

South Muskoka Hospital Foundation

The future is equally important as the present.

Care is second to none, says patient

"I trust him with my life," says Tom Young, a well-known local man, about Dr. Gupta. After learning of his cancer diagnosis, he chose South Muskoka Memorial Hospital and Dr. Gupta to perform the surgery. It was a complex, six-hour colorectal surgery to remove a cancerous tumour. "People asked me if I'd be going to Toronto and I told them no, that I want Dr. Gupta to do the surgery right here in Bracebridge."

Tom is quite active in the community as the announcer for the South Muskoka Shield hockey team and he also plays a couple of local characters for Santa's Village. For the past two years, he spent many weekends as the announcer for Rock Solid Wrestling, travelling to various shows across Ontario. Each show supports a local charity and an upcoming show in Bracebridge will benefit the South Muskoka Hospital Foundation (see details inside).

Tom's story started last summer when he noticed he was passing blood and, in September, while recovering from the colonoscopy, he was told he needed more tests. "I knew then," he said. Dr. Gupta confirmed there was a large tumour and it was stage three cancer. "I broke down," Tom recalls, "I knew they were two nurses short, running around like crazy - but this one nurse chose to spend time with me. She sat there, consoled me, and I knew she didn't have time to do it."

There was some good news when further tests revealed that the cancer hadn't yet spread to other areas.

"For me, cancer is a mind thing. Every time I walked into the hospital, I asked am I going to die? It's scary. Yet the very first person I see when I walk in is the smiling volunteer. They don't just instruct you

where to go, they actually take you there, bring you water and make sure you're okay." Tom quickly noticed that all the staff, "made me feel like I was somebody special. The care here is second to none. Everyone wants to do so much to help. I wanted to do it on my own, but they were there to help."

After the surgery, Tom spent a week recovering in intensive care. "The nurses came quickly whenever I needed them - and with a smile on their faces. They didn't let you know if they were busy. They were so good to me." To Tom's surprise, his physiotherapist had him walking the very next day, inspiring him with his humour. One time, the epidural failed and Tom was in a lot of pain. The nurse tried to fix it and couldn't. "The anaesthesiologist was fantastic. He heard I was in pain and came in at midnight to help me."

Although they believe the surgery was successful, chemotherapy was recommended to eliminate any chance of recurrence. Tom's last round of chemotherapy is later in June. You can find him and wish him well at the Rock Solid Wrestling event coming up in Bracebridge on May 27 at the Bracebridge Memorial Arena. He'll be the rowdy one on the microphone, enjoying life and raising funds for South Muskoka Hospital Foundation.



Tom Young in action as the entertaining announcer for Rock Solid Wrestling.

MAHC Board Chair Evelyn Brown on funding and the future



*Evelyn Brown,
Chair, Board of
Directors, Muskoka
Algonquin Healthcare*

"Planning how Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare will provide health care for future generations is an essential part of the Board's work," says Evelyn Brown, Chair of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare's (MAHC) Board of Directors. "Our

buildings were designed for health care 40 years ago and are getting older and harder to work around every day."

Long-range planning started in 2012 with thorough research of all the options and extensive public consultations. "The Board came to the unanimous conclusion that the highest quality hospital care could be best sustained through a one-hospital model. One hospital also ensures a stable environment that attracts and retains physicians, and offers optimal working conditions that help to recruit staff while protecting the viability of core services without duplication," she says.

While hospital funding across Ontario remains somewhat uncertain, the Board continues to advocate for more dollars to offset the inflationary increases MAHC anticipates year after year to maintain the services provided today, let alone be able to provide new services.

A new collaborative group called Muskoka and Area Health System Transformation (MAHST) was created to bring all the health care providers and agencies together to look at how to ensure more integration to generate savings that could be reinvested into better local health care.

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Infection control is all about prevention



“If we're doing our job well, people aren't hearing about it,” says Cindi Wigston, MAHC's Infection Prevention and Control Manager. In other words, in the infection control world, the best news is no news.

With a mandate to protect patients from hospital-acquired infections and prevent the spread of infection within the hospital, comes a lot of behind-the-scenes activity. Prevention is truly the key, according to Wigston. Infectious organisms called “superbugs” have been making headlines in terms of their pervasiveness in hospital and other health care settings. These pathogens' immunity to traditional antibiotics bring an ongoing challenge to prevent their spread.

The SARS scare in 2003 was a wake-up call for Ontario hospitals, many of which already had infection control procedures, yet were not fully implemented. From that scare came an infusion of cash to ensure each hospital was properly equipped, staffed and trained. Wigston, along with her staff of two certified practitioners, monitor, educate and document infection control practices at both Bracebridge and Huntsville hospitals.

Many pathogens are transmitted through touch - meaning that the greatest risk of spreading infection is on the hands of health care providers and from shared equipment. The most effective way for health care practitioners, patients, visitors and staff to stop the spread is to clean their hands at critical junctures in their interactions.

Through staff monitoring, hand hygiene data is reported to the Ministry. Since 2012, SMMH has consistently met (and sometimes exceeded) provincial targets. In

addition to hand hygiene, other infection control procedures include: monitoring surgical wounds, sterilizing equipment, cleaning furnishings within the hospital, screening every patient upon arrival, using protective equipment when necessary, and ongoing monitoring of outside threats, such as disease outbreaks in area facilities.

New hospital design is greatly influenced by infection control strategy. “The best practice is to have 80% private rooms with private bathrooms,” says Wigston. “The private bathroom totally eliminates the risk of *C. difficile* spores transmitting from one patient to the other. Admittedly, this design drives up the cost for new builds.”

Networks of infection control experts ensure, “We see what's going on where people vacation and what the risks are for people coming to our hospital,” explains Wigston. Infection control is all about work done behind the scenes. Vigilance pays off.



A fond farewell to Bonnie Veitch

Bonnie Veitch started her work as the South Muskoka Hospital Foundation's very first executive assistant on August 10, 1987. Bonnie will be retiring on June 30 although she will be staying on part-time until the end of December to help with the transition and provide clerical support.

Over the years, Bonnie has greatly contributed to the success of the foundation. Her determined dedication and passion for her work means she has always gone above and beyond the call of duty.

All who have spent any time whatsoever with Bonnie know that she is caring and devoted - the ideal supporter for our community's health care initiatives. Due to her positive and outgoing disposition, she is quite well-known by our donors and supporters and widely admired in the community overall.

While Bonnie's departure is a huge loss for the foundation, we wish her every happiness in very well-deserved retirement.

Please stop by to wish her well

before her last day at the end of June.



Bonnie Veitch
Executive Assistant, SMHF

Stories to inspire

Colin Miller, Executive Director, South Muskoka Hospital Foundation

Meeting Tom Young and listening to his inspirational story reminds me of how important this hospital is to our community. Illness often pushes us to our limits. It's certainly not easy for people to come forward and share their personal health issues and experiences. Tom has a lot of courage - exemplified in his battle with cancer as well as in his willingness to come forward publicly with his story.



Two other patients recently shared their stories with me. One person told me that while at the cottage, he fell from a ladder, landed on the rocks and shattered his pelvis. The other - a couple - were in a head-on collision on the highway. He was stabilized and airlifted to a trauma centre while she was hospitalized here, and spent several weeks in recovery. For all three, this was their first experience at our hospital and they had a lot of praise for the caring attitude and professionalism of our staff.

hospital. Each story takes on an expanding ripple of influence as more people learn about the important role the hospital plays in everyone's lives.

“It is often a personal experience that helps people to realize the vital role the hospital plays.”

We deeply appreciate your donation, and I am now asking for you to consider giving us your story. I can tell you with certainty that your words will serve to inspire others. If you'd like to share yours, please contact me.

It is often a personal experience that helps people to realize the vital role the hospital plays. They may decide to support us through a gift, which we wholeheartedly appreciate. Almost all of the hospital's equipment comes from private donations. In fact, the very same equipment that Dr. Gupta used on Tom Young to save his life was available only through the generosity of this community.

The other gift you can give is your story. I've witnessed time and again how those stories inspire others to support the hospital. Each story takes on an expanding ripple of influence as more people learn about the important role the hospital plays in everyone's lives.

We deeply appreciate your donation, and I am now asking for you to consider giving us your story. I can tell you with certainty that your words will serve to inspire others. If you'd like to share yours, please contact me.

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MAHC is on Facebook!



Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare is officially on Facebook! You too can stay up-to-date with happenings at the hospitals by following MAHC's Facebook page. Find us by searching @MuskokaAlgonquinHealthcare and "like" and "follow" the page. Join the conversation!



South Muskoka Hospital Foundation

Special Fundraising Events



Rotary Club of Bracebridge-Muskoka Lakes members Sandra Winspear and Valda Hoar present Colin Miller of the South Muskoka Hospital Foundation with a cheque for \$7,000 toward their pledge commitment of \$35,000 for the Get Better campaign.



Members of the **Auxiliary to South Muskoka Memorial Hospital** present \$50,000 to Colin Miller of the SMH Foundation. This amount is part of their pledge commitment of \$250,000 for the new mammography machine. From left, Colin Miller, Susan Westover, Pat Davidson, Jan Davidson, Dulcie Biscaro, Beth Quinton, Cathy Smith, Nancy Baker.



Photo by Mary Beth Hartill, courtesy of Metroland North Media
Helen Murphy (at left) of **Castle Peak Retirement Residence** presents a \$1,000 cheque to Muskoka Algonquin Health-care board chair Evelyn Brown. Brown accepted the cheque on behalf of the South Muskoka Hospital Foundation. This gift was part of a second round of donations from the proceeds of 'At Your Age' book sales.

Upcoming fundraisers for South Muskoka Hospital Foundation

Rock Solid Wrestling Tournament, Saturday, May 27 featuring the Million Dollar Man: Ted Dibiase. Belltime: 7 p.m. at the Bracebridge Memorial Arena, 169 James Street. Tickets available on-line at rocksolidwrestling.ca and at various Bracebridge locations.

Dave Ellis Pro Am Golf Tournament
Monday, June 5 at Muskoka Lakes Golf & Country Club

South Muskoka Hospital Foundation Golf Classic, Wednesday, June 14 at Windermere Golf & Country Club. Contact Bonnie Veitch at 705.645.4404 x3193 if you'd like to join us.

Freed Charity Golf Classic - 8th Annual
Tuesday, July 4 at Muskoka Bay Golf Course

Ensuring our community's health care future

Spring 2017

South Muskoka Hospital Foundation

75 Ann Street, Bracebridge ON P1L 2E4

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Province _____ Postal Code _____

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My (our) cheque is enclosed in the amount of:

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All donations will be acknowledged and appropriately receipted.
Registered Charitable No. 11915 7998 RR0001



A Message from Natalie Bubela

Chief Executive Officer

Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare

“...for many years to come, the two existing hospital sites in Muskoka will be here for you.”

The importance of your donations today

There is a lot of talk in Muskoka about the future of health care in our area. Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare’s planning work around the future of hospital care continues, and now another group called the Muskoka and Area Health System Transformation (MAHST) is looking more broadly at how health care is provided across the entire region, not just in the hospital.

All of this planning is important

to having a defined road map for the future. At MAHC, we expect the work of MAHST will help to shape the future plans for acute care and the hospitals. But we also know that this planning work has left our residents, both permanent and seasonal, with a certain amount of uncertainty about the future. The work that is being done now is part of a long-range planning exercise that contemplates the region’s future health care needs. Please rest assured that for many years to come, the two existing hospital sites in Muskoka will be here for you, providing the high-quality care for which we are well-known.

It is critical that we continue to invest today to maintain the high level of patient care we expect and deserve. South Muskoka Memorial Hospital will continue to need your generous support and we need this support now more than ever. Millions of dollars are required annually to replace aging equipment and infrastructure, to keep pace with technology, and to ensure that our patients get the very best care. I trust the people of Muskoka who depend on the services of South Muskoka Memorial Hospital can continue to count on your support.



Evelyn Brown on funding and the future *continued from front cover...*

“I expect MAHST will influence the future of hospital care,” says Brown, “because MAHST’s goal is to have health care services working more closely together in the community by 2022, even perhaps with one governance structure.”

A longer term solution is needed for MAHC’s financial challenges

and Brown is optimistic MAHST and the province will bring a resolution. “The government is very interested in seeing what happens with MAHST,” Brown says, as it is a first-of-its-kind initiative. “But the present is equally important as the future, and we need donors to continue their commitment to quality health care in Muskoka today.

While planning for the future continues, we have to continually invest in patient care today to carry us into that future. The need for vital medical equipment is constant and requires millions on an annual basis just to keep pace with technology. The Board is extremely grateful for the generosity of this community.”

South Muskoka Hospital Foundation Mission Statement

To provide charitable financial support to South Muskoka Memorial Hospital Site for capital projects, equipment and new technology as well as staff education to enhance patient care.

To support the improvement of health care in South Muskoka for permanent and seasonal residents.

Check out our website at
www.healthmuskoka.ca

Our Privacy Statement

South Muskoka Hospital Foundation appreciates your generous financial support. We recognize your right to privacy and we pledge to protect it. The information you have provided to us will be used to process your donation(s) and to provide you with acknowledgement and an appropriate receipt.

From time to time, we may use your contact information to keep you informed of other activities, events and/or fundraising opportunities in support of the Foundation.

We are also pleased to send you our biannual newsletter.

The South Muskoka Hospital Foundation does not trade or sell donor lists. If at anytime you do not wish to be listed in our recognition programs or to receive our newsletter, please contact us at (705) 645-4404 ext 3193 or smh.foundation@mahc.ca.

For more information about your privacy, please visit our website at www.healthmuskoka.ca and click on 'About Us' then 'Accountable To You.'


South Muskoka Hospital Foundation
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www.healthmuskoka.ca