Stratford General Hospital Community Update

Vision for Cancer Care

This is first in a series of testimonials in which chemo patients, their families, and the staff and doctors who care for them share stories of their journey to fight the battle against cancer. A new \$2.8 million Chemo space including new technology is projected for 2020 completion. The project is one of the components in the Stratford General Hospital Foundation's capital campaign.

Knowing you're in the hands of committed, caring, highly trained professionals is an important part of the battle for many cancer patients. And that's exactly the kind of caregivers they'll find at Stratford General's Chemo Unit: someone who brings all their skills, knowledge and compassion to work each day to give every patient their best chance of survival.

Nurse Kathy Blake joined Stratford's chemo unit in June of 2017. But she's not new to treating cancer she's been progressively training to strengthen her education, knowledge and experience to better care for cancer patients.

"I'm a big fan of life-long learning," explains Kathy, a nurse for some 26 years and one of only few nurses in Canada to earn a de Sousa designation. "Cancer care is what I wanted to do and where I knew I could have impact, so I invested a lot of time and effort is often completely shot with traveling and waiting into becoming specialized in cancer care."



Kathy Blake, Chemo RN

But her pursuit of excellence nursing isn't just academicalso personal. Kathy's husband was diagnosed with cancer before she started working at SGH's chemo unit. "I had just started doing my training in London to be an oncology nurse," she says. "There had been cancer in my family before, but not like my husband. That really brought it home."

experience The reinforced Kathy's

commitment to the cause and her support for cancer care delivered close to home, saving patients the trip to London's Regional Cancer Centre—a trip many find time consuming and exhausting.

"When patients have to travel to London, their day for their cancer treatment," she says. "If you can offer that same quality of treatment closer to home, they still have part of their day left, and part of their life."

But with the ever growing number of patients seeking chemo treatment in Stratford, shortcomings in the chemo unit are evident. While there are several smaller treatment and procedure spaces, the majority of patients are crowded into one cramped room, sitting shoulder to shoulder with other patients receiving their chemotherapy treatments.

Lack of space also puts the squeeze on a support person. "I think sometimes the family that come to support the person receiving treatment feel that they're in the way. We don't want that," she says.

Ideally, in addition to a larger new Chemo Unit, Kathy would like to see upgrades in equipment, and planning for the changing face of cancer care. Even today, many patients are not simply getting "chemotherapy", but are increasingly receiving biotherapy and immunotherapy.

"Cancer care is going to be changing. It might look very different in 10 years from now, so it would be nice if that new unit can be designed to meet those needs down the road," says Kathy. "There's lots of exciting stuff on the way."

Optimist Club of Stratford



A BIG thank you to the Optimist Club of Stratford for their support of the purchase of a Cardiac Monitor for the Maternal Child Unit. We can never say thank you enough for their gift of this essential piece of equipment that has such an impact on our tiniest patients!! Front L-R: Optimists Sal Marano, Stu MacQuaig - Treasurer, Mat/Child RNs Linsey Van Kooten and Sheila Bell, Kerri Hannon - Manager Maternal Child. Back L-R: Optimists Paul Barton, Brian Pearson, Randy Fortune - President, Dean Listman, Gerry Cox, Andrea Page SGHF ED and Optimist Barry Mason.

Walch Family Strawberries - Big Cheque Presentation



Birgit Walch of Walch Family Strawberries dropped by Stratford General Hospital Foundation for a big cheque presentation marking their generous donation of \$2,209 towards the CT Scanner! Thank you to the Walch Family for hosting the June Pick Your Own Strawberry Day in support of SGH Foundation. We can never say thank you enough! A shout out to the Volunteers of SGH for their help. L-R: Birgit Walch and Andrea Page SGHF ED.

Farm Credit Canada Supports CT



Agri-Spirit Fund and SGH Foundation was one of the only 84 grants FCC Agri-Spirit Fund chose for impact on rural communities. Their grant of \$20,000 towards our CT Scanner will impact over 12.000 patients a year from throughout Perth. Huron counties and beyond. L-R: Lieke Kuijpers, Farm Credit Canada Relationship Manager presents a cheque to Louanne Plain, HPHA Manager Medical Imaging.

A big thank you to young Philanthropist



A big thank you to young Philanthropist Kendra Sherwood! Kendra and her Mom Morgar Longhurst delivered a special gift of care kits for the patients in our Maternal Child Unit. Morgan noted that when Kendra was a baby, she was rushed to the hospital and knows these extras would be really helpful for any parents who have sick children or babies in the hospital The kits are full of essentials including baby toys, a blanket and toiletries. Joining Kendra and Morgan is Paediatrician Dr. Tina Pittman.



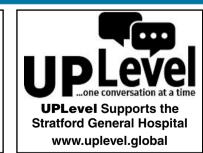
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