

The thin line between life and death

RCH CARE PULLS MOTORCYCLIST THROUGH

For as long as he can remember, 29-year-old Imran Valli has had a passion for being on two wheels. As a boy, he loved riding bicycles, on the road and sometimes down mountain trails. Last year, Valli took lessons and began riding a motorcycle, which quickly became one of his favorite pastimes. But on November 10, 2013, after sustaining a serious injury while motor bike riding, he was fighting for his life at Royal Columbian Hospital (RCH).

The accident happened when an oncoming car suddenly moved into Valli's lane. "I hit my brakes to try and avoid impact but there just wasn't enough room to stop. I knew I was going to make contact and there was nothing I could do to prevent it."

Though Valli wasn't going fast and was wearing full protective gear, when he arrived at RCH his injuries proved to be very serious and he was sedated for three days after the accident. He required a tube to assist his breathing, as well as a tube in his chest to drain blood due to a torn lung. He also had broken ribs and had chipped several bones. But the most severe injury was the damage to his liver. If RCH doctors hadn't been able to get the bleeding in his liver under control, his injuries could have been fatal. "Looking back, I was straddling the line between life and death," says Valli.

Three days after the accident, Valli regained consciousness



A close brush with death has left Imran Valli deeply grateful for family and friends as well as for a healthy body.

and began working towards his recovery with the hospital's staff. He recalls how moved he was by the skill, patience and compassion of the nurses at RCH.

"I mentioned to one of the nurses in passing that I liked to sleep with my socks half off when I was at home. One day at the



Hiking, skiing and water sports are some of the activities that Imran Valli and his girlfriend, Natassia Premji, enjoy doing together.

"I hit my brakes to try and avoid impact but there just wasn't enough room to stop"

- Imran Valli, RCH patient

hospital, I fell asleep with my socks fully on my feet and woke up with them half off because the nurse had remembered our conversation. For them to know my comfort level in that much detail shows how truly committed they are to the well-being of their patients," he says. ■

Care comes full circle

SENIOR TRAUMA PHYSICIAN SEES THE OTHER SIDE OF PATIENT CARE AT RCH

Few are the times that an individual has the experience of being both a doctor and a patient at a hospital - but Dr. Idan Khan, a Royal Columbian Hospital trauma physician, has been both. In January 2013, Dr. Khan suffered an arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat) after playing squash and had to be taken immediately to RCH, where doctors and staff performed life-saving medical care. "I have experienced the cardiac system and been through cardiac care at RCH. I got to see the doctor-patient experience from the other side," says Dr. Khan, who had an implantable defibrillator inserted after his surgery to help support his heart.

A highly respected and senior ER physician at the hospital, Dr. Khan had a new appreciation for the staff at RCH following his recovery. "It was great care, everyone was top-notch. There are multiple doctors and medical students, as well as residents managing your care. I like to think we still have that 'small' feeling of a community hospital, but with the resources of a tertiary care centre," says Dr. Khan.

RCH, which is home to the busiest cardiac intervention unit in British Columbia, is also one of the three busiest hospitals in



When an arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat) landed Dr. Idan Khan in his own hospital, he realized more than ever that cardiac care at RCH is second to none.

Canada, providing 5,100 heart catheterizations annually. Thankful for his treatment at RCH, Dr. Khan knows that because of the exceptional care at the hospital, he will be able to work alongside the highly dedicated and expert staff who saved his life for many more years to come. ■

Plan to give. Plan to touch lives over generations.

PLANNED GIFTS ALLOW RCH TO FUND MEDICAL INNOVATIONS THAT HAVE A MAJOR IMPACT ON PATIENT CARE

One of the most powerful and enduring ways that a donor can give to RCH is through a planned gift - an intentional act of deep generosity that will change and save lives over generations.

The life-changing effect of planned gifts - whether through a will or other estate planning - cannot be overestimated, says Laurie Tetarenko, Interim President and CEO of the Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation. "Planned gifts are a very important part of our fund-raising efforts," she says. "Through these gifts we can fund state-of-the-art equipment and important medical innovations, as well as training and educational opportunities for medical staff."

Since RCH now serves a third of BC's population and is about to embark on a major redevelopment to meet patient needs for the

coming decades, planned gifts are more important than ever.

For individuals considering making a planned gift, the option of having their gift benefit areas that have meaning for them is of primary importance. RCH Foundation staff are available to spend time with individuals considering a planned gift to explore what is meaningful for them. They may select a specific program or area of care, or they may choose to let the hospital decide where their gift can be used best.

"We recognize that many people can't necessarily make a gift to the hospital in their lifetime. But planned gifts are a way for them to be assured that they are making a critical difference in the lives of many people well into the future," says Tetarenko. ■



Andrea Langevin (right) and Hindy Binning are grateful that a planned gift furthered their professional development as psychiatric nurses. Photo: Rob Kruyt.



A retired teacher, Hazel Emerson's passion for learning inspired her to set up an educational fund.

Hazel Emerson

A TEACHER'S LEGACY

← Hazel Emerson's long life - when she died in 2008 she was 97 - was marked by giving and helping others. While she had no children of her own, Hazel gave all her energy and heart to decades of teaching primary and secondary students in Lower Mainland schools.

Hindy Binning and Andrea Langevin never had the opportunity to meet Hazel Emerson - but they are keenly aware that they are benefitting from her decision to leave a legacy to the Royal Columbian Hospital. The two registered psychiatric nurses love their work and have built a career at RCH. Hindy has worked at the hospital for 18 years and Andrea for 15 years.

Thanks to support from the Hazel Emerson Education Fund, the two nurses were able to attend the 2013 World Congress for Psychiatric Nurses in Winnipeg.

"Psychiatry is an ever-changing field and professional development is imperative," says Hindy. "Funding for professional development has allowed me to feel camaraderie in a field that has faced significant stigmatization." "It gave us an invaluable opportunity to connect with mental health nurses from around the world to share strengths and ideas about the unique work that we do," says Andrea. ■



Having experienced RCH as a patient and a nurse, Irene Lowe knows what a difference gifts make to the hospital.

Irene Lowe

FORMER NURSE GIVES A GIFT FOR FUTURE PATIENTS

↑ Inspired by a 50-year association with RCH - both as a nurse caring for patients and a patient herself - Irene Lowe decided to leave a legacy for future generations.

"I know the level of care that patients receive at RCH. Both my children were born there, I underwent a surgery and was cared for in the Cardiac Care Unit after I had a heart attack," says the retired nurse, mother, grandmother and visionary.

Irene is keenly aware that RCH cares for 1.6 million people in British Columbia, and is responsible for treating the most critically ill and injured patients in the province in the areas of trauma, cardiac and stroke care, high-risk maternity and premature babies. "From experience, I know that the hospital always needs extra funding. People are living longer these days and need to know that they can rely on their hospital to provide them with the care they need," she says. ■

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LEAVING A LEGACY OF CARE | THE BASICS OF PLANNED GIVING OPTIONS

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Thanks in part to planned giving...



→ Being in a hospital is often not easy for patients and their families. Their time at Royal Columbian Hospital is made a little easier by the Patient Resource Centre. The Centre provides three computers for patients and their families to use. They can check their emails and also look up resource information, such

as local accommodations and medical information related to their health issues. WIFI is also available. The walls are lined with pamphlets, booklets and brochures covering health information, hospital services and community health services.

"As funding is limited, Volunteer Resources would not be able to expand their patient services without the help of planned gifts. The Patient Resource Centre allows the patients to stay connected with their family and community during their stay at Royal Columbian Hospital." - Kathy Corbeil, *Manager, Volunteer Resources*. ■

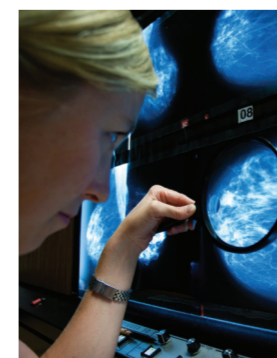


↑ The Multi-Purpose Interventional Suite (MPIS), made possible in part by planned gifts, is a shared space between Cardiac Electro Physiology and Neuro Interventional Radiology.

This suite has provided a state-of-the-art environment to treat stroke patients and brain aneurysms with minimally invasive catheter techniques rather than the patients being treated by open surgery. Cardiac patients are treated for irregular heart rhythm and blockages. The specialized equipment in the MPIS allows the cardiologist to test various trigger points within the heart and pinpoint the area causing

the misfiring of the heart and treat it. Prior to this Fraser Health patients had to travel to Vancouver to have these procedures.

"Our Foundation and the donors who contribute to it are the lifeline of our hospital. I have been to many conferences throughout the U.S. and always come home to RCH with a sense of pride and confidence knowing that we are providing state-of-the-art, evidence-based diagnostics and treatment to our patients." - Karen Bevan-Pritchard, *Site Coordinator, Medical Imaging*. ■



↑ Thanks in part to planned gifts, RCH was able to purchase two digital diagnostic mammography machines with stereotactic biopsy capability. Prior to their arrival, the hospital had one aging analog (film-based) machine that often required servicing, resulting in suspension of service to patients. The new machines have increased the daily number of patients that can be screened and the latest technology has many benefits, including higher quality images.