling-area man receives life-saving cardiac care in Regina



Kelly Doka

You don't have to convince Kelly Doka of the importance of having world-class cardiac care available in southern Saskatchewan. The 70-year-old farmer and cancer survivor from the Kipling area has first-hand experience in our catheterization labs at the Mosaic Heart Centre, in Regina's General Hospital.

"My wife and I returned from a European holiday with our oldest son and his family in mid-January of this year", Kelly explains. "Within days, I developed a serious lung infection which lasted about two weeks. At that

point, I was admitted to the Kipling hospital where the infection was treated with antibiotics. I was sent home two days later."

However, Kelly's relief was short-lived and he returned to the Kipling hospital a couple of days later with severe chest pains and pain shooting down both his arms. This time the diagnosis was more serious. He was having a heart attack. Kelly was rushed by ambulance from Kipling to Regina, and taken directly to our cardiac centre where he underwent a battery of diagnostic tests. A CT scan revealed a severe lung infection. A subsequent angiogram revealed a blocked coronary artery which, if left untreated, would have resulted in another, likely fatal, heart attack.

"Luckily, it was a fairly easy fix", Kelly reveals. "Antibiotics eventually took care of the lung infection, and doctors installed a stent to get the blood flowing properly again in my artery." The angiogram and the procedure to install the stent were performed in one of our two cardiac catheterization labs at the Regina General Hospital.

"We are so grateful for the care we received from everyone in the cardiac care centre", Kelly's wife Karen states.

"On top of the excellent care Kelly received, they took the time to answer all our questions. And we had lots!"

A follow-up CT scan in May revealed Kelly's lung infection was gone, which allowed him to get busy planting his 2024 grain crop. Today, he's feeling good and is thankful for the care he received, and for the support of Hospitals of Regina Foundation donors and partners for Regina's cardiac program.

"Kelly's story is a reminder of the importance of ensuring our cardiac teams have access to the best technology possible", says Lisa Green, senior vice-president, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "That's why the Foundation has launched a \$2.5 million fundraising campaign to upgrade our second catheterization lab, and our friends at Municipal Hail Insurance will match all community gifts up to \$1 million. It's estimated that one in 12 Saskatchewan residents will experience cardiac issues in their lifetime, and we want to ensure the best possible care is available when it's needed the most, right here at home."

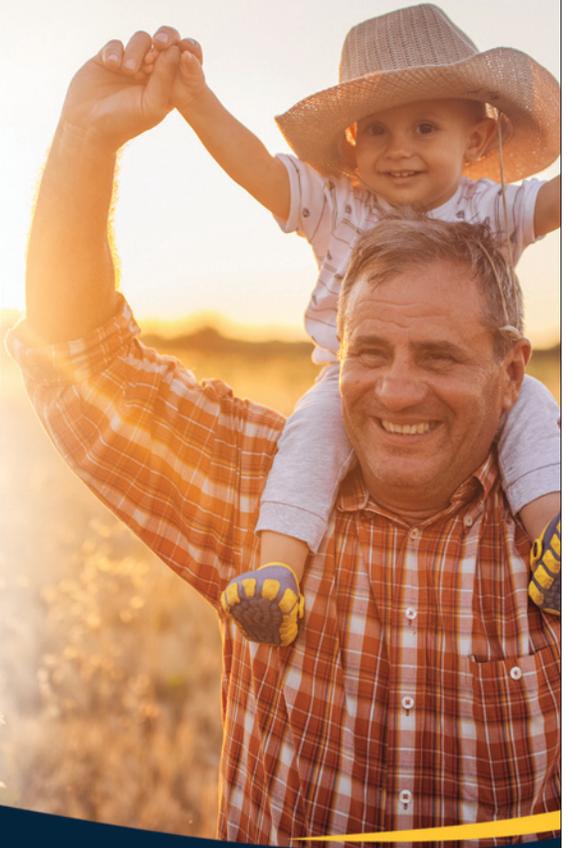


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John Deere Foundation *supports cardiac health*



*Cole Jensen, John Deere Canada and
Lisa Green and Luanne Drake,
Hospitals of Regina Foundation*

John Deere Foundation is committed to strengthening the communities they call home. With their western distribution centre located in Regina, the decision to support Hospitals of Regina Foundation's Cardiac Care Campaign with a donation of \$25,000 was an easy one.

"Cardiac disease is a significant issue in our farming community, which means our customers are directly impacted by our gift", says Cole Jensen, territory business manager for John Deere. "Knowing our support will be matched by Municipal Hail Insurance to have double the impact was an additional benefit."

In recent years, the Government of Saskatchewan reported that approximately 25 per cent of the adult

population had high blood pressure, and one in 12 adults living in this province have heart disease.

"Given the dangers cardiac disease poses to people in Saskatchewan, including the thousands of farmers across our province, investing in the best possible cardiac care is a priority for the Foundation", says Lisa Green, senior vice-president, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "We're grateful to John Deere Foundation for their generous support of our Cardiac Care Campaign, and to Municipal Hail Insurance for matching this donation."

Cardiac Care Campaign receives boost from Young's Equipment



Lisa Green, senior vice-president, Hospitals of Regina Foundation and Sean Young

In April 2024, Hospitals of Regina Foundation launched a \$2.5 million Cardiac Care Campaign to upgrade the second of two catheterization (cath) labs at the Regina General Hospital, along with a \$1 million community match from Municipal Hail Insurance. Young's Equipment was among the first to step forward to offer their support, and double their impact, with a \$100,000 gift.

A 2019 US study tracked the cause of death for farm workers between 1994 and 2019, concluding that 70 per cent of farmer deaths were related to heart disease. Researchers have theorized this may be connected to the long work hours, lifestyle and physical exertion. After hearing about this research and the potential impact of heart disease on

our farming community, Young's Equipment jumped on board with this significant contribution.

"We all know farming can be a stressful occupation but after hearing about the correlation to heart disease, we knew we had to help", says Sean Young, assistant general manager of the family-operated Young's Equipment. "We've partnered with Hospitals of Regina Foundation before and the opportunity to have our gift matched by Municipal Hail Insurance made this decision an easy one."

Our cath lab interventional cardiologists diagnose and treat coronary artery disease – critical heart problems related to the blockage of blood vessels to the heart – helping thousands of people in

our community. The first cath lab was upgraded in 2020. The Foundation will now upgrade the second cath lab through our new cardiac campaign.

According to Dr. Rodney Zimmerman, director of the cardiac catheterization labs at Regina's General Hospital, approximately 70 per cent of patients seen in the cath labs live outside of Regina. With access to the most current technology, and the talented doctors it allows us to attract and retain, many of these patients go on to live fulfilling lives. Given the dangers cardiac disease poses to people in Saskatchewan, including thousands of farmers across our province, excellent cardiac care is a crucial component of health care for our community.

"We are very grateful for Young's Equipment and their partnership on this important project", says Dino Sophocleous, president and CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "As a successful business and important part of the agriculture sector, they immediately saw the need to support this campaign and double their impact, to help us invest in the best cardiac care possible for our southern Saskatchewan community."

Regina's hospitals provide life-saving care for Yorkton youngster



Alice Gregoire

Alice Gregoire's introduction to the world was anything but routine. She was born on Nov. 17, 2018 without an esophagus, a very rare and life-threatening condition. Fortunately for Alice and her family, life-saving expertise was available not far from their Yorkton home, at Regina's General Hospital.

"It was a normal pregnancy, or so we thought", says Alice's mother Rachel Gregoire. "Alice is our third child, and her two older brothers arrived without any complications, but this time we weren't as fortunate. Alice was delivered, in Yorkton, a couple of days shy of her due date and weighed well over seven

pounds. However, she started turning blue shortly after the delivery, which led to an emergency ambulance ride to Regina."

The ambulance took Alice directly to our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at the Rawlco Centre for Mother Baby Care, at the Regina General Hospital. There, the medical team worked to stabilize her condition while preparing her for surgery two days later; the first of 14, so far, surgical procedures.

During that first six-hour long operation, the surgeon created an esophagus for Alice, through a complicated procedure that involved constructing an esophagus from existing tissue, including from her stomach. That was also the start of a three-week stay at our NICU, followed by numerous visits to Regina's pediatric outpatient unit for follow-up care.

A gastronomy feeding tube, delivering food directly to Alice's stomach, was removed in April 2023, enabling her to eat without assistance. A 15th surgical procedure is pending, to determine the extent of damage after a series of recent lung infections.

"Our family is just so grateful for the care Alice received, and continues to receive", says Rachel. "A doctor told us Alice had a greater chance of being hit by lightning than of being born without an esophagus. Despite her condition

being so rare, the medical teams in Regina have the knowledge, and the latest technology, made possible by Hospitals of Regina Foundation donors, to give Alice a fighting chance. One thing is for sure, our little girl is a fighter. She's fierce!"

"Despite her condition being so rare, the medical teams in Regina have the knowledge, and the latest technology, made possible by Hospitals of Regina Foundation donors, to give Alice a fighting chance."

Rachel Gregoire, mother

Today, Alice is about to enter grade one. She's also busy with tap and jazz dance classes along with cheerleading. In other words, she's living the life of a normal five-year-old.

"Alice's story is a reminder of the importance of giving our hospitals the latest technology, and that our medical teams have the expertise required to handle even rare cases like hers", says Lisa Green, senior vice-president, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "That's why our Foundation will continue to work with all of our supporters to ensure life-saving care is available for children across southern Saskatchewan, right here at home."

Schmirler Foundation gifts provide *NICU medical teams with leading-edge seizure technology*

The Sandra Schmirler Foundation is a valued, long-time partner of Hospitals of Regina Foundation, and together we have made great strides in advancing quality care provided in our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), in the Rawlco Centre for Mother Baby Care, at Regina's General Hospital.

Every year, about 500 babies across southern Saskatchewan are born prematurely, have complications during or after birth (such as respiratory distress or cardiac problems) or arrive as part of a multiple birth and require specialized care in Regina's NICU. With its highly trained medical staff and outstanding financial support from our community, it is no wonder our NICU is recognized as one of the best facilities in Canada.

Last year, the Sandra Schmirler Foundation helped the Foundation deliver on a top priority for our NICU, an amplitude-integrated electroencephalography (aEEG) monitor, to help premature babies at risk of seizures. While not all seizures pose an immediate risk to the baby, they are critical indicators of underlying issues that need immediate attention such as infections, brain injury or brain bleeds. Seizures are difficult to recognize in neonates by simple observation even by trained medical professionals, a fact that makes this technology a critical one for our NICU.



L to R: Jessica Rawn, Karen Hackl and Lisa Green of Hospitals of Regina Foundation, and Jenna England and Sara England, Sandra Schmirler Foundation Ambassadors

The Sandra Schmirler Foundation's gifts totalling \$63,000 meant we were able to invest in this technology to help our medical teams improve diagnosis and monitoring of seizure activity in our NICU babies. This is the second aEEG monitor funded by the Foundation in recent years and demonstrates a growing need for this important technology.

“The Sandra Schmirler Foundation shares our vision and commitment to a strong NICU in Regina, and we will continue to support the delivery of quality care for our children, right here at home”, says Lisa Green, senior vice-president, Hospitals of Regina Foundation.

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Thousands of patients to benefit from Foundation's \$2.4 million investment

Saskatchewan's first Urgent Care Centre, located in Regina, proudly opened its doors to the public on July 2, 2024, adding significant capacity to Regina's health care system. Regina's new Urgent Care Centre provides care to patients with non-life-threatening illnesses and injuries requiring same-day attention, as well as those needing immediate mental health and addictions support. With this new capacity, pressure on Regina's emergency rooms will decrease, resulting in reduced wait times, allowing critical resources to be available for life-threatening medical emergencies at the Regina General and Pasqua hospitals

At the official opening ceremony on June 27, Hospitals of Regina Foundation announced \$2.42 million in funding for the Urgent Care Centre's technology, equipment, furniture and fixtures, as we welcomed the media through its doors, along with the Premier, the Ministers of Health and SaskBuilds and Procurement, SHA officials and other special guests.

This significant investment has delivered a digital x-ray system, an ultrasound system, pharmacy and laboratory equipment, patient monitors, portable patient lifts, defibrillators, exam tables that can be raised or lowered to accommodate disabled patients, and other essential items like furniture for the reception area, the counselling rooms and the exam rooms.



Urgent Care Centre, located in Regina

"We are delighted to make this critical investment in the Urgent Care Centre, which is the first substantial addition to Regina's health care capacity for many years", says Dino Sophocleous, president and CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "We are grateful to our donors, for it is their support that allows us to keep our promise of the best health care possible for everyone - a promise we made to this community 37 years ago."

A significant part of the Hospitals of Regina Foundation's investment came from a legacy gift from one of the Foundation's most devoted donors, the late Lynn McManus. A true philanthropist, Lynn always trusted the Foundation to invest her support in the highest priority needs of our hospitals.

"Lynn's philanthropic spirit is exemplified through her legacy to the

Foundation and the southern Saskatchewan community, which allowed us to support the Urgent Care Centre", shares Dino Sophocleous.

"The generosity of our donors allows the Foundation to make critical investments in our health care facilities, and help our medical teams deliver the best care possible right here at home."

The Saskatchewan Health Authority is taking a phased approach to operating the Urgent Care Centre, with the facility accepting patients seven-days-a-week from 8 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. It plans to transition to 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week service in late 2024. The Centre supported 575 patients in its first week of operation and is expected to see 20,000 patients annually.

Saskatchewan Professional Firefighters & Paramedics Burn Fund supports Burn Unit Expansion

Established in 1975, the Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters and Paramedics Burn Fund's (SPFFPBF) mission encompasses a number of initiatives aimed at enhancing burn care and prevention in Saskatchewan. This includes investments in health care, a Children's Burn Camp to support burn victims, education and awareness programs and support for individual burn victims.

A Hospitals of Regina Foundation partner since 1983, they supported our children's burn treatment room in our pediatric inpatient unit in 2021. Most recently, the SPFFPBF members proudly supported the Foundation's commitment to expand the Trauma/Burn Unit at the Regina General Hospital with a gift of \$50,000.

The Trauma/Burn Unit is a high acuity unit with private rooms, specialized technology and equipment, and a much higher than typical ratio of nurses to patients in order to provide the dedicated care patients of the unit need. Last year, the Foundation agreed to provide more than \$500,000 to increase the capacity of the unit by 50 per cent.

"Making sure that the specialized health care needed by burn patients was available when it's needed most is a huge priority for the volunteer members of the Burn Fund", says Brendan Wagner, chair, Regina Professional Firefighters Burn Fund Association.

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Brendan Wagner, chair, Regina Professional Firefighters Burn Fund Association

"Expansion of the unit is something we strongly support and we are pleased to partner with Hospitals of Regina Foundation on this project".

Each year, the unit cares for many seriously injured patients. Burn treatment on this unit also incorporates treatment of severe frostbite, a significant danger in our climate.

"We are grateful to the Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters and Paramedics Burn Fund volunteer members for their support", says Dino Sophocleous, president and CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "Their contribution will help us ensure acute burn treatment is available for people in southern Saskatchewan and that no one will be left vulnerable without access to the life-saving care they need."



L to R: Evan Zurloff, Mackenzie Morris, Lisa Green, Luanne Drake, Austin Brown, and Brayden Phillips

Celebrating *our community's giving spirit*



The giving spirit of the individuals, organizations and businesses that support Hospitals of Regina Foundation is outstanding. Time and time again, these caring and generous partners gather together to raise funds for Regina's hospitals in new and exciting ways! Whether a gala event, a donation at the till campaign, a golf tournament or a marathon, people step up and support health care for those who need it most. The Foundation is grateful for our community's support because nothing we do happens without you.

Thanks to many amazing volunteer organizers, here are some of the fundraising activities that took place between May and August 2024 in support of Hospitals of Regina Foundation:

- CCU 5KM Walk/Run – 13,782
- Bigfoot 50 trail Run – \$2,624
- Motorcycle Ride for the Boys – \$11,707
- Teddy Bear Bash – \$988

It is going to be a busy fall! Please join in the fun at these upcoming events! Follow our social media pages to keep up to date on how to get involved by purchasing tickets, or supporting our efforts through donations.

- GMS Queen City Marathon – Sept. 6-8
- Uncover the Cure Cocktail Party – Sept. 12
- Gift of Giving Gala – Sept. 19
- McDonald's in Yorkton and Melville donation at the till and 10 cents from coffee-based beverages – Sept. 1-30
- McDonald's in Regina, Weyburn, and Estevan donation at the till – Nov. 1 - Dec. 31

CONNECT

To learn how you can host your own fundraiser, visit our website hrf.sk.ca/Events/Host-An-Event, or contact Brienne Moore, development officer at 306-781-7501 or by email at brienne.moore@hrf.sk.ca.

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