

# my ST. JOSEPH'S

FALL 2023

A publication of St. Joseph's Health Care London

Finch Family Mental  
Health Care Building

## Feeding the Good Wolf

A place to call home brings health, wellness and belonging to individuals living with mental illness and is a key focus for St. Joseph's Health Care London.



# my ST. JOSEPH'S

A publication of St. Joseph's Health Care London  
Fall 2023 | Issue 08

## CONTRIBUTORS

Dahlia Reich  
Allison Hansen  
Krista Devries  
Renee Sweeney  
Teresinha Medeiros

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Colleen MacDonald  
Teresa Rangel (Gotham Studios)  
Moylan Family  
Teresinha Medeiros

St. Joseph's welcomes your comments.  
For online or print publication contact:  
[ComDept@sjhc.london.on.ca](mailto:ComDept@sjhc.london.on.ca)

Copyright ©2023 by St. Joseph's Health Care London.  
The publishers assume no responsibility for any effects  
from errors or omissions. All material published in  
My St. Joseph's magazine is copyright and reproduction  
is forbidden without the permission of the publishers.

*Disclaimer: All photos were taken either before the COVID-19  
pandemic or following appropriate physical distancing guidelines.*

## CONTACT US

PO BOX 5777  
268 Grosvenor Street  
London, ON.  
N6A 4V2  
519 646-6100 ext. 66034

[www.sjhc.london.on.ca](http://www.sjhc.london.on.ca)

[f](#) [stjosephslondon](#)

[t](#) [stjosephslondon](#)

## MY ST. JOSEPH'S IS

St. Joseph's Hospital

Parkwood Institute

Mount Hope  
Centre for  
Long Term Care

Southwest Centre  
for Forensic  
Mental Health Care

Teams, clinics and programs in our  
community and beyond.



## The many faces of innovation

St. Joseph's is known for being rooted in our legacy of caring founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph, who instilled the mission and values of our organization that endure today. Also entrenched in our history is that of being leaders and innovators – implementing solutions that address the challenges of today and that position us for care, research and teaching of tomorrow.

This issue of My St. Joseph's provides a glimpse of the innovation underway across the organization. Read about St. Joseph's becoming Canada's first centre of excellence in molecular imaging and theranostics, a rapidly emerging field of medicine that is revolutionizing cancer care. St. Joseph's is now home to Canada's first, next generation PET-CT, which means faster exams, increased accuracy in diagnosing disease, and more options for care.

Innovation is also embedded in training the next generation of health care providers. St. Joseph's has launched a unique residency program to provide new pharmacists with expertise in outpatient care of a growing patient population – those living with complex chronic diseases.

Forging partnerships that become turning points in the expanse and success of care and support available in our community is another key driver of innovation. Our work with Indwell to create quality supportive housing for people living with mental illness is doing just that.

I invite you to discover the impact we are having on the physical, mental and social well-being of our patients, residents and our broader community.

Roy Butler  
President and CEO  
St. Joseph's Health Care London



## FEATURES

### COVER STORY

#### 06 Fueling System Transformation

A landmark, \$5 million donation to St. Joseph's Health Care London will fund research into new solutions aimed at improving access to mental health care.

#### 10 Feeding the Good Wolf

A place to call home brings health, wellness and belonging to individuals living with mental illness.

#### 18 A powerhouse combination

Canada's first centre of excellence in molecular imaging and theranostics will be a potent one-two punch in personalized cancer care.

#### 04 Aflutter with colour

The new 'Butterfly Garden' at Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care brings therapeutic benefits and joy to residents, family members and care partners.

#### 08 Creating pharmacists of tomorrow

A new and unique training program is teaching a new generation of pharmacists to meet the growing need for chronic disease care.

#### 14 Upgrading with style

Gift shops at St. Joseph's Health Care London are benefitting from an infusion of style and function thanks to a partnership with Fanshawe College students.

#### 16 Breaking down barriers

Specialized sexual assault care is now available in Oxford County.

#### 22 Strength in storytelling

For Jason Gray, writing about his rehabilitation journey saved his life – and his brain. Now, as a care partner at St. Joseph's Health Care London, this chapter of his story is impacting the lives of others.

#### 24 Runs in the family

The Reykjavik Marathon has become a family affair for the Moylans as they raise funds and awareness for Alzheimer's research at St. Joseph's Health Care London.

#### 26 Gardening for the mind, body & spirit

A new addition to the recreation program for mental health care inpatients at St. Joseph's Health Care London is flourishing – literally.



# Flutter with COLOUR

The new 'Butterfly Garden' at Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care brings therapeutic benefits and joy to residents, family members and care partners.

**I**n a quaint courtyard outside of Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care (Mount Hope) lies an oasis of flowers, gardening tools, watering cans – and the occasional fluttering butterfly.

The garden, named the Butterfly Garden, is a recently renovated outdoor space that gives Mount Hope residents the opportunity to participate in recreational gardening activities such as planting and watering flowers. It's also a bright, peaceful and accessible spot for residents to enjoy visits with family and friends.

*"It's a great place for our residents to enjoy with their families, get their hands dirty and socialize with loved ones," says Shelby Oxford, therapeutic recreation aide at Mount Hope.*





The courtyard garden at Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care, now called the Butterfly Garden, was recently re-designed to be more accessible and include additional seating areas, colourful shade structures, flowers that attract butterflies, and a butterfly-themed mural.

Made possible through the support of St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation and community donors, the revamped garden was designed for wheelchair accessibility and to incorporate additional seating areas and overhead rain and shade structures.



It's been great to watch our residents take part in the therapeutic activities, which also gives them a sense of pride and accomplishment.

– MORGAN HOFFARTH,  
DIRECTOR OF CARE AT MOUNT HOPE

Currently, about 20 residents are participating in the garden activities, which have been positively received by residents and families.

“Gardening provides physical activity for the residents, but also allows them to connect with others who share a similar passion for gardening and nature,” explains Shelby.

Residents like Ilse Blum and her family enjoy the garden for the beauty and joy it brings while visiting.

“It is so beautiful. There are so many colours. It is so nice to be outside,” says Ilse.

During the garden's construction, residents weighed in on elements of the re-design, including the selection of new chairs, tables and shade structures. Many of the flowers for the garden were chosen to attract butterflies to the space.

“It's a been great to watch our residents take part in the therapeutic activities, which also gives them a sense of pride and accomplishment as they see the flowers and herbs they planted start to bloom and grow,” says Morgan Hoffarth, Director of Care at Mount Hope. “We are very fortunate to have this unique and beautiful space to enjoy.”



**Ilse Blum,**

left, a resident at Mount Hope Centre for Long Term care, and Morgan Hoffarth, Director of Care, enjoy a stroll through the newly renovated garden at the facility.

# Fueling System Transformation

A landmark, \$5 million donation to St. Joseph's Health Care London will fund research into new solutions aimed at making it easier for patients to access mental health care.

Anticipation filled the air as more than 200 guests of St. Joseph's Health Care London (St. Joseph's) crowded under a large white tent to celebrate a transformational donation. Yet they were unaware of just how significant it would be for the community and the future of mental health care.

On June 15, St. Joseph's announced a \$5 million gift – the largest known donation of its kind in Southwestern Ontario – from Ryan Finch, President of Finch Auto Group. The donation will fund research to create system change, making it easier for patients to access mental health care and receive the help they need.

The announcement prompted thunderous applause from health care leaders, politicians, community members, business associates, friends and Finch family members who had gathered at St. Joseph's Mental Health Care Building at Parkwood Institute.

For Ryan, who sat smiling shyly in the front row, it was a proud moment witnessed by his parents, partner Haley Tweddle, and two children Wyatt and Georja. It was also a heartwarming reflection of what true success means to the London businessman – the ability and inclination to give back to the community.



“I hope this donation improves access for people in need,” Ryan told the crowd. “I hope this donation spurs research that leads to more treatment and breakthroughs. And I hope this donation inspires young businesspeople out there to share their good fortunes. But what I really want to do is to let everyone out there that’s hurting know we care.”

“

It is quite hard to truly describe how positive a feeling this produces for me. This is an opportunity I didn't think we would ever have.

– DR. VIRAJ MEHTA

For health care leaders, the financial injection couldn't come fast enough. As burgeoning numbers of people struggle with mental health concerns, significant change is needed to improve access to care.

It was an issue Ryan couldn't ignore. It motivated him to work closely with senior leaders at St. Joseph's to understand the full scope of mental health care needs and what it might take to transform the system.

As Site Chief of St. Joseph's Mental Health Care Program, Dr. Viraj Mehta understands firsthand why changes to the system are essential. Lauding Ryan as a trailblazer in funding an often-overlooked area of care, Dr. Mehta says the donation has him feeling extremely optimistic about the future.

“It is quite hard to truly describe how positive a feeling this produces for me,” says the physician. “This is an opportunity I didn't think we would ever have.”

## Ryan Finch,

President of Finch Auto Group, humbly smiles following the announcement of his landmark donation to St. Joseph's Health Care London.



### Ryan Finch (Centre) and leaders at St. Joseph's

celebrated following the announcement of his \$5 million donation to improve access to the mental health care.

The mental health care system is a complicated one to navigate – both for people living with mental illness and for health care providers, adds Jodi Younger, Vice President of Patient Care and Quality at St. Joseph's.

“People can wrap their minds around breast cancer research, diabetes care or other health issues – how you diagnose it, the care pathway and the options. But that’s not the case with mental health.”

The generous donation will support an innovative new Research Chair in Mental Health System Transformation, a first in Canada, to lead the development of collaborative initiatives to advance mental health system changes in London. The funds will also support special initiatives to improve the system, as well as expand St. Joseph's innovative research project, Mental Health Incubator for Disruptive Solutions (MINDS 2.0).

Dr. Arlene MacDougall, principal researcher for MINDS, says the current system should be proactive, not reactive, because too often it is only when a mental illness becomes debilitating that an individual seeks help.

In recognition of Ryan's generosity, St. Joseph's unveiled the new name for the Mental Health Care Building – the Finch Family Mental Health Care Building. Ryan hopes attaching his family name to mental health will help tackle the broader issue of stigma.

“We are immensely grateful to Ryan Finch for his donation,” said Michelle Campbell, President and CEO of St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation. “In addition to his generosity, the addition of the Finch name on our building opens conversations and breaks down community barriers.”

### You can help



To contribute to the work underway in mental health system transformation, you are invited to support the Mental Health Care Innovation Fund. Contact Lisa Giroux, Senior Development Officer, at [lisa.giroux@sjhc.london.on.ca](mailto:lisa.giroux@sjhc.london.on.ca) or call St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation, 519 646-6085.

# Creating Pharmacists of Tomorrow

A new and unique training program at St. Joseph's Health Care London is teaching a new generation of pharmacists to meet the growing need for chronic disease care.

**A**s the complexity of chronic diseases evolves – and as rates rise in Canada – St. Joseph's Health Care London (St. Joseph's) is helping to create a new generation of pharmacists with expertise in outpatient care for a rapidly growing patient population.

St. Joseph's recently launched a residency program for new pharmacy graduates focused on outpatient chronic disease management and the critical role of pharmacists in providing wholistic care to patients. The intensive one-year program is one of only a few in Canada providing hands-on training in team-based, outpatient hospital care. With placements at all five St. Joseph's sites, and in a variety of clinical settings, the pharmacy resident will complete training within the Pain Management Program, Rheumatology Centre, Palliative Care Unit, Rehabilitation Program, Mental Health Care Program, and the organization's outpatient community pharmacy, with electives available in forensic mental health care and other specialties.

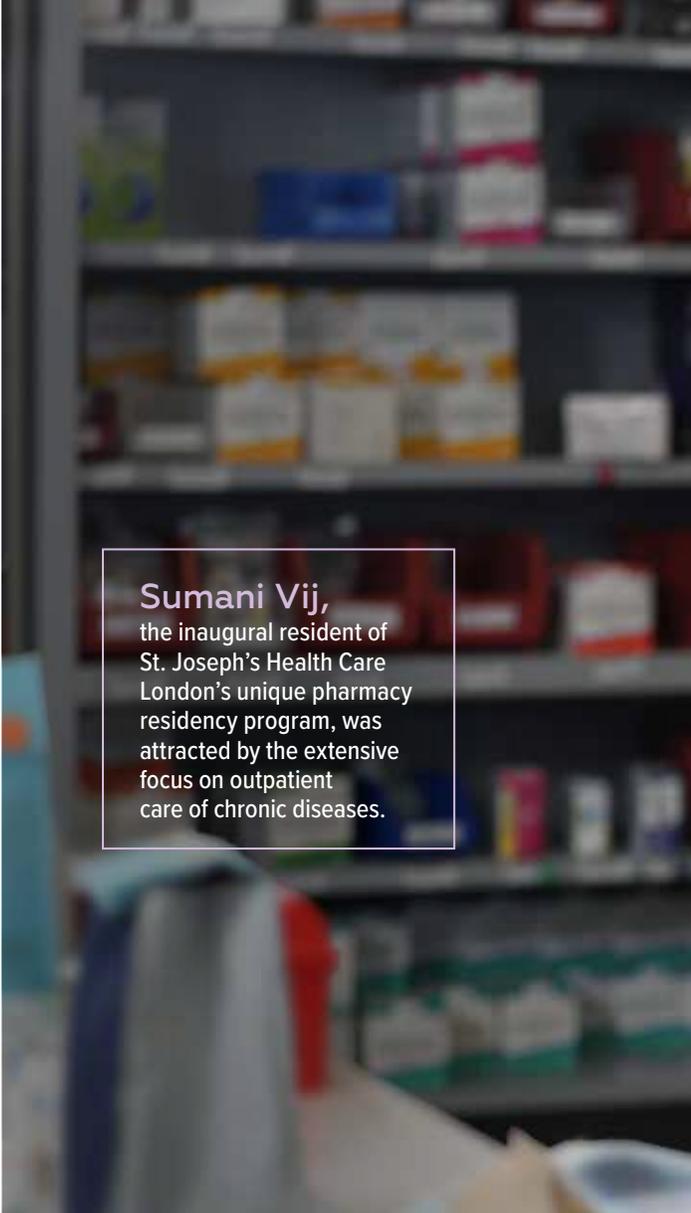
Particularly unique is what the pharmacy resident will learn about the connection between chronic disease, mental health and rehabilitation, establishing trusting relationships with patients, and the integral role of pharmacists as part of a broad team of health care professionals, explains Denise Kreutzwiser, a pharmacist with St. Joseph's Pain Management Program who led the development of the new training program.

“No other Canadian pharmacy residency program offers an intensive focus in interdisciplinary chronic pain management or rheumatology, addressing a critical need identified by national bodies of those specialties to better understand and serve those living with chronic pain or rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases,” says Denise.

With applicants from as far as Qatar and Australia, the successful inaugural pharmacy resident is Sumani Vij, a graduate of University of Waterloo's School of Pharmacy, who was drawn to the ambulatory care focus at St. Joseph's.

## **Denise Kreutzwiser,**

pharmacist, created St. Joseph's Health Care London's pharmacy residency program to provide new pharmacists like Sumani Vij with a unique opportunity to learn about the connection between chronic disease, mental health and rehabilitation, and their integral role as a member of a broad team of health care professionals.



**Sumani Vij,**  
the inaugural resident of St. Joseph's Health Care London's unique pharmacy residency program, was attracted by the extensive focus on outpatient care of chronic diseases.





“You’re able to create pharmacist-patient relationships, which I really like, but also collaborate with many allied health professionals – social workers, occupational therapists, nurses, physiotherapists and others,” says Sumani. “You get the best of both worlds.”

“ St. Joseph’s residency program is super well-rounded and offers really unique electives. I’m excited by everything it offers.

– SUMANI VIJ

While pharmacy rotations during the four years of pharmacy school are compulsory, a residency after graduating and passing the certification exams is voluntary, explains Denise. A residency is additional training that provides pharmacists with proficiency in a particular area. There are only 130 residency spots across Canada for year one pharmacy residents – predominantly in hospital acute care pharmacy.

“There are just a handful of ambulatory or chronic disease-based residency programs in the country,” says Denise.

For Sumani, it was just the opportunity she was seeking. Particularly intriguing, says the driven 25-year-old, “is the focus on chronic pain and mental health, how complex and intermingled they can be, and the pharmacist’s role in supporting patients and making sure they are being treated wholistically – from all angles and by multiple disciplines.”

She also looks forward to an elective in forensic mental health care – a rare learning opportunity in Canada – and a rotation in palliative care because “it’s about looking less at what you can prescribe and more at what you can take away to ensure the patient’s comfort.”

Sumani chose pharmacy as a profession because of its growth and evolution in recent years related to prescribing powers, opportunities to forge relationships with patients, and the diverse workplace options. As she begins her learning journey at St. Joseph’s, she looks forward to gaining experience, confidence and knowledge that will shape her future career, and all the possibilities that loom.

“Within pharmacy, there’s a whole world to explore and I want to see where I fit best,” says Sumani. “St. Joseph’s residency program is super well-rounded and offers really unique electives. I’m excited by everything it offers. I want to learn and create a better version of myself.”

# Feeding the Good Wolf

A place to call home brings health, wellness and belonging to individuals living with mental illness and is a key focus for St. Joseph's Health Care London.

**A**t age 61, Lori Nicholson is no stranger to adversity. In and out of hospital over a span of 25 years due to persistent mental illness, the loss of her business and breakdown of her marriage and support system all contributed to her instability. But some of the most difficult hardships came when she was left homeless with no safe place to call her own.

If she was lucky, Lori would find herself couch surfing for a stint. Otherwise, she slept in the park – sometimes in telephone booths.

“I survived off free food samples offered at the market. I had no space of my own, no privacy. All I had were the clothes on my back. I was everyone's kicking post.”

All told, Lori experienced homelessness four times between 1993 and 2019, until a collaboration between St. Joseph's Health Care London and the Canadian Mental Health Association Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services helped connect her with a place to call home. At the time, Lori was preparing to be discharged from a mental health inpatient stay at St. Joseph's, which coincided with the opening of an innovative supportive residence in London – Indwell's Woodfield Gate Apartments on Dundas Street. A Christian charity, Indwell creates affordable housing communities for people seeking health, wellness and belonging – people like Lori.

“The need for access to better, affordable and quality supportive housing has been an ongoing issue within our communities for some time,” says Jodi Younger, Vice President of Patient Care and Quality at St. Joseph's.

“Unfortunately, there are times when the inability to safely discharge individuals to supportive housing from our mental health inpatient program ties up beds and impacts our ability to provide inpatient care to as many people as possible within our region.”

In 2017, recognizing the significant lack of supportive affordable housing options in London, Jodi reached out to Indwell, which was looking to bring its supportive housing program to London.

Building upon its legacy of advocacy for the most vulnerable, St. Joseph's collaborated with Indwell, local government and other community organizations to design a new housing model – one that would include both subsidized and supportive living accommodations offered through organizations like Indwell. These efforts aligned with the City of London's affordable housing priorities and as a result, enabled Indwell to launch two supportive housing residences, both on Dundas Street: Woodfield Gate, a 66-unit building which opened in 2019; and Embassy Commons, a 72-unit building that opened in 2022.

“The beauty of Indwell's permanent and affordable housing program is the spectrum of support levels designed to meet the many different housing and health needs that individuals living with mental illness, addiction or disability challenges may face,” explains Jodi.

*Continued...*



**Lori Nicholson**

is committed to her wellness and understands the importance of staying connected with her mental health care outpatient team at St. Joseph's Health Care London's Parkwood Institute.

Individuals can stay in the apartments as long as they choose and can increase or decrease the level of support they receive based on their needs. This model increases the likelihood of success for tenants in maintaining stable housing and pursuing their health and wellness goals.

This includes participating in psychosocial programs offered to tenants by Indwell staff – some in collaboration with community partners such as Hutton House and London InterCommunity Health Centre. There is also a focus on nutrition and teaching tenants how to access affordable food resources in the community, helping to decrease food insecurity experienced by those with low incomes.



**Lori Nicholson,** is proud of her Indwell Woodfield Gate apartment and how she has designed her living space to include an expansive collection of 58 hats displayed on her wall.

In addition, Indwell helps to identify and connect tenants with various incentive programs to ensure they are taking advantage of any rebates or assistance for which they qualify and can benefit.

“The programming at Indwell is based on intellect and growth and filled with a whirlwind of knowledge that I use in my everyday life,” says Lori.

Her favourite program, she adds, is ‘Feed the Good Wolf,’ which helps tenants deal with challenging individuals and difficult situations, providing them with new perspectives on life’s trials and tribulations.

Natasha Thuemler, Indwell’s Regional Manager, says on-site professionals including nurses, psychosocial support workers, housing support workers and staff who support tenants with addictions and food security are integral to helping tenants maintain their health and housing stability.

“Professional support can help people build skills and find belonging through contributions to a community,” says Natasha. “Indwell tenants experience improved wellness, become engaged neighbours and live supported independent lives.”

For Lori, the support and guidance provided by Indwell’s housing model is the magic ingredient she says has helped keep her out of hospital since becoming a Woodfield Gate tenant when the building opened.

“The eyes on you keep you secure and safe because you know there’s somebody there for you. With all the challenges we have to meet in a day – mental illness or not – everyone has problem solving to deal with and everyone needs support.”

Having learned how to navigate life with a mental illness, Lori also understands the importance of staying connected with her outpatient care team at St. Joseph’s to remain well in the community and focused on taking care of herself – physically, mentally and spiritually.

St. Joseph’s outpatient and community outreach mental health care teams work collaboratively with Indwell to provide tenants who are St. Joseph’s outpatients with the necessary clinical care needed to continue living successfully in the community.

“I know the medication only does so much and I have to do the rest. That’s how I look at it,” says Lori.



## Partnering for Change

In addition to housing projects in London, St. Joseph’s Health Care London has partnered with Indwell, alongside local organizations, on supportive housing solutions in St. Thomas, including:

### The Railway City Lofts, 15-UNIT

building on Talbot Street in St. Thomas opened in 2021. It’s home to adults who were previously homeless and unsheltered. A low-barrier housing program and one of the highest support models Indwell offers, is being looked at across the province as an opportunity to better serve individuals with supportive health and housing needs.

### The Station, 45-UNIT

building on Queen Street in St. Thomas is a housing solution that welcomed its first tenants in July 2023.



Natasha Thuemler, Indwell's Regional Manager, left, and Jodi Younger, Vice President of Quality and Patient Care at St. Joseph's Health Care London, along with their dedicated teams, work closely to improve access to affordable, quality supportive housing in the London area.

"It's based on an old Cherokee legend," explains Lori. "As the story goes, there is a battle of two wolves inside all of us. One wolf is evil – full of inferiority, lies, ego, hate and greed. The other is good – full of love, hope, peace, empathy and understanding. Ultimately, the wolf who wins the battle is whichever one you feed... and I live by that."

As St. Joseph's continues to work alongside the City of London and community partners on solutions to address the current housing crisis, Indwell's impact is already apparent. The percentage of inpatient beds occupied by individuals unable to be discharged from St. Joseph's Mental Health Care Program due to housing limitations has been reduced from 52 per cent in 2017, to 30 per cent in 2022.

"While there is still much work to be done, it is a much-needed step in the right direction," says Jodi.

Today, Lori is grateful to have found a safe, affordable and supportive community she has called home for four years.

"I was lost before Indwell. But I found out what home was and it gave me a whole new sense of direction and development. I have a new way of life – one I can be proud of... I started letting people in instead of pushing them away. Now, I try to talk to everybody because everybody can teach you something."

## Health and Homelessness

St. Joseph's Health Care London was a sponsor organization of London's Health and Homelessness summits and remains a key partner in the city's "whole-of-community system response" – a far reaching system solution to better serve and support the homeless in our community, co-designed with those who have lived experience with homelessness. St. Joseph's remains engaged in planning and implementation as this person-centred plan continues to take shape. The organization has also signed the 'Commitment to Collaboration' agreement, helping to explore concrete alignments and actions to support the collaborative community response.

Her advice to those in a less fortunate situation, perhaps living rough on the streets or struggling with their own mental illness or addiction, is to "stay in the now, reflect on the past for guidance and look towards the future."

"Just keep going," says Lori. "Look for the good in yourself. Say to yourself 'I deserve this, I count, I'm a miracle and I'm worth saving.' ... Look for the people that are hardy and wholesome and be receptive to letting good people in."

With a twinkle in her eye, Lori says she finds herself opening the doors and windows these days and telling herself 'there's sunshine out there,' or 'it's raining but it's warm rain.'

"I try to use the pros and cons as positively and as simply as I can... I feed the good wolf."

# Upgrading with *Style*

Gift shops at St. Joseph's Health Care London are benefitting from an infusion of style and function thanks to a partnership with Fanshawe College students.

**H**ospital gift shops are not usually considered hip places to hang out, but a group of students from Fanshawe College's Fashion Marketing and Management Program (FMMP) is changing that perception with some trendy transformations at St. Joseph's Health Care London (St. Joseph's).

While the organization's six retail stores are filled with colourful giftware, everyday essentials and delicious sundries, being a place to shop isn't their only function. The stores are also important social hubs, providing connection and joy to patrons.

When planning for the re-opening of the stores after lengthy closures due to the pandemic, St. Joseph's Volunteer Services, which oversees store operations, saw an opportunity to re-envision the shops' layouts, products and processes.

Tracy Drenth, Coordinator of Volunteer Services, and her team, including associate Sheryl Hagerman, connected with Wella Nolan, Coordinator of the FMMP and some of her students.

## More than a store

St. Joseph's Health Care London operates retail stores at St. Joseph's Hospital, Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care, Parkwood Institute (Main Building and Finch Family Mental Health Care Building) and Southwest Centre for Forensic Mental Health Care. The stores offer giftware, confectionaries, clothing and various unique items. They are also a place for patients and residents to socialize. Revenue generated from St. Joseph's stores support patient and resident care and programs.

"I was excited by the breadth of knowledge and excitement the students brought to the table," says Sheryl. "After touring our stores the students had great ideas on our signage, layout design, styling and how to place products to get the attention of our shoppers."

Based on the students' recommendations, numerous operational improvements have been implemented such as sourcing new vendors and inventory, moving to bulk buying practices, enhancing shipping and financial processes, and installing a point-of-sale debit and credit card system at the Parkwood Institute Finch Family Mental Health Care Building store.

The partnership has been equally valuable to the students, adds Wella.

"Working with the St. Joseph's team has provided our students the opportunity to build on their practical, technical and academic skills in a work environment. They have been able to apply merchandising strategies and techniques in a realistic setting and increase their self-confidence, independence, problem solving and interpersonal skills in communicating their ideas with an employer."

But the most rewarding aspect of their experience, say the students, has been eliciting smiles from patients and residents and having a positive impact on their lives.



**Chieh-Lin Huang, left and Pablo Jimenez-Lopez,** students with Fanshawe College's Fashion Marketing and Management Program, helped redesign the retail stores at St. Joseph's Health Care London.

# *Volunteers make a lasting*



**You can too. Volunteer today!**



Scan QR Code to watch video and learn more about volunteering at St. Joseph's Health Care London.

Contact Volunteer Services at  
[volunteersjhc@sjhc.london.on.ca](mailto:volunteersjhc@sjhc.london.on.ca)  
or visit [www.sjhc.london.on.ca/volunteers](http://www.sjhc.london.on.ca/volunteers)



# Breaking down barriers

Specialized sexual assault care is now available in Oxford County.

**I**n an innovative partnership, victims of sexual assault in Oxford County are able to receive specialized follow-up care close to home.

Considered the first agreement of its kind in the province, the Oxford County Community Health Centre (OCCHC) is collaborating with the Regional Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Program (RSADVTP) of St. Joseph's Health Care London (St. Joseph's) to provide specialized follow-up services for Oxford County residents who have experienced sexual assault.

The RSADVTP will provide consultation services to OCCHC on follow-up care for patients seen at St. Joseph's, as well as for Oxford County patients who may need care but did not come to London.

“This partnership addresses a long-standing barrier to care in Oxford County for those seeking support for sexual assault,” says Randy Peltz, Executive Director, OCCHC. “It means the OCCHC can serve as an extension of selected services typically only provided at RSADVTP, including ongoing documentation and treatment of injuries, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infection, and counselling.”



Anyone who comes into our program is offered to be followed medically, psychologically, emotionally and/or spiritually for six months post an assault.

– CASSANDRA FISHER

## Have you experienced sexual assault?

The Regional Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Program at St. Joseph's Hospital in London provides care in the region for women, children and men who have experienced sexual assault/sexual abuse and/or domestic violence. A team of specialized nurses, doctors and social workers are available 24/7 to provide numerous care options to individuals of all ages, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Learn what's available at [sjhc.london.on.ca](http://sjhc.london.on.ca).

Follow-up care in Oxford County will be provided by OCCHC nurses, doctors and social workers, in consultation with the RSADVTP.

St. Joseph's is committed to partnerships that improve access to services and allow survivors to feel safe in disclosing and seeking the care they need, says Cassandra Fisher, Coordinator of the RSADVTP.

“Disclosing sexual assault or domestic violence is extremely difficult and often frightening,” explains Cassandra. “Anyone who comes into our program is offered to be followed medically, psychologically, emotionally and/or spiritually for six months post an assault. We want to ensure everyone is able to access this follow-up care regardless of where they live.”

Historically, travel and transportation challenges have prevented many Oxford County residents from receiving support and care for sexual assault at a time of significant urgency, says Laura McCreery, sexual assault therapist and Program Coordinator, Oxford Sexual Assault Services at OCCHC.

# REGIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TREATMENT PROGRAM



## Cassandra Fisher,

Coordinator of the Regional Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Program of St. Joseph's Health Care London, is working to ensure victims of sexual assault can access specialized care wherever they live.

“This innovative partnership with St. Joseph's also serves as a potential model for other – often rural – communities across the province facing similar barriers.”

The RSADVTP is the only program in the region offering forensic evidence collection. Sexual assault nurse examiners at St. Joseph's are specially trained above a nursing scope to provide forensic evidence collection and expertise as a witness in any case that goes to court. Oxford residents who choose the option of forensic evidence collection will need to be seen at the RSADVTP but can transfer to the OCCHC for their follow-up care.

## Support after a sexual assault

Sexual assault is a crime of violence that often leaves victims in need of medical care and support to recover. Knowing how to best support someone after a sexual assault can be difficult. In a recent episode of St. Joseph's DocTalks Podcast, host Ian Gillespie and Dr. Susan McNair, a family physician and Medical Director of St. Joseph's Regional Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Program, discuss the care and services available for people who have experienced sexual assault and how to help survivors.



## DID YOU KNOW?

**5X**

more likely, for young women (aged 15-24 years old) to have experienced sexual assault.

**114,132**

victims of intimate partner violence, aged 12 years and older, were reported to police in 2021 in Canada.

**29%**

of women belonging to a visible minority have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime.

**79%**

of victims of intimate partner violence were women and girls.



# A POWER

St. Joseph's Health Care London and Lawson Health Research Institute will become Canada's first centre of excellence in molecular imaging and theranostics – a potent one-two punch in personalized cancer care.

**I**n a Canadian first, St. Joseph's Health Care London (St. Joseph's) and Lawson Health Research Institute (Lawson), in partnership with GE HealthCare, will become a centre of excellence in personalized treatment of cancer and other diseases by advancing the powerful blend of precision diagnostic imaging and targeted therapy.

This rapidly emerging field of medicine is called molecular imaging and theranostics (MIT). Molecular imaging provides detailed imaging at the molecular level, and theranostics is a term that combines the words therapeutics and diagnostics.

Together, MIT is a two-pronged approach to diagnostics and treatment, bringing together imaging and radiotracers that can identify the location and extent of diseased tissues and selectively destroy the abnormal cells while leaving surrounding healthy cells undamaged.

*Continued...*



# HOUSE

# *Combination*



St. Joseph's Health Care London is the first hospital in Canada to install the next generation, state-of-the-art PET-CT from GE HealthCare – the Omni Legend System.

“The centre will confirm St. Joseph’s – and the wider London medical and scientific community – as national and international leaders in advancing MIT in the diagnosis of disease, for instance in the identification of cancer and its sub-types, to allow more treatment options for patients,” says Dr. Narinder Paul, Lawson scientist, Chief, Medical Imaging at St. Joseph’s and Physician Executive, Medical Imaging, at London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC). “It will also allow for an expansion of scientific collaborations, increased numbers of scientific and medical learners, and access to the latest software to acquire and integrate imaging science with other patient information.”



A personalized approach to medical care requires a very detailed understanding of the localization of disease and potential response to different treatment options.

– DR. NARINDER PAUL

As part of the GE HealthCare collaboration, St. Joseph’s has become the first hospital in Canada to install the latest generation, state-of-the-art PET-CT from GE, which was delivered to St. Joseph’s Hospital in August. The new PET-CT will mean faster exams, better patient experience, more detailed images and increased accuracy in diagnosing disease at a lower dose of radiation for patients. It will also expand clinical care at St. Joseph’s by significantly enhancing research through the Imaging Research Group at Lawson, working together with researchers at LHSC, the London Regional Cancer Program and Western University.

“We will leverage the combined scientific expertise and innovation of scientists from GE HealthCare and Lawson to maximize the future opportunities of molecular imaging theranostics made possible through PET- CT imaging and be leaders in Canada in this area of medical science,” says David Hill, Lawson’s Scientific Director.

For patients seen in London, the benefits will include expanded use of PET-CT, the ability to extract more information from their diagnostic images more rapidly and with less radiation exposure compared to current procedures, greater diagnostic and treatment accuracy, and new options for treatment, particularly for cancers that are more difficult to treat.

“A personalized approach to medical care requires a very detailed understanding of the localization of disease and potential response to different treatment options,” says Dr. Paul. “We will be able to offer patients across our region access to the latest therapeutic options based on a deeper understanding of the nature of their individual disease conditions gained through next generation medical imaging.”

### Dr. Narinder Paul,

Chief of Medical Imaging at St. Joseph’s Health Care London, is excited to offer patients the latest therapeutic options as a centre of excellence in molecular imaging and theranostics takes shape at St. Joseph’s Hospital.

## What patients can expect

As a dedicated centre of excellence in molecular imaging and theranostics, St. Joseph’s Health Care London will...

- Advance innovation and expand the science in precision imaging of disease, and broaden the potential of PET-CT imaging
- Develop new treatment options for patients with cancer and other diseases
- Maximize opportunities of digital health technologies, expand access for patients across Canada and improve their treatment journeys
- Create a knowledge dissemination hub for Canada to educate and train others in the use of advanced imaging technologies and improve the health care system for all Canadians



At its core, theranostics is about treating each patient as an individual, “recognizing that the same treatment plan doesn’t work for everyone – with the goal of providing more efficient and effective medical care,” adds Mike Hamilton, President, GE HealthCare Canada. “This collaboration aims to advance this practice for the benefit of clinicians and patients around the world.”

St. Joseph’s and Lawson have invested in critical MIT infrastructure for more than two decades with an on-site cyclotron at St. Joseph’s Hospital that produces radioisotopes, a radiochemistry laboratory, scientists to make the clinical grade reagents, Canada’s first PET-CT (2002), Canada’s first whole body PET-MRI (2012), and now, Canada’s first next-generation PET-CT from GE HealthCare, says Ting-Yim Lee, Lawson’s Director of PET/CT Research and medical physicist at St. Joseph’s Hospital.

There are also clinical trials research teams and state-of-the-art PET-CT cameras across London’s hospitals and Western, dedicated facilities at Western to develop new probes used to detect and diagnose disease, and the London Regional Cancer Program at LHSC.

“

St. Joseph’s is proud to be in partnership with GE HealthCare on this exciting opportunity to transform the care journey and outcomes for patients with cancer and other diseases, not only locally and regionally, but also nationally.

– ROY BUTLER (PHD), PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
ST. JOSEPH’S HEALTH CARE LONDON

“This makes the city the obvious location to maximize the development of this exciting new science for the benefit of patients,” says Ting-Yim. “London has an established record of working in partnership with global companies in the field of medical imaging and have together generated many discoveries that are now made available as best patient care.”

The new PET-CT at St. Joseph’s was made possible in part through the generosity of donors to St. Joseph’s Health Care Foundation, which contributed \$1 million to the state-of-the-art machine.



The new PET-CT at St. Joseph’s Health Care London – the first of its kind in Canada – will mean faster exams, better patient experience, more detailed images and increased accuracy in diagnosing disease at a lower dose of radiation for patients.



## Jason Gray

says writing about his rehabilitation experience at St. Joseph's Health Care London saved his life – and his brain.

# Strength in storytelling

Jason Gray says writing about his rehabilitation journey saved his life – and his brain. Now, as a care partner at St. Joseph's Health Care London, this chapter of his story is impacting the lives of others.

As a writer and independent filmmaker Jason Gray knows how to tell a powerful story. But the most compelling and perhaps unexpected story he's sharing is one that's not yet finished – his own.

Jason's story didn't begin in a hospital room but it's there he took pen in hand and began to write it. In 2018, he experienced a severe reaction to a medication prescribed for his multiple sclerosis, which landed him in hospital with significant swelling to the frontal lobe of his brain.

As a result, Jason experienced sweeping personality changes – a known and usually temporary side effect of brain trauma. He also suddenly lost the function of his legs.

"You know that instinctual knowing of how to walk that you develop as a child?" Jason says as he pulls the memory to mind. "One minute it was there and the next, completely gone."

In time, the brain inflammation subsided and Jason's prognosis took a turn for the better. He attributes that positive change to the excellent care he received, but also to his decision to start writing about his experience. The creative outlet, he says, "saved my brain – and my life."

After two months of acute care, Jason was transferred to the Acquired Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program of St. Joseph's Health Care London (St. Joseph's) located at Parkwood Institute. There, he began a rigorous 90-day rehabilitation schedule working with a highly skilled team of care providers to restore and rebuild pathways in his brain.



In some ways, I feel as passionate about being a care partner as I do filmmaking.

– JASON GRAY

Throughout, Jason continued to write.

"It was kind of like summer camp," he says with a laugh. "The nurses would come with a schedule of my therapies for the week, and on weekends I would write my book."

In the spirit of positivity the local filmmaker so easily embodies, and to make the most of his rehabilitation experience, Jason decided he would say 'yes' to every opportunity that came his way.

## What is a Care Partner?

“Care partner” is a term for any person who is or has recently been a patient or resident, family member, loved one, care provider or friend for a patient or resident. Care partners share their experience and knowledge about their unique care journey collaboratively with St. Joseph’s to impact policy and procedures, quality improvement, direct care, and other work underway across the organization.

So, when asked if he was interested in support from a spiritual care provider, he agreed, despite having no spiritual affiliations.

That ‘yes’ provided an unexpected moment of healing for Jason. One day, during a walk on the grounds with his spiritual care provider, he found himself in the exact spot he had filmed the opening of one of his films several years prior.

The shots were of a wheelchair, much like the one Jason now found himself in. The unexpected irony of his circumstances and the support of his spiritual care provider in that moment moved him to tears.

“I guess there was stuff I was holding on to, and she was such an empathetic listener that I felt everything rush out of me.”

After his inpatient stay, Jason continued to receive care through weekly appointments with Parkwood Institute’s outpatient rehab team. One of those appointments was with physiotherapist Stephanie Cornell, who noticed Jason’s knack for storytelling extended beyond his writing.

“I loved his take on things and the way he described them,” says Stephanie. “He really enriched my perspective of what it’s like for someone going through rehab.”

Stephanie asked if Jason would be willing to share his experience as part of a quality improvement project aimed at developing education resources for rehab patients. This was an especially easy ‘yes’ for Jason who says he loves people and loves to talk.

It would be Jason’s first introduction to care partnership at St. Joseph’s and the beginning of his journey as a care partner.

Today, Jason is no longer an outpatient but continues to visit the rehab gym every Friday for a five-kilometre ride on the functional electrical stimulation bike. He also remains an active care partner, using his voice and story to impact others.

“In some ways, I feel as passionate about being a care partner as I do filmmaking,” he says.

Earlier this year, Jason helped deliver a presentation on trauma-informed care at Parkwood Institute Research Day and, most recently, he was asked to join a committee that is guiding the development of education for spiritual care students at St. Joseph’s. It was yet another instant ‘yes’ for Jason based on his own spiritual care experience.

Outside of his role as a care partner, Jason says he continues to do what he loves – writing and planning his next film – and finds beauty in each day.

“To have any experience,” he says, “is a gift.”



Scan for more information about care partnership or visit [sjhc.london.on.ca](http://sjhc.london.on.ca).



**Jason Gray**

visits the rehab gym located at St. Joseph’s Health Care London’s Parkwood Institute every Friday for a five-kilometre ride on the functional electrical stimulation bike.

# Runs in the family

The Reykjavik Marathon has become a family affair for the Moylans as they raise funds and awareness for Alzheimer's research at St. Joseph's Health Care London.

**B**etween the breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean, majestic mountains, lava fields and landscapes, a group of runners in this year's Reykjavik Marathon in Iceland had St. Joseph's Health Care London (St. Joseph's) on their minds.

Ten members of the Moylan family and a few friends recently ran the full marathon in support of Alzheimer's and dementia research.

They wanted to raise funds, increase awareness and thank Dr. Michael Borrie and his team for the care provided to their father and grandfather – John Moylan. They were running for John and all those suffering from the disease and their families, who watch helplessly as their loved one “disappears behind the haze of dementia,” says granddaughter Melani Ferris.

John first began showing signs of dementia more than 10 years ago and was referred for assessment to Dr. Borrie, a geriatrician at St. Joseph's. Within two sessions, John was diagnosed with vascular dementia, a progressive disease that causes damage to the brain due to blood vessel damage or blockages and can affect memory, communication and speech, concentration, judgment or visual perception. It was the first time the family had definitive answers about John's health.

Thankful for the care, John and his wife Margaret participated in Dr. Borrie's national observational study of cognitive impairment and dementia. The study used data collected from clinical testing and questionnaires of more than 1,600 participants over five years to address the causes, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of neurodegenerative diseases.

“I very much appreciate John and Margaret's personal contribution to our research and am most grateful that they recognized the research team with this fundraising endeavour,” says Dr. Borrie.

“My mom feels indebted and is grateful for the kindness and assistance she received,” says John's son David Moylan. “She felt Dr. Borrie was not only very genuine and cared deeply, but he was invested in my dad, which left a lasting impression on her.”

Witnessing the patriarch of the family battling dementia has been hard on the family.

“One day you can have a whole conversation with him and he knows who you are, and the next day, you can't,” says Melani, who lives two hours away from her grandfather.

Godafoss (Waterfall of the Gods) in northern Iceland.





Wanting to do something, Melani pitched the idea of the marathon to her family. The group began training in January 2023, fueled by gratitude for John’s care and motivated by a larger cause – Alzheimer’s and dementia research.



I’m so proud of all the runners for completing it and running their best. Feeling a bit sore, but the soak in the blue lagoon helped.

– MELANI



### The Moylan Family and Friends

recently participated in the Reykjavik Marathon in Iceland to raise funds for Alzheimer’s research at St. Joseph’s Health Care London.

Although running a marathon is a challenging feat for most, it’s old hat for the Moylan family. The Reykjavik Marathon held in August was David’s third and the second for Melani. The family also ran a half marathon during the COVID-19 pandemic to raise funds for cancer and participated in the David Goggins 4x4x48 Challenge in Exeter, running four miles every four hours for 48 hours.

“The run went well,” says Melani after the Reykjavik Marathon. “I’m so proud of all the runners for completing it and running their best. Feeling a bit sore, but the soak in the Blue Lagoon helped.”

Including a personal gift from John’s wife Margaret, the family is pleased to have raised more than \$10,000 in support of St. Joseph’s. Funds will support research focused on finding protein biomarkers in blood that will provide a clear diagnosis for memory problems.

“Soon, we anticipate these blood tests will be available in clinical practices,” says Dr. Borrie. “It is anticipated these biomarkers will tell us the course an illness will take and response to new treatments.”

There isn’t a cure for Alzheimer’s disease, but Dr. Borrie hopes this research can assist in slowing or eventually stopping the disease before symptoms of memory loss progress and affect daily activities.

### John Moylan

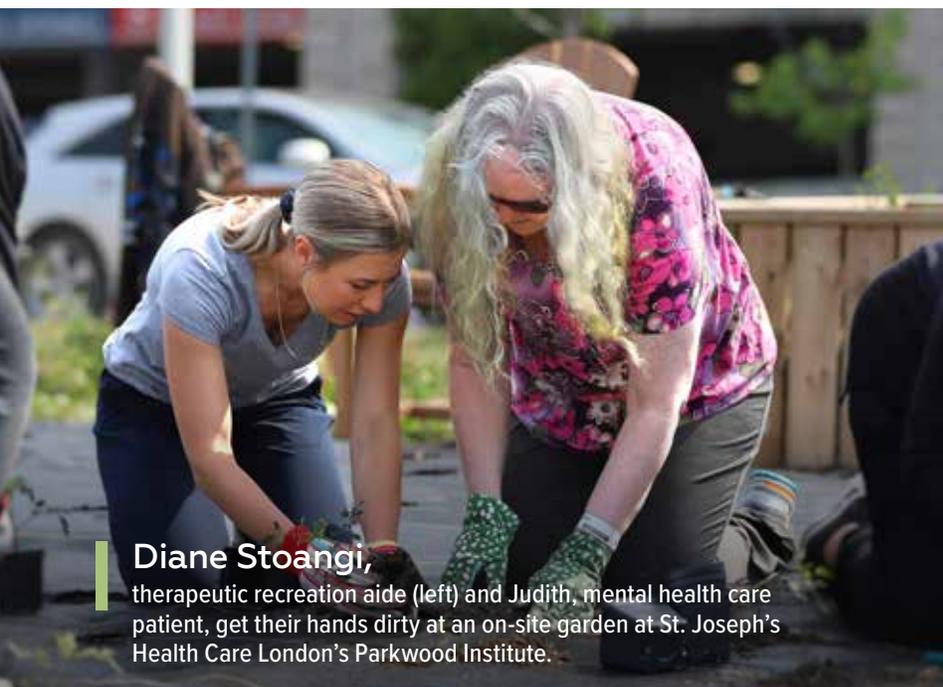
was diagnosed with vascular dementia by Dr. Michael Borrie, a geriatrician at St. Joseph’s Health Care London, providing an answer to signs and symptoms John had been experiencing for more than 10 years.

# GARDENING FOR THE *mind, body and spirit*

A new addition to the recreation program for mental health care inpatients at St. Joseph's Health Care London is flourishing – literally.

**D**igging into the benefits of gardening is quickly growing into an empowering and healing activity for mental health care patients at St. Joseph's Health Care London (St. Joseph's).

Recreation therapists at the Finch Family Mental Health Care Building at St. Joseph's Parkwood Institute recently introduced planting, weeding and harvesting vegetables to patients interested in tending an on-site garden in partnership with the organization's Nourish Project team.



**Diane Stoangi,** therapeutic recreation aide (left) and Judith, mental health care patient, get their hands dirty at an on-site garden at St. Joseph's Health Care London's Parkwood Institute.

"Gardening allows patients a chance to get out into the fresh air, connect with nature, socialize, engage in physical activity, enjoy new experiences and feel productive," says Sula Larochelle, a therapeutic recreation specialist in the Treatment and Rehabilitation Program at Parkwood Institute. "We discovered that patients are also reminiscing about the gardens they grew up with or once tended. Others have spoken about wanting to start their own gardening projects one day. It's giving patients an opportunity to share positive memories and new experiences with each other."

The Finch Family Mental Health Care Building provides care for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness in need of longer-stay specialized mental health care.

As part of the care team, therapeutic recreation professionals assist patients with exploring, resuming and pursuing leisure interests with an optimal level of independence.

Each weekday, therapeutic recreational specialists accompany different inpatient groups to the garden, where they are supplied with water, sunblock, hats and gardening tools to plant, weed, water, or just enjoy the space to rest.

Judith, a mental health care patient at Parkwood Institute, says the garden has been a great way to soak in some sunshine and interact with others.

"It's nice to come here and be involved," says Judith. "I enjoy helping out in the garden and it's nice to be able to meet up and chat with people."

The 3,128 square-foot garden was developed in 2021 as part of St. Joseph's Nourish Project led by members of St. Joseph's Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) team with a goal to harness the power of food to build health for people and the planet.

Created in collaboration with Urban Roots London – a non-profit organization that revitalizes underused city land for agriculture – the garden produces various herbs and vegetables, including tomatoes, potatoes, radishes, broccoli, peppers, green beans, carrots, and scallion, which are used in food production for patients and residents to enhance their meals. The space also enables the Nourish Project team to test the potential for on-site food growing and explore new ways to reduce costs and waste, including food packaging.



## Nourish Project Team

Members at St. Joseph's Health Care London tend the pilot garden at Parkwood Institute, which includes 48 planting beds and four large garden boxes. The garden was developed in partnership with Urban Roots London.

To maintain the garden and foster a sense of community, the Nourish Project team and Urban Roots reached out to program areas at St. Joseph's that might be interested in taking part in the garden pilot.

““ For our patients, recreation therapy is about connecting with others, finding purpose through meaningful activity, feeling a sense of accomplishment, and sustaining hope.

– SULA LAROCHELLE

“It's been great for patients to get involved and reap the benefits that the garden can provide,” says Deana D'Ambrosio, Nourish Project Lead and FNS Coordinator. “Urban Roots staff have also been extremely supportive as some of the patients are learning new gardening skills.”

In addition to mental health care inpatients, residents from St. Joseph's Veterans Care Program and volunteers and staff from various programs are also rolling up their sleeves to help in the garden. All have enjoyed the opportunity and are now seeing the fruits of their labour as the final harvest of the season takes place.

“For our patients, recreation therapy is about connecting with others, finding purpose through meaningful activity, feeling a sense of accomplishment, and sustaining hope,” says Sula. “Offering gardening as a therapeutic activity in partnership with Urban Roots London and FNS provides an avenue for well-being for our patients. To feel part of something that is positive can be very healing.”



## Judith,

a patient at Parkwood Institute's Finch Family Mental Health Care Building, has rediscovered her passion for gardening through a newly created therapeutic recreation program.

# my ST. JOSEPH'S

St. Joseph's Health Care London provides care through a unique mix of clinical settings – making us one of the most complex health care organizations in Ontario. In a continual effort to bring the best care possible to those we serve, we constantly engage patients and their families, leaders, physicians, staff, volunteers, donors and many partners to ensure St. Joseph's takes innovative steps in addressing the health care needs of our community, now and in the future.

## MY ST. JOSEPH'S IS

St. Joseph's Hospital

Parkwood Institute

Mount Hope  
Centre for  
Long Term Care

Southwest Centre  
for Forensic  
Mental Health Care

Teams, clinics and programs in our  
community and beyond.

## SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK OR STORY WITH US

St. Joseph's Health Care London  
PO BOX 5777, STN B  
London, ON N6A 4V2  
519 646-6100 ext. 66034  
ComDept@sjhc.london.on.ca

