

How **YOU** are reimagining patient care at Peterborough Regional Health Centre

Winter 2025

Donor-funded digital pathology will be a game changer for cancer care at Peterborough Regional Health Centre

Powered by the PRHC Foundation's \$60 million Campaign for PRHC, our regional hospital will bring critical advancements like digital pathology to our region, keeping PRHC at the forefront of medical innovation.

With the help of donors, Peterborough Regional Health Centre is committed to transforming the future of healthcare in our community, and digital pathology is a key part of that vision.

"Almost everyone will be impacted by cancer at some point in their life," says pathologist Dr. Katie O'Reilly, PRHC's Medical Director of Laboratory Medicine and PRHC Foundation ambassador for digital pathology. "If we don't make a strategic decision now to digitize the pathology lab, we and our region's patients will be left behind."

Dr. O'Reilly is often asked what pathology is. Many people are unaware of the laboratory or what they do there, but it's essential to many areas of care, including cancer care.

"If you come to the hospital for cancer care, there's going to be some decision made in our laboratory in some way," says Dr. O'Reilly. Pathology plays a vital role in cancer diagnosis and treatment planning. Digital pathology can speed up the process. Instead of relying on traditional glass slides, high-resolution digital images can be shared electronically between laboratories and pathologists, no matter where they're located, making collaboration easier.

Right now, there's a shortage of pathologists everywhere and cancer rates are on the rise – there were over 23,000 cancer care visits last year at PRHC. In addition, PRHC's laboratory provides support for five smaller partner hospitals. In total, 2.3 million tests were run through the laboratory in the last year.

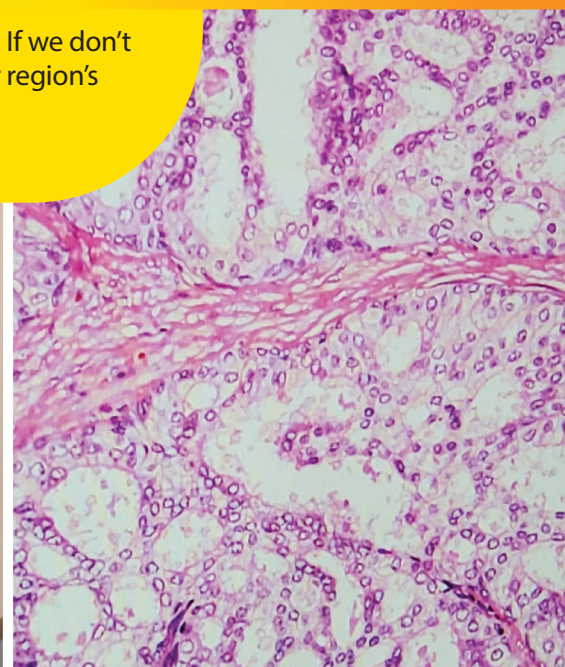
Dr. O'Reilly believes this innovative technology will be a game changer for patient care in our region.

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Dr. Katie O'Reilly, PRHC Medical Director, Laboratory Medicine



Images: PRHC pathologist Dr. Katie O'Reilly examines a slide containing a prostate cancer tissue sample. With donor support, PRHC will bring digital pathology to its laboratory, which will mean faster turnaround times for tests and quicker diagnoses and decisions for patients.

The scoop on nursing at PRHC

PRHC is making great strides in the recruitment of nurses, welcoming 250 last year alone. There are now over 1,600 nurses on staff – a compassionate team of dedicated professionals. Led by a strong leadership group, their skills and expertise play a vital role in delivering exceptional patient care at PRHC.

Did you know...?

- PRHC has been piloting a nurse mentorship program where clinical nurse mentors are scheduled in addition to the existing nursing complement and are specifically available to mentor new and existing staff who may require additional clinical support
- PRHC supports internationally educated nurses through a ministry-funded program, helping them get licensed in Ontario – many become permanent PRHC nurses
- PRHC participates in a provincially paid program for clinical externs – most of these students are nurses, gaining valuable hands-on experience and many go on to become PRHC employees



"PRHC is developing a five-year nursing strategy to help nurses grow their careers and make the hospital a top place to work. It will be one of the first community and regional hospitals to take this approach."

Noel Bennett, PRHC CNE, Vice President, Clinical Services



Image: Joe (left) and Ashley Curry with their sons in a recent family photo. They've included the hospital in their estate plans, through a gift of life insurance to the PRHC Foundation.

Joe and Ashley's gift of health

Joe Curry describes his family's decision to donate a life insurance policy to PRHC:

"I often think of PRHC as the beating heart of our community. We're so fortunate to have such a world-class regional hospital here in Peterborough.

When my wife Ashley and I think about the future, and the legacy we want to leave behind, PRHC is always top of mind. After all, Ashley's a labour and delivery nurse at PRHC – which happens to be where both our boys were born.

The hospital is a constant, comforting fixture – both in our family and in this community. That's why, when Ashley and I started thinking about our estate plans, we knew we wanted to include PRHC. As a financial planner and advisor, I knew there were plenty of ways to do this.

We settled on a life insurance policy, then immediately donated it to the PRHC Foundation. When Ashley and I are no longer here, the benefit will be paid to the Foundation.

We still pay the premiums every year, but because the Foundation owns the policy, we receive a charitable donation receipt.

For my family, we can't think of a better gift than the gift of health. That's why we've chosen PRHC, so the people we love – and the people they love – will be able to get the best healthcare possible when they need it most."

For more information on legacy or planned giving, or to share your donor story, please call 705-876-5000.

Donor Wall Update



The Celebration of Giving Donor Wall has been updated, recognizing the donors who've made a lasting impact on patient care at PRHC.

The wall celebrates cumulative giving of \$5,000 or more. Thanks to those being recognized for the first time, donors whose giving has reached a new level, and supporters who've left a gift through their estate plans!

Our hearts are on the line – let’s bring new cardiac services to PRHC

“You never expect it to happen to you until it does,” says Nick Beamish.

It was Christmas time in 2018, when Nick started feeling ‘off’. An athletic guy, who coached high school sports, Nick was used to pushing his limits, so when he began experiencing extreme exhaustion, he chalked it up to stress. But as the days went on, it became harder to ignore.

With a nudge from his wife, Nick went to the emergency department at Peterborough Regional Health Centre. There, doctors hooked him up to an electrocardiogram to test his heart. Within minutes, alarm bells started going off.

“Doctors were rushing over with carts, with paddles to shock me,” he says.

Doctors discovered he had a life-threatening issue with his heart rhythm. PRHC didn’t have a Cardiac Electrophysiology – or EP – Lab to provide the necessary treatment, so Nick was rushed to Kingston for care. He spent Christmas in the ICU there,

far from home and family. “It was tough and a mental struggle,” says Nick.

Since then, he hasn’t had any issues with his heart. But Nick worries it could happen again – to himself or someone else. That’s why he’s become a donor, volunteer and ambassador for the PRHC Foundation’s \$60 million Campaign for PRHC, supporting bringing lifesaving electrophysiology to our region.

With donor support, an advanced Cardiac EP Lab at PRHC will bring new, world-class cardiac treatment and therapies to our region for the first time, eliminating the need for patients to travel far from home for care during an already stressful and urgent time.

“It’s important to be able to get care closer to home. Donors can help make that happen,” says Nick.

For more information about this exciting advancement or to donate, please visit prhcfoundation.ca or call 705-876-5000.



Image: Dr. Brie Banks explains donor-funded breast seed localization at the Peterborough’s Dragon Boat Festival donation presentation.

Your impact: Better care for breast cancer patients

In 2024, PRHC introduced exciting, new donor-funded technology for breast cancer patients called breast seed localization and it’s already making an impact on care.

Essentially, breast seed localization is a tiny radioactive seed, about the size of a grain of rice, placed directly at the site of a patient’s tumour. It helps surgeons locate the tumour more precisely during surgery.

This process is a big improvement from older methods, which were less comfortable, more invasive and stressful for patients. And the best part? Because of this donor-funded advancement, PRHC can perform more breast cancer surgeries every day. That means more patients are getting the care they need, faster.

“Having breast seed localization at PRHC has dramatically increased access to state-of-the-art surgery for breast cancer patients. Not only are we able to look after more patients in the day, but the process is much less difficult for them. Seed localization is more comfortable and convenient,” says PRHC general surgeon Dr. Brie Banks. “I want to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to all the donors who made this advancement possible.”



Image: Nick Beamish (right) and Jane Lovett with their sons in a recent family photo. Nick wants to ensure that patients don’t have to travel far for care, the way he had to several years ago. As a Campaign for PRHC ambassador, he’s rallying support for new services in our region.

Your gifts are reimagining patient care



Image: Fundraising is ongoing for a specially designed, modern, secure Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit courtyard.

Building a brighter future for mental health

Construction is underway on a courtyard for PRHC's Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU). Before the winter weather arrived, bulldozers took over the southeast area of the hospital grounds, paving the way for a modern, new, outside healing space for PICU patients.

Fundraising is ongoing for the 2,596 square foot courtyard, and with continued support, PRHC will be able to provide a safe environment for patients to decompress and meet with their healthcare team or family in a relaxed, outdoor area.

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"There's more work than there are pathologists, so we're hoping digital pathology can help us do more with less," says Dr. O'Reilly.

Bringing digital pathology to PRHC will have many benefits, including:

- Faster test result turnaround times for patients and physicians
- Quicker diagnoses and treatment decisions for patients
- Ability for pathologists to share and consult digitally
- Improved accuracy

With continued investment from donors, the PRHC Foundation's \$60 million Campaign for PRHC will help bring this state-of-the-art solution to our regional hospital.

"Donor support is essential to making digital pathology a reality at PRHC," says Lesley Heighway, PRHC Foundation President & CEO. "Our donors are the driving force behind this campaign, helping us bring vital advancements in healthcare to our region."



Dr. O'Reilly believes now is the time to bring this essential technology to PRHC and she knows it can't be done without donor support:

"Every bit of our work is possible because of the generosity of donors. Thank you so much."

For more information about this exciting advancement or to donate, please visit prhcfoundation.ca or call 705-876-5000.

Find out more



reImagine.
Health.
Care.

To learn more about the \$60 million Campaign for PRHC
visit prhcfoundation.ca or call 705-876-5000

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