

IMPACT NEWSLETTER

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

“He was lucky he was here!”

Long-time SAH volunteer Richard Webb was on duty in Ambulatory Care when he suddenly collapsed. The team sprang into action around him, providing outstanding care.



Volunteer Richard Webb (R) is pictured with nurse Shannon Morrison (L).

For the last 10 years, Richard Webb has been volunteering at Sault Area Hospital. He's held a variety of jobs over the years – but his favourite place to volunteer is in Ambulatory care.

**It's so fulfilling.
It gives me purpose.**

I've made more friends volunteering here in the 10 years I've been here.

- Richard Webb, SAH Volunteer

Richard volunteers twice a week, Mondays and Wednesdays. “I get close contact with patients. Some you can joke around with – lighten the mood. They appreciate the fact that there's someone they can talk to.” It was one of these Monday mornings, July 22, when Richard suddenly found himself in a role reversal; instead of helping others, he was in need of help himself.

“I came in to work, but I wasn't feeling the best. Within 15 minutes I had collapsed. One of the nurses, Shannon, put me on a bed and took my vitals and immediately called an emergency alert.”

“He was in the right place at the right time,” Ambulatory Care Nurse Shannon Morrison shared. “It could have gone differently if he hadn't been at the Hospital when it happened.”

Shannon stayed with Richard as he was rushed to the Emergency Department. Shannon said the team there took “amazing” care of him. “The two nurses were so kind to him.” When it became clear the issue was serious, they called Richard's wife. “Richard has become a member of our team. I couldn't stay with him, and I couldn't imagine him not having his wife with him,” Shannon shared.

Richard's care team determined it was an issue with his heart, and he was brought to the Intensive Care Unit. “I had extreme bradycardia – the upper chamber of my heart had stopped functioning.” The solution was a pacemaker. “We have a locum that comes to SAH to do pacemakers, but the locum had left,” Richard relayed. “I would've had to wait a month. And I didn't have a month.”

The team at Sault Area Hospital arranged an air ambulance for Richard, and he was flown to St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto for surgery. “I flew down Wednesday, the pacemaker was put in Friday, and by Saturday I was home.”

With his health issue resolved, 81-year-old Richard “felt 70 again”. Issues he had attributed to age, like fatigue, were lessened thanks to the new pacemaker. He returned to SAH to volunteer the following Monday, and received the warmest welcome back – the whole team was there.

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“Volunteers offer such an amazing service, and we’re so lucky to have them,” Shannon said. “When they’re not here, we really miss them. You get attached to them too, when you see them every week. He’s one of our people.”

Your gifts to Sault Area Hospital Foundation will continue to help Richard get care, close to home.

From the bed that transported Richard to the ER, to the tools that monitored his condition, to the machines that found the issue with his heart: all of this equipment is at SAH thanks to your support.

Now that Richard has a pacemaker, he will need regular check-ups, “every six months, until the battery runs out.” Luckily, Sault Area Hospital has a pacemaker clinic where Richard (and 1,400 other patients in our area) can get this care. Your continued support is ensuring the pacemaker clinic has the tools and technology to keep providing care to Richard, here in Sault Ste. Marie.

“I’m going to keep volunteering as long as I can,” Richard shared. “It fills time in a way that’s much more productive and rewarding than anything else you can do. I want to make every day worthwhile.”

THANKS TO YOU!



Thank you to the many donors who support the Algoma District Cancer Program at Sault Area Hospital.

Your generosity ensures Radiation Therapy services closer to home.

- Michelle Hunter, Supervisor - Radiation Therapy

SAH Radiation Therapy team pose with the new Linear Accelerator in Cancer Care, which resumed services on August 12, 2024.

Radiation Therapy is back at Sault Area Hospital

All medical equipment has a lifespan. For radiation therapy equipment, it’s roughly 12 years – then it needs to be replaced.

The radiation treatment unit at Sault Area Hospital, which was installed when the hospital opened in 2011, was reaching the end of its life in 2023. The machine was officially taken out of service on February 11th for a full replacement. The new unit resumed service on August 12, 2024.

While the unit was being replaced, patients traveled to Sudbury for treatment. This was once the reality for all patients needing radiation treatments in Algoma – before the new hospital site was built, and radiation therapy was introduced.

With the new radiation therapy unit comes new treatments! Stereotactic Body Radiotherapy delivers precise high doses of radiation to cancer cells and protects healthy tissues. This treatment technique is currently used at ADCP and in the near future, it will be expanded as an option for other cases such as spine and prostate cancers.

Because of you, more patients can receive Cancer Care here at home.

While Cancer Care Ontario provided \$2.25 million in funding for the unit, your donations covered \$700,000 in additional project costs. Without your support, this wouldn’t be possible. Thank you for helping us maintain local cancer care services!

Your dedication is bringing top imaging tools to our community!

In August, SAH finished replacing the last of three Digital Radiography (DR) Rooms. While fundraising for these rooms is still ongoing, it's thanks to your commitment that they are here!

Digital Radiography (DR) is a type of x-ray imaging that takes an instant digital picture of the inside of the body. X-ray is the most relied-upon imaging at SAH. With over 40,000 exams per year, these three rooms work around the clock.

Imaging is often the first step in a diagnosis. When most people think of x-ray they think of broken bones, but this tool can see so much more! The DR equipment can find tumors, look for pneumonia or lung cancer, and check the condition of internal organs like the heart and lungs.

The new DR Rooms are delivering quality imaging and improving patient care.

With equipment that moves automatically, not only is the patient more comfortable, but our Technologists experience less repetitive strain and stress.

Thanks to our donors, these new machines will help us serve our community for many years to come!

Franci Rogers, Manager - Medical Imaging

Long Length Imaging

The new equipment offer a feature called stitching, which takes several images and combines them to create one larger image. This type of image is important when taking pictures of long bones – like legs or spines. SAH is the only hospital in Algoma that offers this specialized imaging.

Long length imaging is often used for leg measurements and scoliosis evaluations. Before the new equipment, long length imaging could only be done standing up. If patients couldn't stand for the image, they would have to go to another hospital to have it done.

With the new equipment, patients can now have long images taken while laying down. That means more people will be able to get the images they need done safely, comfortably, and close to home.

Safety for our smallest patients

The new equipment also offers more settings for patient safety. Radiation exposure can be set based on seven different age and weight categories. This way, our littlest patients are not exposed to a higher level of radiation than absolutely necessary.

Your support is making a difference

Strong community support of SAHF is ensuring patients will get this care while we continue to fundraise for this equipment. Your gifts, now and over the next year, are making this project possible. **THANK YOU!**



Medical Imaging staff pose with some of the new x-ray equipment in a fully renovated DR Room.

UPCOMING NEED: Not too hot, not too cold; *just right.*

This “one-of-a-kind” blanket doesn’t just make patients comfortable – it helps them get better.

Our Emergency Department sometime uses a treatment called “temperature therapy” for patients. To do this, they need a special temperature control blanket. This blanket attaches to a machine that moves warm or cool water through it. The water helps slowly change a patient’s body temperature.

It’s important for the body to stay at a specific temperature – when the body is too hot or too cold, it can hurt the brain. This kind of brain damage is permanent. It’s very important to our care teams to prevent brain damage as much as possible.

If a patient is too cold (hypothermic), the blanket uses warm water to raise their body temperature. This can happen in



A temperature control blanket.

winter – when people are exposed to very cold temperatures, or if they end up in very cold water. Warming them back up can help stop damage to their heart, lungs, and brain.

But sometimes, hypothermia can be good. “Therapeutic hypothermia” is a treatment where cold water is pumped through the blanket to lower the body temperature. This reduces injury and long-term problems. It’s sometimes used for people who have a cardiac arrest (when the heart suddenly stops beating).

This year, a temperature control blanket is needed for the Emergency Department. Your support can help our care providers give the best treatment when they have the right tools!

THANK YOU!

Since April 1st,
you have helped bring
\$2 MILLION +
in equipment to SAH!

Thanks to you, we have already been able to give Sault Area Hospital \$2,184,059 for critical medical equipment this year.

Your support is helping doctors in the Algoma District Cancer Program with replacement of a video rhinolaryngoscope. This tool is used to take video of the inside of the mouth, throat and neck area for patients who have undergone treatment for head or neck cancers. These scopes are used multiple times per day, and helps patients get follow-up care at Sault Area Hospital.

Our hospital would not have this tool if it wasn’t for your generosity. **THANK YOU!**

Stop by and visit!

We are happy to be on site at Sault Area Hospital to assist patients, visitors and staff.

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday,
8:00am - 4:30pm

In the main lobby, turn right and you’ll see our “Foundation” sign!

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!**