



In This Together

Community Update 2020





Views from the Frontline

A helping hand, a handwritten sign, a small gift.
A selfless act of kindness has never meant so much.

COVID-19 has brought about new ways of living, working, and staying safe. These unique circumstances meant sheltering at home, leaving only for essential trips and safely distancing from loved ones, neighbours and colleagues. Video chats became the only way to connect with others. For some, home became the office as many workplaces went remote. With daycares and school's suspended indefinitely, parenting was taken to the next level as parents juggled work, homeschooling, the needs of their children throughout the day, and many other to-do's.

personal protective equipment day in and day out to care for patients through an unprecedented, challenging time.

In this year's Community Update, it is vital to showcase the stories of staff through the COVID-19 pandemic to comprehend what work on the frontline has been like, providing care and support to keep our community healthy. These stories also offer an understanding of the significance and the power of community support.

The staff at St. Mary's are always here when you need it. More than ever, ensuring frontline staff are well prepared to keep our community safe and healthy is of utmost importance.

For the frontline workers, heading into work each day was an act of bravery. Aware of the immense responsibility, the staff at St. Mary's donned full

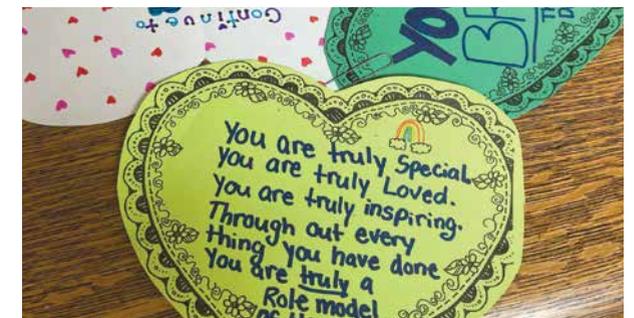
Every message on the cover of the Community Update was sent by a generous donor.

Your support has let frontline staff know they're not alone.



Manulife

Longstanding St. Mary's supporter, Manulife matched \$200,000 in donations to St. Mary's COVID-19 fund. Thank you Manulife, for your ongoing care of Waterloo Region.





Reflecting with Gratitude

Lee Fairclough
President, St. Mary's General Hospital

To call this year unprecedented is an understatement.

Stepping into my role as President of St. Mary's General Hospital in January, I did not anticipate my first year to look the way it has.

I am so grateful for the extraordinary commitment shown by our staff during the COVID-19 crisis. Although challenging, they never lost sight of delivering safe, compassionate, and exemplary care.

I want to thank the community for its encouragement and determination to flatten the curve. You have done a fantastic job of taking care of one another in the face of many challenges.

A tremendous thank you also to our donors. Without donor support early in the pandemic, St. Mary's could not have purchased the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) for frontline staff and the equipment to meet our patients' needs.

Looking back, it's shocking how quickly everything moved. In January, when St. Mary's began to monitor cases internationally, no one was certain what impact COVID-19 may have on Kitchener-Waterloo. As Regional leaders in thoracic and respiratory care, we understood our responsibility to rapidly and creatively prepare. I serve as Hospital Lead for the Waterloo Wellington Regional Pandemic Response and worked with our hospital partners to develop and enact a plan. March saw the temporary pause of elective surgeries, procedures, and clinic visits. Many visits became virtual. We had to say farewell temporarily to our volunteers.

The most poignant moments for me were St. Mary's milestones — the first community-acquired case of COVID-19 in Waterloo Region and sadly the Region's first death. I recall the day St. Mary's recorded the most COVID-19 patients in the Region, and the moment we

realized that our caseload was turning out to be lower than anticipated. Finally, some celebratory moments when St. Mary's had no COVID-positive cases after five months, and when we heard that the long-term care home placed temporarily under our management no longer had active COVID cases.

Because of our expertise, St. Mary's correctly anticipated seeing the first and likely the most severe cases. Our ICU team mobilized to understand what clinical care was required. Many of our staff members were redeployed, taking on new roles screening, testing, and assisting long-term care homes. Everyone worked many long days, trying to keep up with frequently updated government directives. Each and every staff member willingly stepped up.

The fight against COVID-19 continues, and St. Mary's is better equipped to handle what the future will bring. Our days are focused on preparedness for all possible scenarios. How should we move forward as we approach the flu season while potentially still combating COVID-19? How will we fully resume services, procedures, and clinics safely? And how will we ensure we have the necessary PPE and medical equipment to provide safe and effective care going forward?

Our Region, country, and the world will look different, and we must remain committed to keeping one another safe by following public health measures. Wear a mask, physically distance, avoid large gatherings, wash your hands, and take care of one another and yourself, particularly your mental and physical health.

Battling COVID-19 is a marathon, not a sprint. We cannot thank our donors enough for helping to propel us forward on this historic journey.

We are all in this together. I wish you good health and happiness.

Thank you — With \$1 million raised from the community and a generous \$2 million investment from the Lazaridis Foundation, St. Mary's was prepared to respond to the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic.

St. Mary's Response to COVID-19*



2,088,998

units of personal protective equipment used

Including surgical, procedure and N95 masks, nitrile gloves and sanitizer.
St. Mary's now maintain's a new standard of 4 months' PPE stock.



73

new patient beds added

87%

reduction in elective surgeries[†]



193

new staff hired to assist in COVID-19 positions[‡]



11,697

COVID-19 tests completed

* between March 20, 2020-July 20, 2020 † full resumption is almost complete ‡ both employees and agency hires

“Because of donors, St. Mary's was able to respond quickly to the new and pressing demands of COVID-19. Crucial respiratory equipment was purchased the very day St. Mary's received its first case. Personal protective equipment was made readily available to protect frontline staff. Thank you for your outstanding generosity and kindness.”

Lee Fairclough
President, St. Mary's General Hospital

Kindness isn't in Quarantine

More than ever, our community unites and enriches us.

Generous partners, devoted donors, and loyal volunteers play a critical role and raising funds to support St. Mary's exceptional health care. This year, it has been so much more. Selfless gestures of support have arrived in many different forms to thank the employees at the front line throughout the pandemic.

Homemade videos, pictures of hand-crafted window signs, and thank you notes poured into the hospital and onto social media. Unexpected partnerships began with local businesses quickly producing personal protective gear and distilleries reworking their lines to make hand sanitizer.

Small-scale gestures have made a significant imprint, from hand-sewn scrub caps designed by talented community members, local restaurants providing free meals to staff, to flower bouquets that brightened everyone's day. These countless acts of kindness made it possible for St. Mary's to face the challenges during the first months of 2020.

Read on for just a few examples of the inspiring, genuine, and heartfelt offerings of support.

To see the full list of generous in-kind donors to St. Mary's Hospital Foundation, please visit:

supportstmarys.ca/report2020



13th Waterloo Girl Guides

Away from school, learning remotely, and sheltering at home meant that for members of the 13th Waterloo Girl Guides, traditional activities took a new direction. A family initiative, led by parents Heather Petrie, Mike Harris, and Alan Church came up with a few ideas to continue the troop's focus on giving back. In April, boxes of Girl Guide cookies arrived at St. Mary's, alongside beautiful pictures, a video, and notes of support that brightened the day (and fix the sweet tooth!) of many staff.



Carol Jahn

Having turned 75 in April 2020, Carol wanted to celebrate her birthday by giving back to the hospital she had worked for fifteen years. Upon learning that nurses were having difficulties and experiencing pain from keeping their n95 masks on for their full shift, she had an idea. Equipped with her sewing skills and plenty of fabric, Carol crafted and donated 500 ear saving headbands to St. Mary's nursing staff.

David and his wife, Darlene have a close connection to St. Mary's. In 2018, David received care at St. Mary's following a heart attack. During such an unprecedented time, they wanted to do what they could to help those who did so much for them, and did so through donation of personal hand sanitizer and nitrile gloves.



David Borowski



Home Hardware

As a Canadian company headquartered in Waterloo Region, the health and well-being of the surrounding communities is of particular importance to Home Hardware, especially during the COVID-19 crisis. Hearing the call to support the dedicated frontline workers, the business reached out to St. Mary's and donated over 8,000 N95 masks to St. Mary's in April.

Like many business owners in March 2020, Vildana was unsure of what to expect in the next few months. In the business of selling flowers, she wanted her inventory to end up in the right home, before closing her doors temporarily. Having received excellent care at St. Mary's in the past, she decided to do something beautiful for the frontline staff. Sixty-five bouquets arrived at St. Mary's in late March, brightening the days of many staff.



**Vildana Gilisic
Belmont Flowers**

We're Stronger Together

Heather's Story



February of this year took Heather off-guard. Watching as COVID-19 hit Italy, even as a trained nurse, she was nervous and unsure of the implications a pandemic would have on her family, her job, and her hospital. She was no longer standing by the sidelines.

By March, her return to work as a Nurse Practitioner in Surgical Services was not easy, "morale was down. People were frustrated and scared. I was nervous."

"Initially, when the pandemic was called, we realized patients were starting to come in with a lot of fear. As a healthcare worker, we rely on literature, research and studies to tell us what to do. And with COVID, we didn't have that. We were relying on people's experiences from abroad to tell us how to make our decisions with care, which is very challenging to do."

*Heather-Lynne Goody
NP-PHC, MSN, BScN, RNFA*

Normally responsible to care for cancer patients throughout their surgery at St. Mary's, Heather's extensive experience brought her to different units and floors of the hospital, providing PPE training as a part of the Frontline PPE Committee. "The goal was not to make people feel judged by their questions. We're here to educate and support." The Committee provided education ranging from how to don PPE correctly, how to test and clean equipment properly, to how to return home safely after the workday.

"One of the hardest things with COVID is that there isn't a treatment. There isn't something we can do to make patients better. All we can do is support them through all the symptoms that they have. I definitely saw a lot of people struggling. It's one thing to see somebody in pain; it's another to see somebody who's having trouble breathing. Those two things, you put them together, and it's just heartbreaking to try and support those who need help."

Like so many, Heather Lynne-Goody has been wearing both the mom and the professional hat during the COVID-19 pandemic. Balance is the goal, but it proved difficult with two young children, nine and six, learning from home, and no prospect of summer camp relief. On top of that, an ill-timed contract ending left her husband out of work. Though financially this was not ideal, in the end, his presence at home was needed to get the family through those months.

Regardless of the many recent challenges, Heather is incredibly proud to work at St. Mary's, and of her dedicated group of colleagues. She is also very appreciative of the gratitude and financial support extended by the community. "It's not that we feel we are heroes. These are our jobs," she says, "We love what we do and choose this career for a reason because we're fulfilled by what we're doing."



"I'm proud of my colleagues, the fact that they continued to show up and continued to care in spite of the personal risk and risk to their family. Reinforcement from the public through lawn signs and painted stones reminds you why you do what you do. It helps recharge you."

*Sean Winter
Nurse Practitioner, Respiriology*

"There was a huge collaboration amongst different groups within the hospital, other hospitals, and institutions such as long-term care, public health, family practice and regional governments. All of this infrastructure did not previously exist and one of the takeaways is that these connections will serve us going forward."

*Dr. Mary Jackson
Respirologist,
Chief of Pulmonary Medicine*



"Within the early days of this pandemic, the changes within St. Mary's were happening daily, even hourly within our unit. This led to a lot of concerns, and I personally felt all stages of grief — I was so angry that this virus was coming to Canada, and in denial that I'd be hands on with these patients. I was devastated that I may lose a family member to it, and that led to determination to do everything I could to keep myself, my patients, and my family safe."

*Kate Demeuleneare
Registered Nurse (MSICU/CCU)*

[Read these and more staff stories at supportstmarys.ca/report2020](https://supportstmarys.ca/report2020)



The Need Continues

Susan Dusick, President and CEO
St. Mary's General Hospital Foundation

The COVID-19 pandemic required the redeployment of all available resources to address the unexpected needs of the frontline to provide care to those infected with the virus. Out of this experience, St. Mary's has established new planning, procedures, and benchmarks of what "prepared" for the unexpected represents at St. Mary's.

The truth is, medical emergencies occur every day. Having a prepared hospital, ready to provide care when the unexpected happens for you, your family, or your community, is always essential. This means ensuring all areas of the hospital are equipped with the tools needed to respond today, tomorrow, and for whatever may come.

We are now shifting our attention back to the ongoing medical emergencies in our community. In particular, the Regional Cardiac Care Centre. Originally built almost twenty years ago, the footprint of the program is unable to keep pace with the needs of our expanding community.

The urgency to expand cardiac services is clearly evidenced by the creative measures put in place to continue the construction of the new Electrophysiology (Heart Rhythm) suite throughout the COVID-19 crisis. Pushing forward to complete the addition will allow St. Mary's to begin seeing patients in early 2021.

The next step is to equip the hospital with a third cardiac catheterization suite, the absence of which increases St. Mary's wait times, and affects the ability to respond efficiently to cardiac emergencies.

At any time, St. Mary's General Hospital maintains a substantial list of medical equipment in critical

need of replacement or new equipment required to support the delivery of the safest and most effective care possible.

I am asking you today to support the expansion of cardiac services and other urgent equipment priorities. Please make a donation today to help equip and prepare St. Mary's talented frontline staff to provide the best care possible when you need it.

On behalf of the staff, physicians, patients and families we serve, thank you.



Construction of the Electrophysiology (Heart Rhythm) Suite continued throughout the COVID-19 pandemic at St. Mary's. The construction workers leveraged their unique vantage point to share thanks to the frontline workers.

You provide what's missing in hospital funding.

Let's make sure it's here when you need it.

Ontario Ministry of Health funding does not provide for the purchase of new or replacement medical equipment.

Your financial investments ensure St. Mary's can purchase the necessary tools that staff depend on daily to deliver exemplary care to patients today, tomorrow, and in the future.



Donate online today!

supportstmarys.ca/equip



Yes! I want to help St. Mary's:

Please accept my one-time investment of:

\$1000 \$500 \$250 Other \$ _____

Paid by:

Cheque (Payable to St. Mary's General Hospital Foundation)

Credit Card (Complete information below)

Credit Card: Visa MasterCard AmEx

Card #: _____

Name on Card: _____

Expiry: ____ / ____

Signature: _____

I wish to give anonymously and not be named in Foundation communications.

I would like to be contacted by a Foundation representative to learn more about making a gift of securities.

I would like to be contacted by a Foundation representative to learn more about leaving a gift in my will. (If you have previously notified us of a gift, thank you.)

I would like to make a monthly donation to St. Mary's General Hospital Foundation:

\$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

I authorize St. Mary's General Hospital Foundation to debit the amount indicated above each month from my:

Bank (Withdrawn: 1st of each month, include void cheque)

Credit Card (Withdrawn: 30th of each month, complete info to left)

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Email my tax receipt



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