



RURAL HEALTH MATTERS...

The Vulcan County Health & Wellness Foundation 2024 Pledge Drive





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As the holiday season approaches, we want to take this opportunity to connect with you and share all that has been accomplished. We also want to express our profound appreciation for your trust in us to act on your behalf. Your trust is not just a cornerstone, but the very foundation of our work, and we are deeply grateful. We are committed to the well-being of our community, and we continue to work tirelessly towards that reality alongside you, your family, friends, and neighbours. We have achieved significant milestones in the past year with your generous and continued support. Your contributions have made several funding highlights possible, each of which has profoundly impacted our community. Your support has been instrumental in these achievements, and we remain deeply appreciative for your commitment to our collective vision.

Expansion of Laboratory Services in the Vulcan Community Health Centre

- The impetus for the expansion project was to move the original clinical footprint to the expansion of the Vulcan Community Health Centre. This would free up space to increase the capacity of laboratory services to meet AHS accreditation requirements, and to add more advanced testing equipment. This renovation will also see the health records area converted into a permanent IV-Clinic. We have assurance from AHS that this laboratory and clinical renovation will proceed in Spring 2025.
- We know it has been a long road to get here, but thanks to your commitment to the Wellness expansion vision, the end date of the remaining upgrades is in view. Your contribution has paved the way for AHS to finally fulfill its commitment to the expansion project and is a testament to the power of the community, and we hope it makes you feel proud and appreciated for

your part in this success. Your support has led to these improvements, and we are excited about the journey ahead.

Since November of 2023

- Beginning this fall, we have committed \$ 12,000.00 per year for the next four years to move forward with our partnership with Dr. Martin Ferguson Pell, Professor at the University of Alberta Rehabilitation and Robotics Lab and Dr. Rebecca Purc-Stephenson, Professor of Psychology at the University of Alberta. The project will support the agricultural workforce by improving access to physical and mental health services. We are eagerly looking forward to the community engagement sessions that will be scheduled in the upcoming months, and we encourage you to participate. Your voice will be crucial in determining the starting point for this program, and only with your input will this program best serve our community.
- You can also access the community engagement survey from the home page of our website: <https://www.vchwfoundation.com/>, and we encourage each of you to share your voice through this process. This project is closing in on the target of seeing individuals at the Vulcan Community Health Centre by the end of December 2024.

Bursaries for Healthcare Professionals, supporting Healthcare Workers, and First Responders

- This year, your support has enabled us to provide two bursaries to practicum students, now offering free clinical mental health support to Vulcan County through Vulcan FCSS. By partnering with Vulcan FCSS, we have significantly expanded the mental health support available in our community. Your





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support, specifically your contributions to our bursary funding, has directly contributed to this initiative, making a tangible difference in the mental health support available in our community.

- We have also funded three healthcare aides at Vulcan Extencare to support them in securing their dreams of healthcare aide certification so they can best serve our most vulnerable elders in their care. Your support has directly contributed to this initiative, making a significant difference in the lives of these healthcare workers and the quality of care they can provide.

Supporting our Vulcan Community Health Centre Staff

- On February 29, 2024, the Vulcan County Health and Wellness Foundation hosted a dinner celebrating the individuals working in Vulcan Community Health Center and the Vulcan Medical Clinic. The evening was a time to thank the staff for their dedication and service to health and wellness within Vulcan County. AHS Site Management awarded extended services awards, highlighting those in attendance who had worked in healthcare for over five years and up to 40+ years of service.
- This recognition is a testament to the dedication and commitment of our healthcare professionals, and we are grateful to have such experienced individuals serving our community. Your support has allowed us to host this event and show appreciation to these dedicated and essential individuals.

Technological Investments for our Emergency Department

- Thanks to your generous support, in 2023 our fundraising efforts, including our Pledge Drive and 24-hour Golf Challenge, were a resounding success. As a

result, these events have allowed us to make significant strides in improving healthcare in Vulcan County. For example, funds raised by these two events allowed us to purchase a portable ultrasound machine for the VCHC's Emergency Department. This equipment is a game-changer. It enables our physicians to conduct cardiac exams and identify heart conditions, eliminating the need to send patients elsewhere for these diagnostics. The improved image quality and preset variety make it a time-saving tool, especially in emergencies.

Two Digital Infant Thermometers for Public Health

- The impact on quality of care is when a newborn baby may show subtle signs of illness and quickly become sick. A precise temperature reading on a newborn is crucial in deciding the next care steps. This will help the family receive timely and appropriate referrals and care. Thanks to your support, two of these units serve the community through Public Health.

Post Covid Program

- It began with Radiology and Associate Inc. arriving in 2022. This medical imaging company initially could only undertake outpatient ultrasounds. However, since last spring, they have started doing inpatient ultrasounds. This service expansion in our rural area is rooted deep in the Expansion Project's vision.
- The Foundation is strategically planning to bring programming into the VCHC's designated Wellness Spaces. We are excited about the potential of these programs and look forward to sharing more details with you soon.





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Investing in Advanced Training Simulation Equipment

- This past year, our staff has utilized advanced training simulation equipment on multiple occasions. For example, U of C medical students came to Vulcan to learn firsthand the advantages of establishing their medical practices at a rural facility. A second example was Let's Go Rural. This was a one-day high school event where students had the opportunity to learn about healthcare professions. In both events, the students were able to use the advanced training simulation equipment – equipment funded by the community.

We are a Collaborative Partner

- We continue to work with the ACT4Health Coalition, which brought forward the Community Link Worker. To learn more about this initiative, visit our website and click Act4Health.
- We have been founding members of the Vulcan Regional Response to Elder Abuse Council, which raises awareness about Elder Abuse and its forms and provides interventions and support to those experiencing it.
- This past winter, we were excited to represent the VCHW Foundation at the newly formed Friends of Vulcan Emergency Services Society table. This organization's vision is to support and promote the physical and mental well-being of Vulcan County first responders so they can fulfill their mission of serving the residents of Vulcan County with strength, honour, and dignity.
- We continue to work towards providing space to accommodate Wellspring, which provides cancer

support programs to those whose lives have been impacted by cancer. We hope to be offering their catalogue of programs in 2025.

- We have and will continue supporting collective community efforts with other organizations like Vulcan FCSS and the Vulcan Mental Wellness Support Committee to keep the conversation around rural mental health at the forefront of our minds by collaborating on items highlighting locally accessible wellness services. We additionally support our site's mental health Clinician with upcoming support groups that will run in the Wellness Space at the Vulcan Community Health Centre beginning this fall.
- During the summer, we have had conversations with the Prostate Cancer Centre to determine how to support those facing this diagnosis. We are eager to explore the potential for accessing virtual mental wellness programming for men dealing with prostate cancer as well as their partner.
- Most recently, we have partnered with the Vulcan Elks and the Alberta Elks Foundation. This passionate community service club and its Foundation have provided the funds needed to purchase a Pediatric Crash Cart for the Emergency department. We are so grateful to the Vulcan Elks for this support and look forward to partnering with them again soon.

Looking to the Future

- As we look to the future, we see opportunities to enhance the Palliative Care Room in the Vulcan Community Health Centre. We will continue to support the medical team in the health centre's Emergency Department through the purchase of state-of-the-art technology for the ER.





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- In collaboration with our local FCSS agency, Wellspring Alberta – Cancer Support Alberta, Prostate Cancer Centre – Calgary, and many other wellness providers, you will see more wellness programs offered onsite as well as virtually.

In Conclusion

- The Vulcan County Health and Wellness Foundation remains steadfast in its commitment to ensuring that every citizen of Vulcan County has access to the highest-quality healthcare available. We are dedicated to this mission and will work tirelessly to make it a reality.
- Your support is a testament to the strength of our community and the importance of our shared goal and is not just appreciated; it is integral to our success.
- Your time and donations are the lifeblood of our organization.
- We are deeply grateful for your past support, which has significantly improved our ability to provide quality healthcare to the residents of Vulcan County and attract and retain physicians, nurses, and other medical professionals.
- The future of healthcare in Vulcan County is in your hands, and we would be grateful if you would continue to be a part of our vision/mission.

From the Vulcan County Health and Wellness Foundation family to yours, we wish you a wonderful holiday season and hope for a healthy, happy, and prosperous 2025!

Your Vulcan County Health and Wellness Foundation Family

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Louise Markert, Treasurer
Darian Ashbacher, Secretary
Glen Hutton, Executive Member at Large

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AHS Representative

Paulette Wagenvoort RN, Manager Acute and Long-term Care, Vulcan Community Health Centre

Vulcan County Health and Wellness Foundation's Executive Director

Gail Wark



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