



THE YEAR THE WORLD CHANGED

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St. Joseph's Report to the Community 2020-2021

Just over one year ago, the world changed. COVID-19 arrived and with it came the critical rush for hospitals to mobilize, and fast. St. Joseph's moved swiftly, efficiently, expertly and innovatively. The role of St. Joseph's in the region's pandemic response has been extensive – from opening new beds and caring for the most vulnerable during COVID-19 surges, to sweeping new infection control measures, fast-tracking virtual care, and ramping up research to delve into COVID unknowns. A glimpse of this effort can be found in "[COVID by the numbers](#)" created to capture a mere snapshot of our pandemic response. In reality, COVID-19 is affecting so many aspects of life – at home and work. Yet St. Joseph's staff and physicians remain, as always, passionately committed to making a difference for those in our care – safely, skillfully, with respect, excellence and compassion.

OUR HIGHLIGHTS

Harnessing the potential of virtual care

From the earliest days of the pandemic, many of St. Joseph's programs and services rapidly and creatively pivoted to take advantage of what they saw as the COVID-19 silver lining – the impetus to fast forward virtual care to keep patients connected with their care teams.



Since mid-March 2020, 3,000 to 5,000 virtual care appointments (telephone and videoconference) have taken place per week, a staggering leap from about 1,000 virtual care appointments per week pre-pandemic. During the height of the pandemic, with most in-person visits put on hold, as much as 69 per cent of all registered outpatient visits at St. Joseph's were virtual. Currently, about 1,000 patients each day are receiving care, education and therapy without leaving home.

1Virtual care at St. Joseph's has expanded by leaps and bounds during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure patients in nearly all programs stay connected with their care teams.

And the journey is just beginning. While in-person care has resumed, the pandemic has unveiled a new world of opportunity to provide care differently.

“Building upon lessons learned from the speedy implementation of virtual care during the urgency of the pandemic, important next steps are now underway at St. Joseph’s to ensure reliable, safe, sustainable and appropriate care using virtual technologies as additional tools to serve patients,” says Glen Kearns, Integrated Vice President, Diagnostic Services and Chief Information Officer. “Our patients, their families and our clinicians are key partners in planning how we evolve and adapt to this exciting new way of providing service to some patient populations.”

Taking the battle to the lab

When cases of COVID-19 began emerging in London, Lawson Health Research Institute's medical scientists quickly mobilized, launching studies to explore the impact on patients, residents, staff and physicians in London's hospitals.



2St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation is providing seed funding for innovative COVID-19-related studies, such as one by Lawson Health Research Institute scientists Ruud Veldhuizen (PhD), left, and respirologist Dr. Jim Lewis to determine if a treatment com

with severe cases must spend on mechanical ventilation, the researchers are studying a new treatment most commonly

To accelerate this critical research, St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation initiated the St. Joseph's Health Crisis Fund, which has raised more than \$500,000 in donations for new clinical trials and much-needed items to support the health and well-being of patients, residents, staff and physicians in the midst of a challenging pandemic.

One promising project to receive seed funding through St. Joseph's Health Crisis Fund was initiated by Lawson scientists Ruud Veldhuizen (PhD) and respirologist Dr. Jim Lewis. Hoping to improve COVID-19 outcomes and reduce the time patients

used to improve lung function in premature babies. It's called bovine lipid extract surfactant suspension (BLES®) and it may be the key in helping adults who develop lung disease and acute respiratory distress syndrome.

The world is focused on finding good treatments for COVID-19, say the scientists. This kind of research is made possible through generous donors, strong partnerships and collaboration involving many experts.

Endings, beginnings and the confidence to grow

At only 12 years old, while most young girls are eagerly envisioning the freedoms and adventures that lie ahead, Alexis couldn't see a future for herself. Nor could she understand the overwhelming feeling of hopelessness that engulfed her. It would be the beginning of a long and difficult journey - one that would eventually bring her to St. Joseph's where treatment through Parkwood Institute's Adolescent Psychiatry Program would change the course of her life.

This spring, that program officially closed, ending a legacy of adolescent mental health care at St. Joseph's that has spanned more than two decades and helped to shape the lives of countless youths like Alexis. As part of an exciting opportunity to reimagine hospital-based child and adolescent mental health care in the region, this unique population now receives care through Children's Hospital at London Health Sciences Centre.



3 Alexis found hope and the confidence to make something of her life through the Adolescent Psychiatry Program at St. Joseph's Parkwood Institute Mental Health Care Building.

worker, much of what she learned about dealing with transitions came from St. Joseph's staff, she says.

"The best gift you can give someone is the confidence to believe in themselves...I would not be who I am today without the staff and physicians at Parkwood Institute."

"St. Joseph's has built a lasting foundation upon which an enhanced model can now be developed to serve an ever-growing and expanding need in Western Ontario," says Jodi Younger, Vice President, Patient Care and Quality at St. Joseph's. "We remain so very proud of the exceptional care provided by our organization to the adolescent population in our region over the years."

Alexis knows a thing or two about endings and new beginnings. Now completing her first year of college to become a developmental service

The path forward

It's been nearly nine years since Rob Staffen was cycling down a mountain near Palm Springs, California when his road bike suddenly malfunctioned, catapulting him head-first into the rock-strewn desert terrain. And it was a few years ago when Jill Wright, during an ordinary hectic evening at home juggling work and kids, accidentally hit her head on the granite kitchen counter. Both suffered traumatic brain injuries that changed their lives in an instant.

Known as an invisible injury, a concussion can affect a person's physical, mental, behavioural and emotional health. While 80 percent of people recover, 20 percent have persistent symptoms that can develop or worsen over time, derailing their ability to work, enjoy their usual activities, or even perform routine tasks.



4With the help of St. Joseph's brain injury rehabilitation clinicians, patient Jill Wright has used her experience and background in creating educational resources to help other brain injury survivors.

At St. Joseph's Acquired Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program at Parkwood Institute, patients learn the skills and strategies they needed to get their lives back on track. Now, patients can tap into that knowledge and training at home with the launch of St. Joseph's free, online educational toolkit. Designed to empower patients to pace and plan their recovery, the toolkit includes: the MyBrainPacer™ app which helps patients monitor and track their daily activity and concussion symptom; a concussion care video series – the brainchild of Jill; and a Mindfulness podcast series.

The app is the electronic evolution of St. Joseph's innovative Pacing and Planning Program, which was made possible by the Cowan Foundation and other community supporters through St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation.

For Rob and Jill, the care and expertise at Parkwood Institute cleared the path to move forward, making recovery possible.

Hope, healing, connection and wellness

Transforming the mental health care experience of Indigenous peoples and breaking down long-standing barriers to care is the focus of an innovative, collaborative program of Joseph's and Atlohsa Family Healing Services.



Biigajiisakaan combines traditional healing medicines and ceremonies, such as smudging, drumming and song, with western psychiatric treatment modalities.

Called Biigajiisakaan ('BEE-gaw-JEES-gawn): Indigenous Pathways to Mental Wellness, the referral-based mental wellness initiative is designed to provide accessible, culturally safe, specialized care for Indigenous people with serious mental illness, addictions and concurrent disorders. Based at St. Joseph's Parkwood Institute and co-delivered by St. Joseph's and Atlohsa, Biigajiisakaan combines traditional healing medicine, Indigenous elder-guided care and ceremony with hospital-based

health care practices and psychiatric treatment.

“There is so much missing within the medical system for Indigenous individuals,” explains Liz Akiwenzie, Biigajiiskaan’s wellness knowledge keeper and cultural educator. “It’s never been a place of safety. People don’t fully understand the depth of the damage caused by all the trauma, abuse, loss of identity, and disruption of families. The intent is to help them heal and re-connect to the essence of who they are.”

With high rates of mental illness and addictions among Indigenous people, the program responds to an urgent need to provide a hostile-free environment and Indigenous-led services, explains Jodi Younger, Vice President of Patient Care and Quality at St. Joseph’s. “We are proud to be working alongside our Indigenous health care partners to help support and provide their services to the community.”

A lucky break

It was Leda Jarrett's first ever broken bone and it meant more than a year of recovery. Yet the 69-year-old says "nothing but good" has happened since her fall.

After an emergency room visit where the wrist fracture was diagnosed and treated, Leda was referred to the Roth McFarlane Hand and Upper Limb Program (HULC) at St. Joseph's Hospital. While registering, a clinician came to talk to her about her medical history and osteoporosis. Within minutes, she was undergoing a bone mineral density test, with



6Thanks to a fracture prevention program at St. Joseph's Hospital, Leda Jarrett learned her broken wrist was more than a just a break – it was osteoporosis. She is now being treated for the bone-weakening disease to help ensure her first break is also her

the results ready for review at her HULC appointment.

The “good” Leda refers to is learning the break was due to osteoporosis and being fast tracked to St. Joseph’s Osteoporosis and Bone Disease Program, where care is focused on prevention. While fractures caused by osteoporosis can be debilitating, even deadly, many patients with the type of breaks that are a red flag for osteoporosis – like the fractured wrist Leda experienced – don’t get checked for the disease, explains endocrinologist Dr. Kristin Clemens.

At St. Joseph’s, a partnership between orthopedic specialists, endocrinologists and Osteoporosis Canada is spotting those red flags and providing patients with the proper care and follow up they need to prevent further fractures.

Now, through diet, exercise, treatment, education and ongoing monitoring, Leda is hoping her first broken bone was also her last.

Lighting the way to better heart care

The heart is one of the hardest working organs in the body, providing the body with oxygen and nutrients it needs to survive. Every cell depends on this muscle. When it becomes damaged or weakened by other conditions – a syndrome called heart failure – it can mean serious illness, frequent hospitalizations, perpetual fatigue, breathlessness, even death.

More frightening, it's nearly impossible to predict who will develop heart failure.

At St. Joseph's, Lawson Health Research Institute scientist Dr. Savita Dhanvantari (PhD) and her team are searching at a cellular level for an early biological marker – warning sign – for heart failure so that patients can be diagnosed well before symptoms appear. Allowing them to explore and peer with precision in multi-dimensions is the leading-edge confocal microscope.

Thanks to donations made to St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation, Lawson was the first in Canada to install this advanced and important instrument, which uses laser light to focus on a defined spot at a specific depth within the sample. It is now one of four in the region being used to observe and study the development and progression of diseases such as cancer, diabetes and Alzheimer's. It's also being used to discover new drug and medical treatments.

“Heart failure is extremely debilitating,” explains Dr. Dhanvantari. “Our goal is to be able to predict heart failure early on so that a patient can take proactive steps through medication and lifestyle changes to halt its progression.”



77Dr. Savita Dhanvantari (PhD), scientist at Lawson Health Research Institute, is using the state-of-the-art confocal microscope to search for an early predictor of heart failure.

The right kind of treatment

Two years ago, Lori Linton felt she was running out of options. Struggling with a series of heartbreaking family and health challenges, her burdens were crippling – mentally and emotionally.



8Paddling the river, Lori Linton is enjoying life again after receiving care for treatment resistant depression at St. Joseph's Mental Health Care Program.

Lori was prescribed various medications for her mental health, but little changed. She was dealing with treatment resistant depression (TRD) - when patients don't respond to any kind of treatment, even after years of multiple therapies.

Referred to St. Joseph's Parkwood Institute Mental Health Care Building, Lori benefitted from a new way to assess TRD and physicians determined she was an ideal candidate for transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) – a non-invasive procedure that uses

electric stimulation to regulate neural activity in the brain. Within weeks, the cloud of depression she had been living with for years lifted.

An estimated 10 per cent of individuals with depression don't respond to traditional therapies and medications, and 30 per cent only partially respond, says psychiatrist Dr. Viraj Mehta, Site Chief of St. Joseph's Mental Health Care Program, a leader in TRD assessment. It's crucial to gather a holistic view of each patient's unique condition using specially-designed questionnaires, as well as physical and cognitive assessments, he says.

"The tools are here - they just need to be matched to the right person at the right time."

Generous donors are contributing to making recovery achievable. The TMS machine that transformed Lori's life, as well as ongoing research into TRD, is funded through donations to St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation.

RISING TO EVERY CHALLENGE

RISING TO EVERY CHALLENGE

Message from our Board Chair and CEO



It's been more than one year since the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. We could not have predicted or truly prepared for what would transpire over the next 12 months, nor that we would still, one year later, be navigating the numerous and varied challenges that COVID-19 continues to generate.

With no blueprint on how to deal with COVID-19, the many unknowns and constantly changing information, the task for staff, physicians and leaders to remain focused and diligent in protecting patients, residents and one another has been monumental. Yet our responsiveness during this ever-evolving pandemic has never wavered, our commitment to those in our care never stronger.

Ingenuity, collaboration, courage, deep compassion, perseverance and generosity of spirit have defined the efforts and achievements of staff, physicians and leaders in every program and service during these past extraordinary months. From the earliest days of this pandemic, amid much uncertainty, what we knew

without question is that our greatest strength is the outstanding dedication of our staff, physicians and leaders, which continues to see us through.

Each year in our Annual Report to the Community, we share accomplishments and aspirations from across our multi-site organization. The turbulence of the pandemic and the complexity of the demands it has created have not been an impediment to achieving our goals as an organization. In fact, it has inspired us and propelled us forward. Our success over the past year in safely and effectively Reaching Out, Connecting Care, Innovating Together, Leveraging Technology, and Empowering People – priorities laid out in our strategic plan – is a testament to just what can be achieved in adversity.

With our partners, our community, and guided by our enduring mission, we will continue to respond to this historic crisis with an abiding focus on those we serve and the health of our workforce while learning, growing and harnessing every opportunity it presents. This is the essence of St. Joseph's – rising to every challenge, seeking solutions, finding the path forward, then leading the way.

Howard Rundle

Chair, Board of Directors

Dr. Gillian Kernaghan

President and CEO

TREAUURER'S REPORT

TREASURER'S REPORT

Even as we weathered a very dynamic and uncertain year – heading into the second year of a world-wide COVID-19 pandemic – St. Joseph's reported strong operating results for 2020/21.



Despite the significant disruption brought by the pandemic, St. Joseph's was able to meet or nearly meet all volume accountabilities established with Ontario Health West. The care provided at St. Joseph's included 317,000 patient days, 19,500 surgeries, 39,000 urgent care visits and 780,000 outpatient and outreach visits, as well as 57 additional surge

beds opened at Parkwood Institute during the first wave of the pandemic, many of which remained opened throughout the year in response to surge demands across the region.

Outpatient and outreach visits include 226,500 virtual visits, a 350% increase over last year, as we focused on expanding virtual care across St. Joseph's. This is an incredible testament to the dedication and resourcefulness of many across the organization, achieving such significant growth of virtual care during this challenging time.

St. Joseph's ended the fiscal year with an accounting surplus of \$20.4 million driven by strong performance of our investment portfolio and confirmation of Ministry funding and post-construction operating plan funding above our budget estimates, even as the organization took on significant additional accountabilities and expenses to support the pandemic response in our region.

This year's surplus will enable investments in critical areas across St. Joseph's including virtual care solutions, reducing our patient waitlists that have increased during the pandemic, expanding our electronic health record, OneChart, and renewing our facilities.

St. Joseph's financial position remains strong, with a healthy working capital position and a current ratio of 1.7 to 1.0. St. Joseph's also maintains internally restricted investments which are externally managed by a professional firm under the stewardship of our investment subcommittee of the Board of Directors to invest in the hospital's future needs relating to facilities renovations and redevelopment, clinical equipment and strategic technology projects to advance patient care.

We invested \$22.1 million in new equipment and building-related projects including the renewal of our medication dispensing equipment, investments in OneChart, capital investments relating to our pandemic response and the refurbishment of the Mount Hope rooftop patio.

St. Joseph's capital investments were funded by \$16.2 million of hospital resources, \$2.3 million of support from St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation and \$3.6 million of other government grants, including \$2.3 million of funding from the Ministry of Health's Health Infrastructure Renewal Fund, which supported the replacement of flooring, brickwork, heating and cooling equipment and elevator refurbishments.

We are so grateful for the unwavering community support this past year from donors contributing to our pandemic response as well as recognition for our staff directly. We thank all of our donors and our Foundation for their kindness and generosity.

We acknowledge the challenges we face – globally, locally and as an organization and health system – as we continue to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic. Our stable financial position will support us as we continue to mount our pandemic response into 2021/22 and address the uncertainties around health care in a post-COVID-19 era.

Although we face many unknowns, a constant for St. Joseph's is our staff, leaders, and physicians, guided by the values of our founders, the Sisters of St. Joseph. We stand confident in responding to the needs of our community and health system in the face of uncertainty, continuing our mission of exceptional care.

Don MacDonald, Treasurer, St. Joseph's Health Care London Board of Directors

[**DOWNLOAD FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**](#)

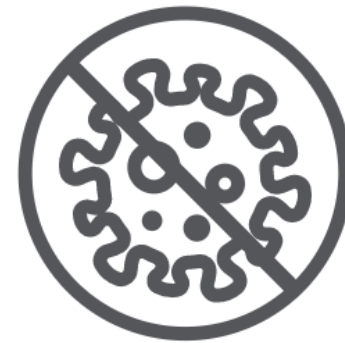
COVID BY THE NUMBERS

Statistics are from April 1st, 2020 through March 31st, 2021.



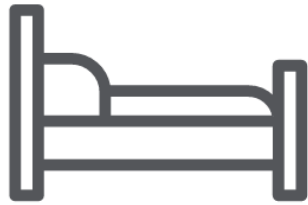
300+
SCREENERS

hired to staff 14 entrances to keep everyone
within St. Joseph's buildings safe.



12,400+
OUTPATIENTS
AND VISITORS
SCREENED

per week at entrances across St. Joseph's.



**85+
BEDS
OPENED**

across St. Joseph's in wave one to manage potential COVID-19 surges.



**2,250+
HEALTH CARE
ORGANIZATIONS**

across the region supplied with PPE by Healthcare Materials Management Services.



**800,000+
LABORATORY
COVID-19 TESTS
PERFORMED**

by Pathology and Laboratory Medicine – equivalent to 150+ years of normal seasonal flu testing.

**66,907
TREATS**



distributed to staff across all sites, funded by St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation for staff care and comfort.



265
EMPLOYEES
REDEPLOYED

to areas they were needed most during
first wave of the pandemic.



79
COVID-19
RELATED PROJECTS

on the go by Lawson Health Research Institute
researchers in London's hospitals.



40+
IPADS

to help keep patients and
residents connected with
loved ones.



50
FITBIT
ACTIVITY TRACKERS

to monitor patients virtually
for the Primary Care
Diabetes Support Program.



6
SMART
BOARDS

for indoor recreational
activities for veterans and
long-term care residents.



**NEARLY
\$100,000**

dispersed to support critical
COVID-19 related research.



**\$500,000+
DONATED
TO ST. JOSEPH'S
HEALTH CRISIS FUND**