

# Annual REPORT

## 2023



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## Dear Donors,

Every day I am inspired by the generosity of our community. Your commitment to the health and wellbeing of children and youth guides all CHEO Foundation staff. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with you to build a better future, together.

All of us in this region have come to appreciate the importance of having CHEO in our community. I was a CHEO kid, and my kids were CHEO kids. I find that I don't have to speak to someone for very long to discover a connection to CHEO - if not them, a family member, a neighbour, a colleague or a friend. The same is true for donors. The reasons for giving can be close to home, or a desire to support the most fragile among us. I wish all donors could see the impact of their contributions; it is phenomenal. When kids come through the doors at CHEO, just about every aspect of their care and treatment - the equipment, the programs, the research behind the diagnoses and treatments - is either funded by, or enhanced by, your sponsorship, your participation in events and your individual donations. Families that rely on CHEO feel the impact of your kindness and your generosity.

Please enjoy this annual report. It is a snapshot of what you have helped us achieve this year. Your belief in our mission not only provides crucial financial support but also inspires us to work harder. Kids these days really need our help. We look forward to sharing each step on the road to the future we must build together. Thank you for walking with us, thank you for being part of Team CHEO.

**Thank you for caring.**

Warmest regards,

Steve Read  
President and CEO  
CHEO Foundation





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For the first time in **CHEO**'s history, donors are helping to fund the position of a research chair!

Research at CHEO would not be possible without the support of generous donors. Donors support the CHEO Research Institute in many ways, most notably by funding their operating costs. By having donor dollars support the existence and operation of the Institute, researchers can then be hired, the laboratory environment can be established, and additional research funding can be secured through various sources.

The CHEO Research Institute and the CHEO Foundation named Dr. Kusum Menon the inaugural CHEO Foundation Research Chair in Pediatric Intensive Care. The Chair position provides Dr. Menon, a Pediatric Intensive Care physician at CHEO and Senior Scientist at the Research Institute, with protected time to carry out collaborative research work with partners across Canada and globally through numerous projects and leadership positions. CHEO and the CHEO Research Institute are excited to see the scientific advancements and clinical impacts enabled by this support.



“ This is such a great example of how donor dollars can not only facilitate innovative and life-saving care for kids at CHEO, but also fuel the ground-breaking discoveries that will impact the lives of children on a global scale! ”

Steve Read, President & CEO, CHEO Foundation





## Supporting cancer patients both physically and emotionally

For children suffering from the side effects of their cancer treatment, donors help CHEO offer therapeutic massage therapy to help alleviate some of the pain and distress they experience.

Last year, **59 patients** received services in over **229 massage sessions.**



Thanks to community support, CHEO's Massage Therapy Program helps meet the needs of children and youth receiving cancer treatments. This specialized form of therapy can:

- lower stress,
- ease tension and pain,
- reduce anxiety and
- help make patients feel more physically and emotionally relaxed.

# CHEO Foundation donors play a **major role** in supporting innovative research:

First patient treated in cell therapy trial to heal the lungs of preterm babies



Researchers at the CHEO Research Institute and The Ottawa Hospital have treated the first infant in an innovative clinical trial of a cell therapy that aims to prevent very premature babies from developing a chronic lung disease called bronchopulmonary dysplasia (BPD). This is the first trial of its kind in the world.

Very premature babies need extra oxygen and mechanical intervention to breathe, but this damages their lungs, causing BPD. Premature babies have smaller and weaker lungs that can't send as much oxygen to their growing brains. The lack of oxygen during brain development can lead to learning disabilities, or problems walking, hearing and seeing. Approximately 1,000 babies in Canada develop BPD every year.

**Until now there has been no hope for a cure or treatment.**

**This is a critical step towards a potential breakthrough therapy that could help premature babies in Canada and around the world.** ”

Dr. Thébaud, neonatologist and Senior Scientist

Dr. Bernard Thébaud, a neonatologist and Senior Scientist at the CHEO Research Institute and The Ottawa Hospital, and his team previously discovered that cells from the umbilical cord tissue, called mesenchymal stromal cells (MSCs), can heal lung injury and prevent BPD in newborn rodents. Since then, the team has been working tirelessly to bring this novel therapy to babies and their families through clinical trials.

**Thank you for improving lives today and changing the future of care.**





## Support for some of CHEO's sickest children and youth

Donor generosity has helped revamp CHEO's interventional radiology (IR) and catheterization (Cath) lab and build a new simulation (SIM) lab for medical learners. These state-of-the-art spaces contain the most advanced and innovative equipment and support for some of CHEO's sickest children and youth while providing staff with a **state-of-the-art training** environment.

Thanks to our generous community, CHEO can support more children and youth by offering neuroIR services. Critically ill patients requiring procedures in this area can now receive care from different teams at CHEO without having to transfer offsite. This is of great help, as offsite transfers require a fully specialized pediatric critical care team, pediatric-appropriate equipment and supplies, as well as critical care transport services. Having this new lab space at CHEO significantly reduces the need to move patients, **giving them access to life-saving treatment much faster.**



Interventional Radiology (IR) and Catheterization (Cath) Lab







## Using zebrafish as a tool for advancing cancer research

Dr. Jason Berman, CEO and Scientific Director of the CHEO Research Institute and Vice President of Research at CHEO, is internationally recognized for research using zebrafish to study childhood cancers and rare inherited diseases. The Berman Lab was the first lab in Canada focused on using zebrafish to study pediatric cancer. Despite their appearance, these small tropical zebrafish are genetically similar to humans. They have all the same genes, cells and tissues as humans which allows researchers to study genetic diseases like cancer.

The Berman Lab uses state-of-the-art genomic editing and transplantation-based approaches to generate cancer, precancerous disorders and other rare genetic diseases in the zebrafish. Thanks to their translucent skin, researchers can observe how cancer tumours grow and how they react to experimental interventions. The zebrafish will respond in a similar way to drugs and tumours as humans do. Researchers can see which drugs work best for tumours, understand a cancer's progression and recommend which drugs would be most effective for a patient. **This form of personalized medicine has the potential to provide more tailored and effective treatment for children and youth with cancer treated at CHEO and across Canada.**

[Click here to see Dr. Berman's lab!](#)



"More clues and answers are inside these fish - they have the potential to change the way children are treated in the future."

- Dr. Berman





Redesigning  
& creating new spaces:

## Mental Health Bed Expansion Project

Because of you, children and youth have access to specialized mental health support at all hours

When families don't know where to turn, they often visit the Emergency Department to seek help. Many Emergency Department visits at CHEO occur overnight, when fewer trained mental health clinicians are available.

The donor-funded 24/7 Child and Youth Counsellor (CYC) positions, which are part of the Mental Health Emergency Department team, provide **around-the-clock direct care and crisis de-escalation** to patients and families, conduct Emergency Department mental health assessments and connect patients and families with other care teams in the mental health community.

For the last couple of years, close to one third of patients seen by CYCs were evaluated between 11 p.m. to 8 a.m. Providing children and youth with mental health support at all hours is critical to help staff identify patients with co-occurring mental health and substance use challenges and to develop the capacity to address substance and addiction issues.

Overnight coverage for CYCs is the result of generous donor funding. Overnight staffing on the Crisis Team continues to be essential to supporting timely responses at night, reducing the length of stay in the Emergency Department for high need families, and preventing overnight holdovers.

Over the past year, incredible work has taken place to increase CHEO's physical space, including the mental health inpatient psychiatry unit. Thanks to generous donor contributions, CHEO has added four new inpatient single rooms for children and youth with severe mental health conditions. The new area frees space in other parts of the hospital, allowing CHEO to expand the eating disorder program. In addition to the new patient rooms, CHEO has added a nursing station to ensure continuous supervision, maintaining care and safety for patients. The newly opened spaces also include a sensory room, multi-purpose room and kitchenette.



**Watch here to learn more about this young mental health warrior.**

Pablo has relied on every avenue of mental health services provided at CHEO, from hospital admissions to assessments and counselling.





## Patient Experience and Family Support Services supports families in need

Staff look for ways to support families in need through financial assistance so that **parents can be their child's foremost support without having to deal with unsurmountable financial pressures.**

Thanks to donor generosity, nine families received funds to support funeral expenses and nine families were provided travel assistance to help cover out-of-pocket costs while travelling out of Ottawa to access medical care.

Over the course of 2023, **384 parking passes** were renewed and **103 families** who experienced a financial crisis as a result of their child's treatment received financial assistance.

These examples are just a few ways your dollars have offered compassion and transformed the lives of families.

## Additional nurses in the Neonatal Follow-Up Clinic

Over the past year, donor dollars have allowed CHEO's Neonatal Follow-Up Clinic to provide screening services to more than **400 infants identified as high risk** for potential developmental delays. In providing early screening via phone sessions with primary caregivers at six weeks, four months, eight to 12 months, 18 months and four years of the child's development, clinic staff can identify developmental issues and connect infants and children to the appropriate supports.

These scheduled phone calls are a standard of care that the clinic was previously unable to achieve. Generous support from donors has provided additional nursing time which will help to address developmental issues quickly.



## Patient lifts: freedom to play and just be kids



Patient lifts are an important piece of equipment that allows staff to move children and youth from their hospital beds to wheelchairs and stretchers so that they can safely make their way around the hospital. These lifts are especially useful for patients with mobility issues, who are recovering post-surgery, or who are undergoing treatments that require frequent repositioning. Just as important, they give patients the freedom to play and **just be kids**.

Our young patients aren't the only ones who benefit from this equipment. Thanks to these lifts, the physical strain on medical staff is reduced, allowing them to focus more on providing care rather than on the physical demands of lifting and moving patients.

Overall, patient lifts contribute to a safer and more efficient environment, improving our overall quality of care.

The team at LCBO is enormously generous and showcased their commitment to the children and youth in our region and beyond by funding the replacement of CHEO's patient lift fleet. Thank you for helping CHEO offer patients the best possible care with the most up-to-date equipment.





# Financials



Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management intends to liquidate the Foundation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Foundation's financial reporting process. The Board carries out this responsibility principally through its Finance Committee, whose members are appointed by the Board. The Finance Committee meets with management and the external auditors to discuss internal controls over the financial reporting process, auditing matters and financial reporting issues, and to satisfy itself that each party is properly discharging its responsibilities. The Finance Committee reports its findings to the Board for consideration when approving the financial statements for issuance to the members in the Annual Report.

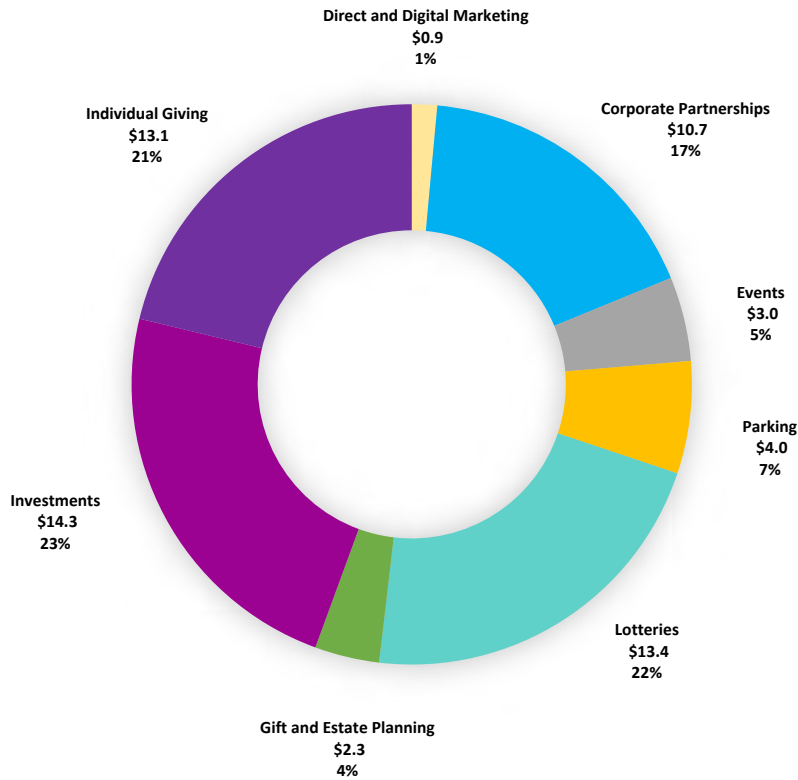
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Thomas'.

Rob Thomas  
Vice President, Finance and Human Resources





# Financials



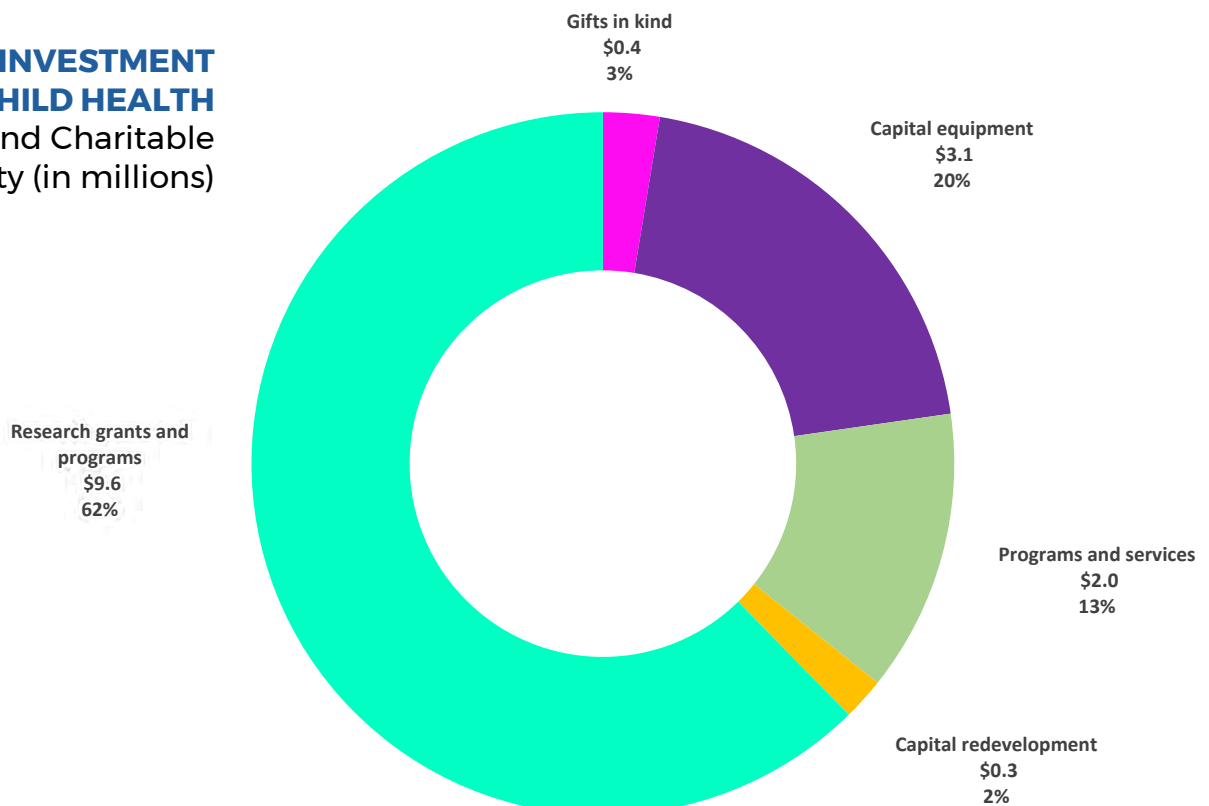
## SOURCE OF REVENUE (in millions)

Gross fundraising program,  
lottery and parking revenue:  
**\$ 61.7**

Total distributions and  
charitable activity:  
**\$ 15.4**

Fundraising and  
administrative expenses:  
**\$ 18.3**

## INVESTMENT IN CHILD HEALTH Grants and Charitable Activity (in millions)





# Donor Bill of Rights



- To be informed of the CHEO Foundation's **mission**, of the intended use for donated resources, and of the capacity for donations to be used **effectively** for their intended purpose.
- To be informed of the identity of the CHEO Foundation's **governing board**, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgement in its **stewardship responsibilities**.
- To have access to the CHEO Foundation's most recent **financial statements**.
- To be assured their **gifts** will be used for the purposes for which they were given.
- To receive appropriate **acknowledgement and recognition**.
- To be assured that information about their donations is handled with **respect** and with **confidentiality** to the extent required by law.
- To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be **professional** in nature.
- To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the CHEO Foundation, or hired solicitors.
- To have the **opportunity** for their names to be deleted from mailing lists.
- To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive **prompt, truthful** and **forthright** answers.





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