



## When our daughter needed everything, our hospital was ready.

A story of care, healing, and the power of community support.

Last November, my husband and I faced every parent's worst fear when our daughter Paulina was rushed to the South Muskoka Hospital, barely responsive.

Paulina had collapsed, she couldn't keep her eyes open and was struggling to speak. She was brought to the hospital extremely weak after battling a serious bacterial infection and the devastating effects of a long battle with anorexia. I remember her whispering, "Mom, I am so sorry."

We held her hand, it was terrifying to see her in such a state. She was so frail, and we all feared for her future. We could see the fear in her too.

## *We put our trust in the team at the South Muskoka Hospital.*

Now, 4 months later, we're writing this letter to share an incredible story of care, healing and hope. Where do we begin? How do we explain how we witnessed an entire coordinated team - doctors, nurses, dietitians, kitchen staff, environmental services, spiritual care, volunteers, unit aids, lab technicians, and social workers – all come together to help our daughter heal?

It was a team that, in the end, felt like an extended family to us.

The first two weeks were beyond difficult. Paulina shut down. For five days, she was unconscious. To us, there was very little sign of life. Her body was too weak to fight the infection she had contracted, and she needed very strong doses of antibiotics and constant monitoring in the ICU. At the same time, her body needed to be nourished to be able to fight.

Slowly, taking it one day at a time, the South Muskoka Hospital team established a protocol. The dietitian caring for her had just finished a course in eating disorders, and the way she approached Paulina's care was exactly what she needed. Everything had to be done carefully and meticulously. Feeding had to be done slowly, or it would put her body into shock. With the bacterial infection she was fighting, she needed to see a specialist three times, which ended up requiring surgery. All three times, the South Muskoka Hospital team brilliantly coordinated all the transfers and appointments.

The hospital staff allowed us to participate in her recovery too. We felt like we were part of the team, part of an incredible group of people looking after her. Even our two little Maltese dogs, Maple and Willow, were able to visit her many times.

During her two and a half months at the South Muskoka Hospital, we can say that everyone was an essential part of her recovery. The care was above and beyond anything we had experienced before. Beyond their medical skills, the patience, acceptance, and compassion given to our daughter gave us all hope.

## *We feel lucky this happened here in Bracebridge.*

Paulina is now back home with a new lease on life. She continues to have regular visits with the dietician at the South Muskoka Hospital.

It wasn't until recently that we learned that **when someone you love needs care at the hospital, community donations are what ensure the hospital team is ready.** Essential medical equipment, like all the monitors used with Paulina, the lab tools to monitor her blood, the bed she stayed in for 2.5 months; it was all funded by donors. Even staff education is supported by community giving.



*"Our Paulina wouldn't be here today without you."*

So now we turn to our community: **Will you help us say thank you to the incredible team at the South Muskoka Hospital? Will you support patient care and help ensure our hospital is equipped and ready to support the next family in need?**

Quality care needs the right people, with the right tools, in the right space, and **100% of hospital equipment is funded from donations.** They can't do it without you, and our Paulina wouldn't be here today without you. Please consider showing your support today.

With love, gratitude, and deep appreciation.

**Patty Berger**  
Bracebridge

P.S. Please show your support today to ensure other families have access to the same great care we did.

**DONATE**

While the government funds the basic operating costs of a hospital, **community donations purchase virtually every piece of equipment in the hospital.**



South Muskoka  
Hospital foundation

Better Healthcare Today,  
Tomorrow, Together

