# HealthMatters

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ROYAL COLUMBIAN HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

## Free Fall

Aldergrove man nearly loses life after losing balance on ladder by Jodi Martens

It's amazing how quickly life can fall apart. It can happen to anyone - an accident at work, a car crash, or something as simple as a mis-

Last December, 39-year-old Trevor James fell five feet from a ladder, hit the concrete and fractured his skull. He was rushed by air ambulance from his Chilliwack worksite to

RCH Neurosurgeon Dr. Michael Nikolakis performed a craniotomy on Trevor to remove a blood clot that had formed in his brain. A few days later, fellow Neurosurgeon Dr. Richard Chan had to remove half of Trevor's skull, as Trevor was suffering from very high brain swelling and pressure.

Trevor spent Christmas in a coma in RCH's Intensive Care Unit, surrounded by his wife,

didn't know if he would make it through, or what his condition would be when he woke up.

"Will he even remember me? The kids? Will he be able to speak again? Those were some of the things that passed through my mind during those dark days," recalls Marnie. "Ev-



Trevor, with son, Colby and daughter, Courtney.

Marnie and their two children, Courtney, 16, and Colby, 12. They eryone told me how lucky we were that he was at Royal Columbian, and that gave me hope."

> Trevor woke up on New Year's Day. Since then, he has put his hard work ethic to work on himself, redeveloping his ability to read, spell, drive and most importantly, tell his family he

## stars align

When the

RCH medical teams save BC Lions' Stanley Franks's leg and possibly future playing career

BC Lions Defensive Back Stanley Franks nearly lost not only his playing career but his entire leg as a result of a severe hyper-extended knee injury during a game against the Calgary Stampeders this season. Running at top speed, Franks stepped on top of a receiver's foot. The impact dislocated Franks's left knee and forced it backwards and to the side.

"I just knew my season was over...I had no feeling where my shin should be," recalls 25-year-old Franks.

While BC Lions' Team Physician and RCH Orthopaedic Surgeon Dr. Dory Boyer was able to pop Franks's knee back into place on the field, he could find no pulse in the major knee



Stanley Franks was in his third season with the BC Lions when he was injured. Photo by Kyle Clapham.

artery. Without immediate restoration of blood flow, Franks would surely lose his leg. Franks was rushed from the field to RCH where Vascular Surgeon Dr. Kamyar Kazemi spent nearly four hours meticulously repairing Franks's artery, which had been torn in half.

Franks's hospital ordeal was far from over, though.



RCH Orthopaedic Surgeon Dr. Darius Viskontas consults with BC Lions Defensive Back Stanley Franks prior to his second knee operation.

Four weeks later, RCH Orthopaedic Surgeons Dr. Darius Viskontas and Dr. Trevor Stone took on the highly complex and uncommon task of reconstructing Franks's Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) and posterolateral (outside) corner knee ligament. Dr. Viskontas and Dr. Stone are two of only three orthopaedic surgeons in B.C. who conduct this type of complex surgery.

"Certainly here at Royal Columbian, we are used to seeing significant trauma [patients]," says Dr. Viskontas, "so we get really good at treating complex injuries."

Franks is now embarking on a nine-month rehabilitation program. While he remains hopeful about returning to the field next season, Franks is most grateful to have his leg so he can lead a normal life.

"I'm going to give it all I've got and see how far it takes me," says Franks. "I owe it to both my teams -BC Lions and RCH - to give it my best shot."

RCH Neurosurgeon Dr. Richard Chan

was able to completely remove both

malignant tumours from Shannon's

## **Best Gift**

RCH needs significant investment from government and community to continue as centre of excellence

Fundraising for healthcare takes a lot more than bake sales! Keeping the first hospital in B.C. stocked with necessary equipment and resources for clinical research and education is an ongoing task that involves many ways to give: large-scale donations, gifts through the mail and rchfoundation.com, wills, gifts of securities, and events.



rchfoundation.com · FALL 2011

Since 1862, support from individuals, organizations and businesses has built upon government funding to help our medical teams make RCH the centre of excellence that it is today. However, RCH continues to run at overcapacity and we cannot stand by and watch the hospital's infrastructure continue to erode. In 2012, we celebrate 150 years of health care. It's Royal Columbian's turn for government to make a major investment, and partner with RCH Foundation donors. Wouldn't that be the best birthday present ever for the 1.6 million British Columbians who depend on RCH?



President and CEO

Chair, Board of Directors

#### Yes, I want to support critical care at RCH

Here is my gift of: \$200 \$100 \$50 (please specify) Enclosed is my cheque made payable to: **Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation** Or charge my credit card: Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code Please send me information on the following ways to give: ☐ By monthly donation ☐ Using securities Life insurance or annuities

Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation Health Care Centre Lobby, 330 East Columbia St. New Westminster, BC V3L3W7 Phone: 604-520-4438 or give online at rchfoundation.com

RCH Foundation is already in my Will

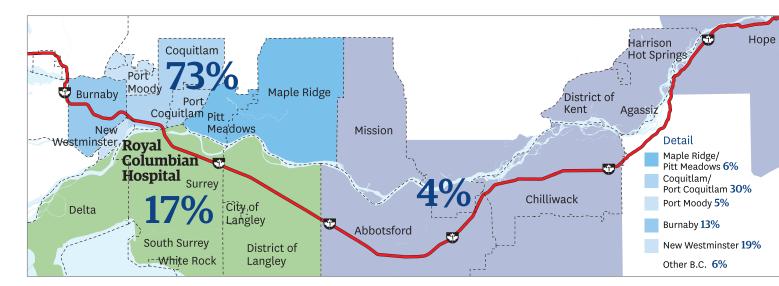
☐ In my Will

Mail or fax form to:

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#### Where RCH Patients come from in the Fraser Health Region



## **Home Away**

Northern B.C. family receives expert and compassionate care at RCH

It was the middle of the night when Lisa and Frank Dyck were bundled into a B.C. Air Ambulance and flown to RCH - 1,300 kilometres away from their home in tiny Prespatou, in northeastern B.C. Lisa's water had broken and she was only 28 weeks preg-

nant. She was airlifted to RCH, as it is a provincial centre for high-risk maternity and neonatal intensive care (NICU). Lisa was put on bed rest for three weeks until her baby

could be safely delivered. On July 7, 2011, Lisa gave birth to a baby boy whom they named Trevor. Born premature, Trevor was treated for lung problems in

RCH's NICU for five weeks. With no local family or friend support and having to take time off work, finances were very tight and caused extra stress for Frank and Lisa.

Fortunately, RCH

Social Worker Cheri King was able to access funds for their living expenses from RCH Foundation's Maternity Infant Child Youth **Emergency Response** Fund supported by Variety - The Children's Charity.

Having a baby in the NICU can be a very stressful experience.

"To try and pay for our food and accommodation down here would've been impossible without help," says Lisa. "The fund was a big relief for us."

The fund has helped more than 150 families at RCH from across the province since 2008.

### Only \$800,000 more to go!

Thanks to our many generous individual, corporate and community organization donors, our Multipurpose Suite campaign is well underway! To date, their generosity has raised \$2,000,000 towards a suite that will help RCH meet the extraordinary and growing demand for specialized cardiac and neurological care in B.C.

Many of those who have chosen to support our cause are patients who have suffered a stroke, aneurysm or serious heart problem, and the family members and friends who love them. They understand that advanced diagnoses and treatment is only as good as the access you have to it.

To donate or find out more about our Mulitpurpose Suite cam-

## A Miracle

other hospital in the province

10,000 trauma patients from

· Falls and motor vehicle collisions

• Trauma is the #1 cause of death for

are the two highest causes of trau-

across B.C.

matic injury in B.C.

15-45 year-old males

· Last year, RCH treated more than

Shannon Gaudette and family grateful for expert care received by Dr. Richard Chan and RCH medical

"I shouldn't be alive...my baby girl shouldn't be alive...but we're both here thanks to Dr.

Those words are being spoken by Shannon Gaudette, 39, a woman who had two malignant tumours – one the size of an orange, the other the size of a lemon -- removed from her brain in June.

She was six-and-a-half months pregnant at the time.

Shannon started her battle with cancer back in 2005 when she had a mole removed that tested positive for melanoma. The cancer returned in January 2010 in her lymph nodes on her right side, which were sub-

sequently removed. Not focused on anything else but beating cancer, Shannon and her husband Brad were surprised when they found out they were pregnant in December 2010.

Shannon enjoyed a healthy pregnancy until May 21, 2011 the day her foot went numb. Assuming it was a normal symptom of pregnancy, she didn't think much of it until her condi-

The two white oval-shaped areas in this MRI scan are the malignant

tion grew worse. "I started feeling weak... not well, and my handwriting was going wonky," recalls Shannon.

An emergency MRI scan at a local hospital showed two large masses in Shannon's

"We were astounded," recalls Brad, who was told that there wasn't anything that could be done for Shannon except ease some

of the pressure being caused by the tumours. There was a chance that they could



Brad, Dr. Chan, referring to the two malignant tumours in Shannon's brain, simply said: "They've gotta come out." Brad tearfully kissed his wife goodbye as she was wheeled into the OR, not knowing if Shannon or their baby would sur-

During the next few weeks at RCH, Shannon slowly regained her ability to walk, talk and function normally again. "When I say it's a miracle, I truly believe it is," said Shan-

non's Dad, Langley Township Mayor Rick Green, in a media interview.

tensive Care, High Acuity, Neuro and High-Risk Maternity units. On August 5, although eight weeks premature, Madeline

specialists all under one roof. "Those were the two worst nights of my life," recalls Brad. RCH Neurosurgeon Dr. Richard Chan was on-call when they

arrived at RCH on the night of Saturday, June 11. Upon meeting

After six hours in surgery, Dr. Chan emerged saying, "I got it all and the baby is fine." "I can't express what a relief it was," says Brad.

Shannon continued to recover through her stays in the In-

Gaudette was born a healthy baby girl, at the hands of obstetrician Dr. Melanie Altas and neonatologist Dr. Zenon

Did you know?

country since 1997.

· RCH is the only hospital in B.C.

risk maternity and neonatal

that has a neurosciences, high-

intensive care unit (NICU) all on

RCH's NICU has had the best pa-

tient outcomes of any NICU in the

· RCH has five neurosurgeons who

perform 1,250 neurosurgeries per

"We are so grateful for the exceptional care we received on every ward...the doctors, nurses, cleaning staff, porters, social workers...everyone was just amazing," says Shannon.

Two months later, an MRI scan showed there were no residual, recurrent or new tumours in Shannon's brain. "He got everything," says Shannon. Shannon's battle with cancer is not over yet, as she embarks on a four-month drug treatment to combat two small tumours on her liver and one on her lung, but she is feeling strong.

"I'm so thankful that we are here," says Shannon. "I cherish every day that I get to spend with our daughter, because we weren't supposed to be here."

paign, please call **604.520.4438** or visit **rchfoundation.com**. tumours. ROYAL COLUMBIAN HOSPITAL FOUNDATION YOUR HEALTH MATTERS rchfoundation.com · FALL 2011