

LIVING WELL

Stories of How Your Support Changes and Saves Lives



“To have Cancer Coaching available in my own backyard is invaluable. It’s helped round out my healthcare team. I’ll be forever grateful to the donors who made it possible.”

Learning To Strive And Thrive In The New Reality, Thanks To You

How your support is playing an important role in Sherry's cancer journey.

One of the biggest emotions Sherry Wee Baker is experiencing these days is gratitude. Much of that gratitude is for thoughtful supporters like you.

As Sherry says, “There aren’t enough words to thank everyone who supports the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation. Thanks to your generosity, we have world-class research, clinical trials and Cancer Coaching happening right here.

Patients like me have a reason to hope and stay positive, because you care.”

Sherry's story began on March 9, 2019 in an isolated room in the hospital's Emergency Department. That's where she had the most terrifying conversation of her life.

Read more of Sherry's story on page 2

Learning To Strive And Thrive In The New Reality, Thanks To You

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"The doctor came in and told me I had breast cancer and it had metastasized to the bones and liver," recalls Sherry. "I was completely shocked. I knew something was wrong but I never expected it to be so bad."

Medically, things happened very quickly after Sherry's diagnosis. She received radiation therapy, started oral chemotherapy and was scheduled for surgery to remove her ovaries. Emotionally, Sherry found her mind reeling with difficult questions and fears.

"I contacted a friend who told me about the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation's Cancer Coaching program," says Sherry. "It was a Godsend. The program helped me learn how to manage and live with cancer and the side effects of the medication. It also helped me prepare for my surgery and kept me grounded."

Sherry talked through some major issues with her Cancer Coach, Bonney, and found her expertise invaluable. "Talking to Bonney had a calming effect on me. She's approachable and a great listener and resource. I felt supported outside of my family and friends," Sherry explains.

Today, Sherry's biggest concerns are to continue to remain as mentally and physically healthy as possible, through the coronavirus pandemic and beyond. Figuring out next steps in her treatments are an ongoing concern, especially for the ones that have been put on hold.

"To deal with my stress, my Coach has provided me with some great resources, and we were able to move a scheduled



Sherry with her husband Mark (right) and sons (from left) Griffin and Owen.

face-to-face appointment online using the NexJ virtual platform," Sherry says. "People living with cancer face daily challenges, and COVID-19 is another bump in the road. For me, it's important to focus on what I have control over, and believe in the medical system and support I have."

Sherry continues to be grateful to everyone involved in her care, including her Cancer Coach and, of course, caring supporters like you. In fact, Cancer Coaching means so much to Sherry, she wants to ensure other cancer patients in the Ottawa region and their families continue to have access to the program.

For her 50th birthday last year, Sherry hosted a party at a local restaurant to raise funds for the Cancer Foundation. It was

also an opportunity to thank everyone for their enduring support. She hired a band, set up a silent auction and invited family and friends to attend or make a donation online. The event raised over \$30,000 for Cancer Coaching, cancer research and local clinical trials.

"There are so many people affected by cancer and I want them to know about these great resources, especially now when things may be harder for them during the pandemic," Sherry says. "We are very fortunate to have this continued support available to us with the commitment from the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation during these unprecedented times. Without the generosity and support from donors like you this would not be possible, thank you."



Your Support is Changing the Way Doctors Treat Brain Cancer

A world-leading surgical technique is now being used in Ottawa, thanks to you!

Thanks to you, one of Ottawa's top surgeons, Dr. John Sinclair, now has consistent funding for the drug 5-Aminolevulinic Acid (5-ALA). When taken before Fluorescence Guided Surgery (FGS), 5-ALA binds to brain cancer cells, and illuminates them under the light of a specialized microscope.

The bright pink fluorescence of the cancer cells allows Dr. Sinclair to remove more of a patient's brain tumour safely. It's incredibly precise and doctors are seeing longer periods between diagnosis and cancer recurrence in brain cancer patients.

It also makes follow-up treatments, like chemotherapy and radiation, more effective. Patients are living longer overall. And for those with recurrent tumours, the illumination helps to differentiate between new cancer cells and cells that have already been treated with radiation.



Your support allows Dr. John Sinclair, Neurosurgeon at The Ottawa Hospital, to use the 5-ALA drug that illuminates a brain tumour during Fluorescence Guided Surgery.

Total number of local patients treated with 5-ALA and FGS: 31

The combined use of FGS and 5-ALA is also having a

big impact on local research projects. Scientists can now examine a patient's MRI and pathology results to compare them with what surgeons are seeing as they operate. This helps researchers develop and optimize targeted treatment plans for patients with highly malignant brain tumours.

The ongoing benefits of this surgical approach have been

seen in other countries for many years. Now YOU have made it possible right here in our community. With more and more patients experiencing the incredible results of FGS, Dr. Sinclair hopes the 5-ALA drug will one day be funded by the province. **Thank you for making it possible for local patients to receive such life-changing care!**



Thank You For Your Incredible Generosity In These Difficult Times

Your impact on cancer patients and their families during the coronavirus pandemic.

"Each time someone stands up for an ideal or acts to improve the lot of others... he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope."

~ Robert Kennedy

You are incredible! In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, you stepped forward and gave a gift to help a cancer patient and their family in our community. With it, you also gave hope for new beginnings and stronger connections to one another.

In mid-March, the Maplesoft-GumDocs Centre for Cancer Survivorship had to close its doors; both for the safety of our staff, and our Cancer Coaching clients. But, thanks to you, anyone who needed the help of a Cancer Coach, got it from the comfort and safety of their own home through the online NexJ virtual platform. That's incredibly important for those with compromised immune systems.

You also gave the ability to connect families to 25 new resources related to COVID-19, stress, anxiety and resilience through our virtual health library. These issues are top of mind for many families right now, and are needed more than ever.

As we move forward, we know we will have to rise to the challenge of caring for more families than ever before. Together, we can provide them with the essentials they need, and encourage them to focus on what matters most – healing mind, body and spirit.

Thank you so much for your generosity toward cancer patients and their families. In these uncertain times, the one thing we are certain of is that cancer doesn't wait. Thank you for not waiting to give.

Sincerely,

Paula Muldoon
VP of Development and Community Engagement



This summer, when you buy a cup of virtual lemonade, you help Lemonaders like Manny, take a stand against cancer.

When Life Gives You Lemons, Make Lemonade

Thanks to your support, the Cardel Lemonade Standemonium has raised nearly \$600,000 for cancer care over the last six years. That's a lot of lemonade!

Your generous support of the kids, who host a Cardel Lemonade Stand each June, means every nickel, quarter and loonie raised goes directly to those touched by cancer. Because of you, cancer patients in our community are able to get help by meeting with a Cancer Coach, and their children are able to express their emotions through art and conversation in the CLIMB™ program.

This summer, we are taking it virtual. When you buy a virtual cup of lemonade, or host a virtual stand with your family, you are making sure local cancer care remains a priority. Take a stand and put the squeeze on cancer! For more information, or to register your virtual lemonade stand, visit www.itakeastand.ca, call 613-247-1920 x 243 or email hnyenkamp@ottawacancer.ca.