



Health Sciences Centre  
**FOUNDATION**

# Foundation Connection

Delivering Tomorrow's Health Care, Today

FALL 2023



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## “Pushing Things Forward”

HSC attracts Toronto surgeon focused on minimally invasive surgery



*Dr. Lev Bubis, hepato-pancreato-biliary (HPB) surgeon: “I was attracted by the exceptional team that’s in place at HSC and by the fact that the hospital is really pushing things forward with minimally invasive surgery.”*

He might still cheer for the Ottawa Senators, but Dr. Lev Bubis was keen to jet to Winnipeg this fall and continue his surgical career at Health Sciences Centre.

“My primary goal was to come to HSC,” says the Ottawa-born hepato-pancreato-biliary (HPB) surgeon who started working at HSC in early October. “There are many things that were attractive to me here from a work perspective, especially the hospital’s commitment to minimally invasive surgery.”

Dr. Bubis did his residency at the University of Toronto followed by a fellowship in HPB surgery and surgical oncology. After his studies, he worked for a year with Unity Health Toronto. Aside from his specialties in liver and pancreatic surgery, he has also completed extensive training in treating neuroendocrine tumours, which can occur throughout the gastrointestinal tract as well as elsewhere in the body. He sees HSC as a place where he can collaborate effectively with colleagues and advance research in his field.

“I was attracted by the exceptional team that’s in place at HSC and by the fact that the hospital is really pushing things forward with minimally invasive surgery,” says Dr. Bubis. “This is where the HPB field is going and it is a real interest of mine. It’s exciting to me that the HSC Foundation is supporting this direction in surgery with capital investments.”

Minimally invasive surgery is an approach to surgery that typically relies on smaller incisions and instruments. Very small cameras allow surgeons to see their work on video monitors in high definition. Minimally invasive surgery means less pain for a patient, a quicker recovery, and a shorter hospital stay. Among other benefits, shorter hospital stays free up beds more quickly, which reduces the amount of time patients need to wait in the Emergency Department. The HSC Foundation’s Operation Excellence campaign is keenly focused on acquiring the necessary equipment and bolstering HSC’s infrastructure to support the expansion of minimally invasive surgery.

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“To attract leading surgeons and other personnel, we need to do what we can to ensure that Manitoba’s hospital sets new standards in care and always demonstrates a commitment to excellence and innovation,” says Jonathon Lyon, President and CEO of the HSC Foundation. “The fact that Dr. Bubis and other surgeons have chosen HSC in recent months is a tribute to our donors and it bodes well for the future of health care in Manitoba.”

Dr. Bubis and his wife both have extended family in Manitoba, with roots in Winnipeg, Selkirk, and Gimli.

He is excited to call Manitoba home and to contribute to the well-being of Manitobans.

“The fact that HSC is available to all Manitobans and serves as a resource for the whole province is appealing,” he says. “Fulfilling, actually. I’m very happy to be here.”

**To support the expansion of minimally invasive surgery at HSC, please donate to Operation Excellence at <https://www.hscfoundation.mb.ca/donateoe/>.**

## Operation Excellence



**“Thanks to your support of Operation Excellence, we are acquiring new, state-of-the-art technology that will improve health care for Manitobans. Through your generosity, we will shorten wait times, shorten hospital stays, and improve patient outcomes. Thank you for your ongoing support!”**

— Dr. Manon Pelletier,  
Chief Medical Officer,  
Health Sciences Centre



**“Through the HSC Foundation’s Operation Excellence campaign, HSC’s Pain Clinic will double in size and we will be able to double our caseload to about 12,000 a year. With your support we can prevent the worst effects of chronic pain and aspire to become a pain-free Manitoba. Please donate today.”**

— Dr. Ryan Amadeo,  
Medical Director, Manitoba  
Pain Care Program,  
Health Sciences Centre



**“With donor support of the HSC Foundation’s Operation Excellence campaign, we are starting to see remarkable progress at Manitoba’s hospital. New, state-of-the-art diagnostic and surgical equipment is arriving, and new operating spaces are under development. Your support of this transformational campaign will keep the momentum going at HSC. Thank you!”**

— Dr. Shawn Young,  
Chief Operating Officer,  
Health Sciences Centre

**Let’s end surgical wait times together. To learn more and to make your gift, please visit [OperationExcellence.ca](https://www.operationexcellence.ca).**

# Donor-funded Researcher Supported the Establishment of the Virtual Crisis Stabilization Unit to Extend Mental Health Care

Dr. Jennifer Hensel is now working with a patient advisory committee to understand who benefits the most from virtual crisis mental health care and why

Within just three weeks of Manitoba's first reported case of COVID-19 in March 2020, HSC psychiatrist Dr. Jennifer Hensel led the Crisis Response Services team at HSC in implementing a range of virtual care solutions. Notably, she worked with colleagues to establish the virtual Crisis Stabilization Unit (vCSU), which has proven instrumental in providing crisis mental health care to patients in the comfort of their homes.

Dr. Hensel's donor-funded study, *"An Innovative Virtual Mental Health Crisis Stabilization Unit: Evaluation of Patient-Centered Outcomes,"* aims to discover why virtual services like the vCSU have helped some patients more than others and hopes to use those findings to improve service delivery and potentially benefit all patients who seek mental health care at HSC Winnipeg.

***"Virtual care brings health care directly into the day-to-day of people's lives, allowing individuals to benefit in new and innovative ways."***

***— Dr. Jennifer Hensel***

"I've always been somebody interested in research and evaluation. I've always enjoyed the numbers and other data, and what we can learn from them and where we can improve. Ultimately, mental health care is a rewarding field with lots to learn," says Dr. Hensel.

The concept of providing comprehensive health care services virtually to patients at home has significantly expedited and expanded care options for those facing mental health crises. Dr. Hensel emphasizes: "Virtual care brings health care directly into the day-to-day of people's lives, allowing individuals to benefit in new and innovative ways."



Dr. Jennifer Hensel: "With this research grant, we are trying to understand who is benefiting the most from virtual services and determining who is best suited for them."

Working with a patient advisory committee comprising patients who have personally been the recipients of virtual mental health crisis care, Dr. Hensel is designing a comprehensive research and evaluation study conducted entirely virtually.

"We are meeting a need we didn't know we had until the pandemic. With this research grant, we are trying to understand who is benefiting the most from virtual services and determining who is best suited for them," says Dr. Hensel.

Dr. Hensel is grateful for the support of HSC Foundation donors, and firmly believes that donors are helping create opportunities that wouldn't otherwise exist.

This year, the HSC Foundation, with the generous support of its donors, invested over \$305,000 in health care research.

***Learn more about Dr. Hensel's study and the other research projects funded by 2023 grants by visiting [hscfoundation.mb.ca/about/grants/2023-grant-recipients/](https://hscfoundation.mb.ca/about/grants/2023-grant-recipients/).***

# One Step at a Time

## Overcoming a spinal stroke, HSC patient Stan Gajek shares his inspiring story of rehabilitation and gratitude

Retirement often marks the beginning of a new chapter, filled with plans for relaxation and enjoyment. However, for Stan Gajek, his plans took an unexpected turn when, after 30 years working at MTS on the very first day of his retirement in October 2022, he experienced a spinal stroke that left him with no movement below his waist. After first being admitted to another hospital, Gajek found himself needing the specialized care of Health Sciences Centre.

His rehabilitation began on HSC Winnipeg's Intensive Care Unit. Upon entering HSC's rehabilitation program, Gajek encountered a dedicated team of therapists and other health care professionals who played a crucial role in his recovery. Daily sessions included massages, stretching, and exercises, gradually transitioning to physiotherapy in the gym. Janine, a key member of the team, along with HSC Winnipeg nurses and assistants, helped Gajek regain movement.

Almost exactly one year prior to Gajek's stroke, HSC Foundation donors rallied together for Giving Tuesday to raise funds for recreational equipment for HSC Winnipeg's RR5 Specialty Adult Rehab Inpatient Unit. The patients who stay on this unit are people like Gajek who have suffered spinal cord injuries, endured amputations, or have been diagnosed with neuromuscular disorders.

The equipment purchased as a result of donor generosity included a new hand-cycle, which Gajek credits for opening his eyes to new possibilities beyond a wheelchair. He emphasizes the significance of donor support in making innovative equipment available.

"It's important to try to stay active," says Gajek. "When donors come in and fund all this different equipment and give you the opportunity to be more active when in hospital, I find it very helpful and very rewarding."

From using a hand-cycle to participating in wheelchair basketball, Gajek embraced various therapeutic approaches. Occupational Therapy provided essential skills for wheelchair maneuvering, while Recreation Therapy arranged a road trip, swimming lessons, and opportunities to try different pieces of equipment to help expand Gajek's horizons.



*Grateful patient Stan Gajek with Taylor Hurley, Clinical Service Leader for Therapeutic Recreation at HSC.*

Taylor Hurley, Clinical Service Leader for Therapeutic Recreation at HSC, commends Gajek's active involvement in rehabilitation. She expresses gratitude for the generous donations that facilitated the purchase of new equipment, providing patients with the opportunity to explore options they might not have considered otherwise.

"When you first come to hospital with an amputation or a spinal cord injury you don't know what to expect and you think a lot of things you used to do aren't possible anymore," says Hurley. "Being able to show patients what is possible and have them try different pieces of equipment or have those conversations is huge. I want to thank HSC Foundation donors and tell them it went to great use and that we really appreciate it."

Gajek's journey at HSC is a testament to his own tenacity, the support of the health care professionals at HSC, and the generosity of HSC Foundation donors.

# Celebrating the Carolyn Sifton Foundation

## Acting on a passion for excellence

As President of the Carolyn Sifton Foundation, Graeme Sifton has developed a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by Canadian health care systems.

“Governments are positioned to fund the operation of our hospitals,” says Sifton, the nephew of the late Carolyn Sifton, “but to achieve the highest possible levels of excellence, philanthropy has an important role to play.”

That observation—along with some recent family experiences at HSC—inspired Sifton, his husband Jay Martin (who serves as Secretary of the Carolyn Sifton Foundation), and their Board to support recent initiatives of the HSC Foundation.

***“Dr. Buchel helped us understand how HSC needed to accelerate the acquisition of new, minimally invasive equipment and upgrade spaces at the hospital to keep pace with the latest developments in health care.”***

***— Graeme Sifton***

They have supported the campaign for the development of the state-of-the-art Manitoba Urologic Centre; a campaign to upgrade equipment for emergency gynecological surgery; and, most recently, the HSC Foundation’s transformational Operation Excellence initiative—a \$100 million campaign to refocus and revitalize HSC as a surgical centre of excellence and innovation.

Sifton and Martin’s daughter-in-law Alisha, who works as a radiologist, received outstanding care at HSC after being diagnosed with systemic lupus erythematosus; and their daughter Micah and grandson James were well cared for at HSC Women’s Hospital after a complicated birth a couple of years ago.

“James had a little bit of a rough entry and he had to spend some time in the neonatal intensive care unit,” says Sifton. “He and Micah got great care and are doing very well today.”



Jay Martin and Graeme Sifton: “It’s clear that donors have to support this campaign and the Carolyn Sifton Foundation is proud to contribute,” says Graeme Sifton.

It was a meeting with HSC Foundation officials and HSC Surgery Site Director, Dr. Edward Buchel, that inspired them to support Operation Excellence. “Dr. Buchel helped us understand how HSC needed to accelerate the acquisition of new, minimally invasive equipment and upgrade spaces at the hospital to keep pace with the latest developments in health care,” says Sifton. “It’s clear that donors have to support this campaign and the Carolyn Sifton Foundation is proud to contribute.”

Carolyn Sifton set up the Foundation in her estate, and then passed away in 1975 at the age of 47. Graeme Sifton joined the Board in 1979. The Foundation grew significantly in 1980 when the Sifton family sold its newspaper business, including the Winnipeg Free Press. Since inception, the Carolyn Sifton Foundation has distributed roughly \$30 million in grants. Grants are currently awarded to organizations and initiatives in Winnipeg and Brockville, two places where Carolyn Sifton lived.

Sifton believes that his late Aunt Carolyn would have supported these gifts to the HSC Foundation: “She was a kind, generous, and community-minded woman.”

# HSC Foundation Unveils Redeveloped \$1.8M Donor-funded Plastic Surgery Clinic with First of its Kind in Canada Procedure Room

New clinic's advanced technology and same-day procedures will improve patient care



L-R: Tina Jones, O.M, Chair, HSC Foundation; Dr. Ed Buchel, Surgery Site Director, HSC Winnipeg; Kristin Coulthard, Former Plastic Surgery Clinic Patient; Jonathon Lyon, President and CEO, HSC Foundation

On June 22, 2023, the HSC Foundation unveiled HSC Winnipeg's redeveloped plastic surgery clinic, which includes a plastic surgery procedure room that has the same equipment and design standards as a general operating room, making it the first of its kind in Canada.

"Thanks to this procedure room, 85% of the plastic surgery trauma patients who would have previously required one of the hospital's main operating rooms can now be treated in the clinic, and patients can often go home the same day," says HSC Foundation President and CEO Jonathon Lyon. "With time, space, and equipment for new procedures, the clinic has had an immediate impact on patient care and outcomes."

The advanced plastic surgery procedure room is equipped with an advanced Fluoroscan InSight system which produces high-quality, real-time images for doctors with minimum radiation exposure for patients. It is estimated that this room alone will free up 49 operative days per year in HSC's general operating rooms.

You can learn more about this newly renovated clinic at [hscfoundation.mb.ca](https://hscfoundation.mb.ca) or by scanning the QR code. To watch a video of the new space, please scan the second QR code.



Guests and donors of the HSC Foundation toured the newly redeveloped space on June 22, 2023.



The advanced plastic surgery procedure room was made possible thanks to remarkable donors Bob and Marnie Puchniak.

# Milestone Made Possible Thanks to The Bannatyne's

Recognizing Annie and Andrew Bannatyne's role in HSC's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary



*HSC Winnipeg has transformed to what it is today thanks to Annie and Andrew Bannatyne's generosity 150 years ago.*

If it were not for the community spirit of Annie and Andrew Bannatyne and their acts of generosity 150 years ago, there would be no Health Sciences Centre today. They were leaders, influencers, visionaries, and champions.

Annie, who was Red River Métis, was the daughter of Andrew McDermot and Sarah McNab. She was renowned for her hospitality, energy, and ability to bring people together in common cause. It's been said that it was Annie's persistence and passion that persuaded her father and her husband to donate a parcel of land that ultimately became the site of the Winnipeg General Hospital, known today as the Health Sciences Centre.

***“As we reflect on 150 years of HSC, it is important to recognize Annie and Andrew Bannatyne. They inspired and enabled the development of the Health Sciences Centre. Their gifts will have an impact for all time.”***

*— Irma McKenzie*

“As we reflect on 150 years of HSC, it is important to recognize Annie and Andrew Bannatyne.

Together, they left their mark on Manitoba. They inspired and enabled the development of the Health Sciences Centre. Their gifts will have an impact for all time,” says Irma McKenzie, HSC Foundation’s Director of Planned Giving.

And that’s why we named the Bannatyne Legacy Circle, a community committed to supporting HSC by leaving a gift in their will, in their honour.

*To learn more about the Bannatyne Legacy Circle, visit [hscfoundation.mb.ca/legacygiving](https://hscfoundation.mb.ca/legacygiving). To learn more about HSC’s milestone anniversary, please watch the hospital’s 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary video at [hscfoundation.mb.ca](https://hscfoundation.mb.ca) or scan the QR code.*



Through the Ladies of the Province—an association that later became the White Cross Guild—Annie and her colleagues raised funds for the poor and for health care. In 1872, Annie started fundraising for a hospital that was built on the land generously donated by her family. The first building was completed in 1875 at a cost of \$1,818. Annie and the Ladies of the Province raised \$1,345.80 of the total.

# Innovation HSC Launches for 2023–2024!

Join us as we enhance Health Sciences Centre for all Manitobans

You can save a life. By supporting innovation, HSC Winnipeg can advance health care for Manitobans. With a goal of **\$2,352,000** for 2023–2024, your support of our annual campaign will benefit the hundreds of thousands of Manitobans who count on HSC to provide leading-edge care.

Since the launch of Innovation HSC in 2019, over 9,000 donors have contributed over \$11 million toward revolutionizing patient care at HSC Winnipeg. Here are two examples of how Innovation HSC donors have helped improve patient care.



## **Fiberoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES) Portable Assessment Cart**

FEES provides direct visualization of the pharynx during swallowing and helps assess the palate, pharynx, larynx, and vocal cord movement.

*To learn more about Innovation HSC, please visit: [hscfoundation.mb.ca/support/innovation-hsc/](https://hscfoundation.mb.ca/support/innovation-hsc/).*



## **Blue Light Laser**

Used in vocal cord operations, the Blue Light Laser allows for surgery in an HSC outpatient clinic under local anesthesia instead of general anesthesia. This means quicker access to treatment and shorter recovery times.

To make your donation today, visit [hscfoundation.mb.ca](https://hscfoundation.mb.ca)  
or call **204-515-5612** or **1-800-679-8493** (toll-free).

**At the HSC Foundation, we prioritize reducing our environmental footprint. To receive our newsletter in your inbox instead of your mailbox, please email [info@hscfoundation.mb.ca](mailto:info@hscfoundation.mb.ca).**

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