

BC WOMEN'S

HEALTH FOUNDATION

IMPACT REPORT
APR 2023 - MAR 2024

**THE POWER
OF COMMUNITY**
A LOOK BACK
AT THE YEAR'S
FUNDING
HIGHLIGHTS

**ELIMINATING
CERVICAL
CANCER**

Dr. Gina Ogilvie
leads groundbreaking
research

**BRIGHT
BEGINNINGS**

Babies thrive in
BC Women's NICU



THANK YOU FOR CHAMPIONING WOMEN'S AND NEWBORN HEALTH

I learned early in my career working in healthcare that the power of change is only possible when we work together to make it happen. Looking at the incredible accomplishments of the past year, I'm proud of our community of champions, making life-changing care possible for women and newborns. A special thanks to Board Chair Jennifer Randall Nelson for her unwavering support these past two years, and a huge welcome to our incoming Board Chair Karen Kerr.

We're excited to continue to support the exceptional care provided by BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre (BCWH) and the transformative initiatives of the Women's Health Research Institute (WHRI). With your continued support, next year holds even more promise: from Women's Health Research Month, to our new Midlife program, to the launch of the Women's Mental Health Stabilization Unit and Program, we're excited about more *Good Things To Come!*



Cally Wesson

Cally Wesson
President + CEO
BC Women's Health Foundation

A LOOK BACK AT THE YEAR'S FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS

The impact of your donations has culminated in many powerful advancements in women's and newborn health across BC.

APR

Avalon Fetal Monitors

These crucial monitors measure vital signs of moms and babies during labour and delivery to catch any potentially life-threatening conditions as quickly as possible.

MAY

Mother's Day Campaign

Community Partners, including Save-On-Foods with their Bunches of Love campaign, rallied together to raise over \$250,000 for maternal health and research.

Shoppers Drug Mart® Run for Women

The annual Vancouver run helps fund mental health initiatives offered through programs and clinics at BCWH, including the Reproductive Mental Health Program, Chronic Complex Diseases Program, Centre for Pelvic Pain + Endometriosis, Early Pregnancy Assessment Clinic and Recurrent Pregnancy Loss Clinic and CARE Program.



JUN

Affirm Breast Biopsy System

This system enables quick 2D or 3D breast biopsies using the same imaging equipment as that used for mammography exams.

JUL

Matching Campaign for Fellowship in Family Planning

Our community raised funds to support the first and only fellowship in Canada to provide comprehensive postgraduate training in complex contraception and advanced abortion clinical care.

AUG

Skydiving for Women's Health Research

Eighty-year-old Betty John went skydiving to raise funds to support cutting-edge long-COVID research at BCWH.



SEP

Brevera Breast Biopsy System

World-class and leading-edge, this system revolutionizes the entire breast biopsy process for a more comfortable and faster experience. Thank you to CIBC and the Diamond Foundation for their support in bringing this system to BCWH.

OCT

Glow Gala Presented by RBC

The annual Glow Gala raised over \$1.1 million for women's and newborn health! Dr. Deborah Money and the Lalji Family were also recognized at the event as Women's Health Champions.



Butterfly Run

The 5th annual Butterfly Run Vancouver raised \$35,000 to help fund various initiatives at BCWH to support families in BC who experience infertility, pregnancy loss and infant loss.

JAN

Dr. Deborah Money Receives Order of Canada

Dr. Money, Inaugural Executive Director of WHRI, was recognized for her contributions to women's health, notably in the field of reproductive infectious diseases, as a researcher, clinician, teacher and mentor.



Cervical Cancer Self-Screening

Self-screening for cervical cancer is now accessible in BC. Read more on page 6.



NOV

Ventilators for BC Women's NICU

Ventilators deliver life-saving breathing support to the most vulnerable babies. BC Women's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) received eight much-needed new ventilators. Read baby Blakely's story on page 5.



DEC

Catalyst Grant Recipients Announced

The only grants of their kind in BC, seven Catalyst Grants were awarded to kick-start some of our province's most cutting-edge research on women's and newborn health.

FEB

\$310K Raised for Canada's First ROTEM

BCWH will be the first Canadian hospital with a ROTEM device used in the Labour and Delivery Department, transforming care by reducing complications from high-risk births and postpartum hemorrhage.

Portable Ultrasounds for BC Women's NICU

Enabling critical decisions at the point of care, ultrasounds are also used for line insertion or placement – a game-changer when caring for the tiniest babies.

Universal Free Contraception Announced

BCWH and WHRI leadership guided provincial and federal policies to introduce universal contraception for all Canadians. This all began with a transformational study that BCWHF and donors supported.

MAR

Professorship of Midlife + Mature Women's Health

Thanks to the generosity of our donors who funded the first phase of this groundbreaking program, the UBC professorship job posting was announced on International Women's Day, March 8.

Good Things To Come

Women's Health Research Month launched at the 23rd annual Illuminations Luncheon presented by RBC Wealth Management. Throughout the month, donors and community partners came together and raised over \$542,000 to empower women's health research.



Our sincere gratitude to all those who supported these important initiatives. Read on for more of the year's great moments and their impact.

THIS WORK IS MADE POSSIBLE THANKS TO THE LEADERSHIP OF OUR PARTNERS



BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre (BCWH) is the only women's hospital in British Columbia, serving approximately 80,000 patients annually through over 60 specialized clinics and programs devoted to the health of women and newborns. It is a national leader

in educating doctors, nurses and allied health professionals in all aspects of women's and newborn health, the provincial centre for the highest risk maternity and neonatal care, and home to BC Women's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), the largest quaternary NICU in Canada.



The Women's Health Research Institute (WHRI) is the only one of its kind in British Columbia, with over 600 researchers dedicated to improving women's and newborn health through

research. The WHRI's mission to create new evidence-based solutions that inform and transform health and healthcare is led through knowledge experts who enable real-world impact. The WHRI members are comprised of researchers, trainees, policy makers, clinicians and other research partners, including community partners.

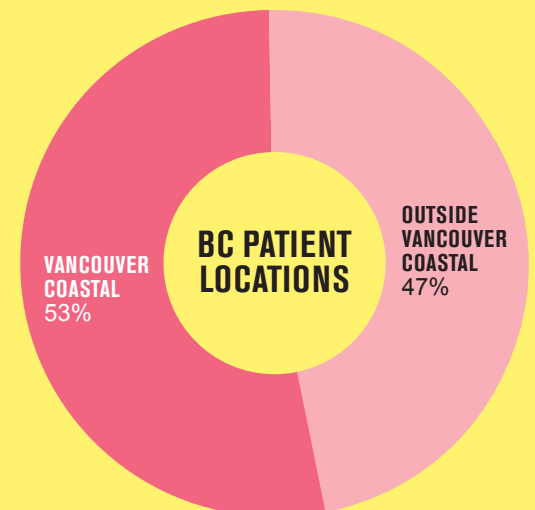
2023 IMPACT OVERVIEW

86,406
TOTAL VISITS

5,921
BIRTHS

4,043
GYNAECOLOGICAL
SURGICAL CASES

2,718
OBSTETRIC
SURGICAL CASES





BABIES THRIVE IN BC WOMEN'S NICU

Babies who are born too early or with complex medical conditions rely on the only quaternary neonatal intensive care unit in the province.

When Kelly Laing was 30 weeks pregnant, doctors at BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre discovered her baby likely had esophageal atresia, a disorder in which a baby's esophagus, the pathway from the mouth to the stomach, does not properly form during pregnancy. Kelly delivered baby Blakely at 35 weeks, and doctors confirmed Blakely had long-gap esophageal atresia, where the esophagus is disconnected from the stomach by a relatively long distance. This meant baby Blakely would need to spend an extended period in the BC Women's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), growing stronger before the gap could be repaired surgically.

The next four months were exhausting and overwhelming for Kelly and her husband, Mike, but the staff in the BC Women's NICU "were so patient with us and would answer our questions clearly so it all made sense to us. Even when they had to give us difficult news, they shared information calmly and patiently with a smile," said Kelly. Like all BC Women's NICU parents, Kelly and Mike were involved in the daily rounds with the care team and at the forefront of decision making for their baby.

Blakely's surgery was complicated, but many doctors and specialists were there throughout to ensure she was in the best hands possible. "She was a tiny baby in a little bed with a respirator tube, a big ventilator, a chest tube attached to another machine, a big bank of IVs. For every piece of equipment, there was a team of people dedicated to Blakely's care," explained Kelly.

Today, the delightful toddler is growing and thriving, thanks to the amazing care and sophisticated technology that were there for her when she was born. "We want to say a huge thank you," said Kelly. "This truly was lifesaving, and none of it would have been possible without BC Women's and all those who support the NICU program."

"As scary as it was, it gave us such comfort knowing that we had the very best care for Blakely."

**KELLY LAING
BLAKELY'S MOM**

"For every piece of equipment, there was a team of people dedicated to Blakely's care."





SELF-SCREENING FOR CERVICAL CANCER NOW ACCESSIBLE IN BC

If caught early, cervical cancer is one of the most preventable forms of cancer. While Pap tests have dramatically reduced cervical cancer deaths for many years, they are no longer the most effective tool for cervical cancer prevention. Screening for cancer-causing types of the human papillomavirus (HPV) – the main cause of cervical cancer – offers an innovative and effective approach to moving us closer to eliminating cervical cancer in BC.

BC has been a leader in cervical cancer research for decades. **The journey began with a commitment from BC Women’s Hospital + Health Centre in 2005**, to provide seed funding to support Dr. Ogilvie’s work involving self-screening for cervical cancer. This was followed by a long-term commitment to research, with landmark large clinical trials for HPV screening and pilot programs involving self-screening. Years of dedication and innovation led to BC becoming the first province in Canada to offer free provincewide cervix self-screening kits as part of the provincial transition to HPV primary screening. Compared to Pap screening, which identifies changes to the cells of the cervix after they have occurred, HPV

“When I first saw the ad on social media for the cervix self-screening pilot, I thought I’d give it a try. I’m so glad I did. I found out I had a high-risk type of HPV and ended up needing a procedure to remove the cancerous tissue from my cervix. We caught it early and I’m now cancer-free. I’m grateful this opportunity was there for me. I am thrilled too that at-home self-screening is now being made available to anyone in BC who needs it.”

**CHRISTINA PRICE
PILOT STUDY PARTICIPANT
PORT ALBERNI, BC**

testing detects the presence of HPV and identifies those at risk of having cervical precancer or cancer earlier and better than the Pap test does. HPV testing can be done by either a provider or collected by the person undergoing screening themselves. This empowers the individual and increases accessibility and reach of cervical screening. This is especially important for those who have not historically accessed screening with the Pap test due to various barriers. This rollout marks a major step in the fight to eliminate cervical cancer in British Columbia.

“With the distribution of these kits, we’re taking the next major leap forward to reducing

the incidence of cervical cancer, and ultimately eliminating it altogether,” said Dr. Gina Ogilvie, Associate Director of the Women’s Health Research Institute. Dr. Ogilvie is a globally recognized leader in the field of women’s reproductive and sexual health, with a particular expertise in cervical cancer prevention.

“The transition to HPV testing as a primary screening for cervical cancer is supported by rigorous evidence,” said Dr. Ogilvie. “Randomized trials, including a major trial led here in BC with over 20,000 women showed HPV-based screening is more effective at identifying those with precancerous lesions compared to conventional cytology or pap smears.”

“I’m delighted about the rollout of the self-screening program provincewide,” said Dr. Ogilvie. “It’s a huge step forward and especially important for those most vulnerable. I’m excited that British Columbia is at the forefront of research and initiatives to eradicate cervical cancer in the next few years.”

The transition to HPV primary screening in BC is a significant part of BC’s 10-Year Cancer Care Action Plan. Research and innovation have made this advancement in women’s health possible – and with further investment in women’s health research, we have the potential to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer in BC.



BCWHF’s community of donors, including TD Bank and Scotiabank, united to support pilot projects around BC, which included rural communities. Findings from these projects contributed to the provincial launch of HPV primary screening.



THE LASTING IMPACT OF LEGACY GIVING

Discover what inspired Barb Hestrin to leave a lasting legacy through BCWHF, highlighting her dedication and the impact of her giving.

Barb Hestrin spent her career, both before and during her tenure at BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre (BCWH) and BC Women's Health Foundation (BCWHF), demonstrating an unwavering commitment to women's and newborn health. Beginning her career in newborn special care in Calgary, she made her way to Vancouver in 1992 to work in the newly formed Women's Health Centre. After working in various departments as a nurse clinician and later as a senior administrative officer, when she retired, Barb continued supporting the hospital through fundraising with the Auxiliary. In 2008, she was asked to join the Board of BCWHF.

Joining the hospital in those early years gave Barb the unique opportunity to be part of groundbreaking projects. "The programs were innovative and one of a kind in the country. I put into practice my passion for women's health," explained Barb.

After her remarkable career, Barb knew she wanted to continue to find ways to give back, and has decided to do this through a legacy gift. "**Leaving a legacy gift to BC Women's Health Foundation is a way to personally express my gratitude for having the opportunity to be involved with the hospital,**" said Barb. "It just seemed logical to leave a gift to an organization that gave so much to me."

Leaving a legacy gift to BCWHF creates a lasting impact for generations to come by ensuring patients will continue to receive the highest quality healthcare. It also helps secure BCWH's place as the centre of medical excellence for maternal and infant care and women's health research.

LEARN MORE ABOUT LEGACY GIVING AT
[BCWOMENSFUNDATION.ORG/LEGACY](https://bcwomensfoundation.org/legacy)

PAN-PROVINCIAL CARE PROVIDES MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS FOR NEW MOMS

BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre (BCWH), the largest maternity care centre in Western Canada, has more than 60 programs dedicated to women's and newborn health. One key initiative is the Reproductive Mental Health Program (RMH Program), a centre of excellence dedicated to the treatment of women who are dealing with mental health challenges during pregnancy and up to a year after giving birth. This program is far-reaching, acting as a provincial source for best-practice guidelines, expanding access to care and educating healthcare providers across BC. Your donations make it possible for new moms to get the critical care they need when struggling with their mental health.



“I’m so grateful for the care of the Reproductive Mental Health Program, and for making it their mission to give all moms the support they need to navigate the monumental task of growing, birthing and raising babies.”

**LIZ HAMMOND
GRATEFUL PATIENT**

MAKING A DIFFERENCE, ONE PATIENT AT A TIME

Liz Hammond was a BCWH maternity patient who also received care from the RMH Program. After an unplanned C-section followed by her baby's short stay in the NICU, Liz found herself dealing with postpartum depression. “When the weight became too much and I reached a breaking point with my mental health, I was referred to the RMH Program. In my first appointment with the RMH Program Co-Medical Director, Dr. Barbara Shulman, I felt hopeful that I would feel better. With time, therapy, new medication and the support of healthcare providers and my family, I began to see the light again.”

OUR THANKS TO THESE CHAMPIONS OF WOMEN'S HEALTH



Moiz and Nadia Lalani have proudly supported a number of the hospital's important maternity programs and projects, including matching donations for the 2024 BCWHF's Mother's Day campaign. Their children and several grandchildren were born at BCWH, including their twins, who were born prematurely and spent time in the NICU. They understand firsthand the importance of skilled staff and state-of-the-art equipment and programs.



Shoppers Drug Mart® has generously donated more than \$2.5 million to BCWHF, which includes proceeds from the annual Shoppers Drug Mart® Run for Women, supporting women's mental health initiatives at BCWH. The annual month-long Shoppers Drug Mart® Giving Shelter campaign in October also supports health and safety for women across Canada. Shoppers Drug Mart® additionally supports women's health through the Women's Health Collective Canada, which is focused on improving health equity for women through research.

FINANCIAL MEASURES APR 2023 - MAR 2024

\$8,366,039

TOTAL REVENUE

GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

25%

FUNDING SOURCES

PHILANTHROPY

Your generous donations

45%

EVENTS

Your support of our signature events

21%

OTHER

9%

2,336

DONORS

5,770

GIFTS

46

PROJECTS FUNDED



WE'RE CHAMPIONING LIFE-CHANGING CARE AND RESEARCH IN WOMEN'S AND NEWBORN HEALTH

OUR CURRENT FUNDRAISING PRIORITIES:

BC WOMEN'S NICU CARE + EQUIPMENT

For the most critically ill and premature newborns who need intensive support, constant improvements in the BC Women's NICU are critical. This includes the most advanced lifesaving technology and continual training for doctors and staff to give these babies a bright beginning.

MIDLIFE WOMEN'S HEALTH

Women in midlife face daunting new health challenges. To help them navigate these challenges, this program will combine holistic research with real-time clinical care and will feature a referral clinic. This will lead to improved treatment options and better healthcare experiences.

MENTAL HEALTH STABILIZATION PROGRAM

For high-risk new moms struggling with mental health challenges, Canada's first Mother and Newborn Mental Health Stabilization Program will provide essential inpatient care. This program will work alongside the pan-provincial Reproductive Mental Health Program for outpatients.

WOMEN'S RESEARCH + INNOVATION

Research is critical to a future with groundbreaking treatments and innovative healthcare. With funding from BC Women's Health Foundation, the Women's Health Research Institute is igniting health research for women and newborns, making way for *Good Things To Come*.



EVERY DONATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE

We can't achieve our goals without your valuable donations. Your support continues to empower us to deliver next-level, state-of-the-art care through cutting-edge technology, innovative research and exceptional treatment. Together we can ensure that all women and newborns receive the best quality care.



BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR

MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY FOR AS LITTLE AS \$25/MONTH.

TO LEARN MORE OR MAKE A DONATION
VISIT [BCWOMENFOUNDATION.ORG](https://bcwomensfoundation.org)
OR CONTACT US 604.875.2270

BC WOMEN'S
HEALTH
FOUNDATION



We acknowledge that we carry out our work on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples – x'məθk'ə'yəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səlliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. When we refer to "women," we include women in all their diversity inclusive of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community.

*Consistent with our fiscal sustainability policy, a contribution from all designated donations will be directed to support the work of BCWHF in fulfilling its mandate to ensure women in BC have equitable access to quality healthcare.