

IMPACT NEWSLETTER

Stories of outstanding care you make possible with your support of Sault Area Hospital Foundation.



Your support helped John meet his grandchildren

In November, Kailie Doncaster said goodbye to her father, John, after he received critical care at Sault Area Hospital for over two years. Despite her grief, Kailie is grateful for the two years that outstanding local care gave her and her father. Your support made that care possible.

In September 2020, Kailie was 12 weeks pregnant, and excited to tell her father, John. Their plans to travel that month had been cancelled due to pandemic restrictions, so Kailie thought her news was sure to cheer up the whole family.

But Kailie didn't get the chance to tell her dad in the way she'd planned. On the day of their cancelled flight, John walked in through the front door after work and collapsed.

"When he called me, I couldn't understand a word he was saying," recalls Kailie. "I drove home as quickly as I could to find him on the ground. I called an ambulance and it got to us within minutes." As soon as they entered the Emergency Department, doctors took John to the ICU. Kailie sat in the emergency waiting room, fearing the worst.

It was there that she got the devastating news: Her father had had a severe stroke in his brain stem. John was put into a medically induced coma. A ventilator breathed for him, tubes fed him through his stomach, and IV lines supplied him with water and medicine. He was in a coma for 2 months.

It was December 2020 when doctors woke John from his coma. They warned Kailie that they couldn't be sure when, or if, her father would regain consciousness. "In the first few weeks, my dad shocked the doctors with his progress. He was cognitive, he understood what was happening," Kailie shares. "It was a relief. My best friend had pulled through; the nightmare was over. I thought, 'I'll have my dad back home!' But sadly, that was just the start."

John's stroke caused a disease called Wallenburg Syndrome. He lost mobility in the left side of his body, and couldn't swallow on his own. He needed a tracheostomy, a small hole in his throat, to allow for suction of fluid from his lungs and, on his bad days, to provide oxygen.

John struggled to speak and couldn't write because of the loss

(Continued on page 2)

John's Story, Continued



John met his granddaughter Stella in June 2021

of his mobility. Kailie learned to read John's lips, so they could continue to communicate.

When he woke up, Kailie had a baby bump. "He was a bit surprised! He wondered how long it had been."

John was at risk of choking, so he was deemed too unwell to be cared for at home or go into a long term care home. He needed specialist care that only Sault Area Hospital could provide.

The two years that followed were not easy for Kailie and John. John battled aspiration pneumonia again and again. But the Sault Area Hospital care team were amazing throughout.

"The staff of 2C went above and beyond... Some brought him Christmas gifts or visited on their breaks to sit and talk with him."

When Kailie's daughter, Stella, was born in March 2021, visitor restrictions were in place. John's care team printed pictures for him and helped him make video calls. He met his granddaughter in person a few months later.

John met his second grandchild, Archie, the day after he was born on August 20, 2022. Three months later, John fought aspiration pneumonia for the final time and went into palliative care at the Hospital.

"My dad should have died during his stroke, but thanks to the care at Sault Area Hospital I got two more years with him," Kailie shares. "He got two more years to watch his grandchildren come into the world. Though I'm grieving, I am so grateful for the two years SAH gave us."

Your gifts fund equipment that extends the lives of critically ill patients.

Your support funds essential medical equipment like the bed that John lived in for two years, the ventilators that helped John breathe through his coma, and the IV equipment that provided him with medication. By funding this crucial equipment, your gifts help keep families like Kailie's together for longer.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment.

If you suspect someone is having a stroke, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Know the signs:

Face is it drooping?
Arms can you raise both?
Speech is it slurred or jumbled?
Time to call 9-1-1 right away.

Act **F A S T** because the quicker you act, the more of the person you save.

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Your gifts save lives every day in the SAH Cath Lab

Februrary was Heart Month, so we asked Lisa Barnett RN,

Cardiac Care Coordinator, how your gifts have helped the Cardiac Care Program.

"I joined SAH in 2007 and back then, we didn't have a stenting program. We performed 1-4 angiograms a day and fitted pacemakers," Lisa says. An angiogram takes an X-Ray of the heart, helping cardiologists to see any blockages.

As SAH didn't have a stenting program, patients would have to travel to another hospital.

"Patients would see a cardiologist, who would decide if they should stay at Sault Area Hospital to wait for a transfer, or go home and wait there," Lisa shares. "Being told to go home and wait, after the doctor had found a blockage, was distressing for patients – and in an emergency, every minute counts."

Now, it's a different story.

SAH opened a Cath Lab in 2018, and has performed 1,138 stenting procedures since then! Hundreds of people have been able to receive care close to home thanks to your donations.

Lisa comments, "Your investment is so valuable. In the Cath Lab, we save people's lives. We allow people to live longer." Thank you for giving to SAHF!

We asked, you answered

Thank you for responding to our survey! Here is what we've learned...

Why you give to SAH Foundation

"SAH needs to be the best it can be" **83%**

"I want to say thank you for care" **72%**

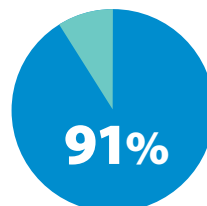
"To give back to my community" **56%**

Areas for improvement

You said: "I don't know what SAHF does" and "I don't know if SAHF listens to me"

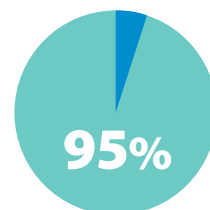
We will: Better explain how SAHF helps SAH, and how to get in touch with us.

Your opinions



91% of respondents rated the care at SAH as **"Good"**, **"Excellent"** or **"Outstanding"**

95% of respondents feel that their gifts have a **"significant"** or **"critical"** impact on care



"SAHF is one of my favourite charities. I donate because it is the right thing to do."
-Anonymous donor

New ENT equipment arrives, thanks to your gifts!

In our last Newsletter, we told you about the surgical tools that our Ear, Nose, and Throat specialists need to help people hear, breathe, and swallow easily. Your gifts helped to fund a new High Speed Drill (pictured right) for ear surgery. Dr. Rebello predicts that this tool will allow her to perform two surgeries per day instead of one, meaning that patients will not wait as long for this procedure!



A New High Speed Drill has arrived at SAH

UPCOMING NEED:

SAH Surgeons need new scopes

Every year, more than 1,500 patients rely on our surgical team to perform Minimally Invasive Surgery (MIS).



MIS is a type of surgery where small incisions are made to access the organs, instead of one large opening. It is the standard for removing cancerous tissues, the appendix, the gallbladder, the uterus, or the kidney.

Vital for this kind of surgery are the tiny cameras that allow surgeons to see inside the body. These endoscopes work like tiny cameras, taking live video footage from inside the body and display it on a screen.

The endoscopes at SAH have served our surgical team well for almost 15 years, but improvement in technology means newer endoscopes offer a much higher quality image.

Our community deserves the

best possible surgical care, and this means giving our surgeons a high-definition view of their work. We need your support to make that possible.

“Endoscope technology has improved rapidly in the last 5-10 years,” explains Ryan Crozier, Business Analyst for the SAH Surgical Program. “Today's endoscopes take higher quality video footage, and have fluorescence imaging features.”

Fluorescence imaging uses a non-toxic dye or stents that glow when viewed through a new endoscope. The dye lights up blood vessels, helping surgeons to assess blood flow during surgery and make crucial care decisions.

In kidney surgery, fluorescence imaging stents are used to help surgeons protect delicate areas from damage. We aim to upgrade our outdated endoscopes so that this feature is available to SAH surgeons.

“Fluorescent imaging is powerful technology,” Ryan shares. “It could minimize the risks of causing injury during operations, or of patients needing further surgeries.”

Endoscopes vary in cost depending on their size, but the average cost is \$8,700. We need your support to help replace our fleet of 20 – and every little bit helps!

Thank you for your ongoing support of SAHF.

We're back in office!

While visitor restrictions are still in place, we are happy to be back on site at Sault Area Hospital to assist patients, visitors and staff.

Office Hours:

Tues.-Thurs., 8:00am-4:30pm
Working remotely Mon/Fri

When you give, you make outstanding care possible.



Visit our website:
sahfoundation.com

Make a secure gift, or find more information about our programs.



Call our main line:
705-759-3848

We'd be happy to chat, or you can leave a message for a call back.



Send us mail:

**750 Great Northern Road
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6B 0A8**

We've included a postage-paid envelope with this newsletter for whenever you need it next.

We look forward to the next time we see each other!

SAHF

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