

THE BULLETIN

HGH FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER- SPRING 2019



STORIES YOU CREATE EVERYDAY

How your donations have impacted the life of Mrs. Boucher, a beloved dialysis patient at HGH

By Erin Tabakman, Donor Relations Officer

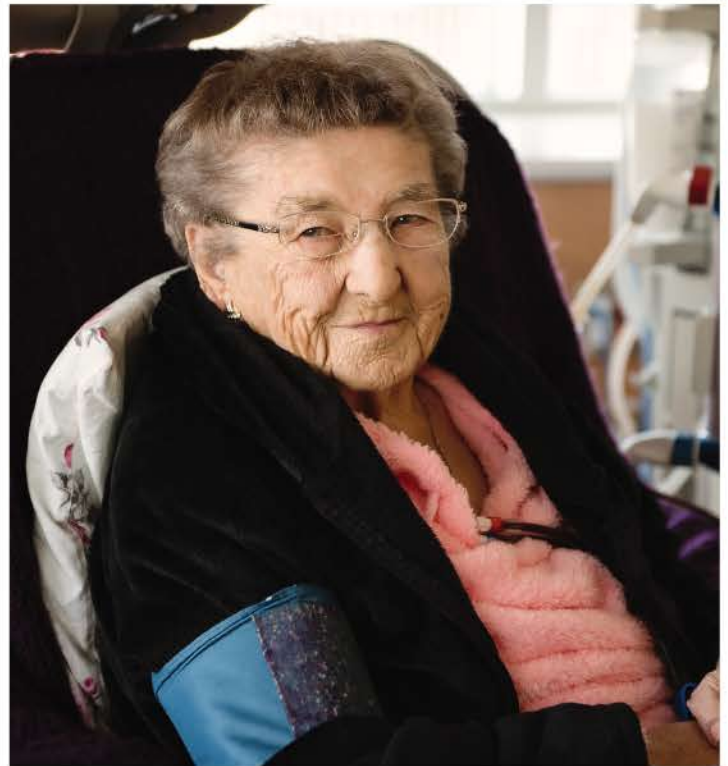
I can't help but be drawn to Mrs. Ozéline Boucher's kind eyes and warm smile. On a sunny Friday afternoon, she shares her story with me while undergoing hemodialysis. Mrs. Boucher has been a dialysis patient of the Hawkesbury and District General Hospital (HGH) for over 13 years, and there is no doubt that she is an incredibly strong woman. In addition to her own health challenges, she has had to overcome many difficult losses in her life, including the recent deaths of her husband of 73 years and their beloved daughter.

Despite the challenges she has faced, Mrs. Boucher, who has just celebrated her 97th birthday, is grateful that she has been able to maintain her health through the many years of care she has received at HGH's dialysis clinic. "I wouldn't be alive without them," says Mrs. Boucher, who attends the clinic for four hour sessions three times each week. For her, and other patients like her, dialysis helps the body by performing the functions that her failed kidneys can no longer carry out.

"When I was diagnosed with kidney failure, I had to travel one hour each way to St. Jerome, three times per week. It was exhausting! Being able to receive treatment closer to home has changed my life."

Mrs. Boucher goes on to explain that although there's nothing painful about undergoing dialysis, once she completes her treatment, she is too tired to even undress. "I'm so fortunate to have my sons," she says gratefully, "they help get me settled once the volunteer driver has brought me home from the hospital. I can't imagine how difficult it would be if I had a long drive to face each and every time I came for treatment."

The dialysis clinic, now located in HGH's brand new ambulatory care building, has large windows, comfortable



reclining chairs and TVs at each station for those who wish to pass the time with their favourite program. Throughout my visit with Mrs. Boucher, the nurses stop by to check on her, and it's obvious that they share a close connection. "The nurses are very caring and so good to me," she beams, "they even invited me for lunch on my birthday and gave me a beautiful pink rose for Valentines Day."

When I speak with some of the nurses in the dialysis department, they refer to Mrs. Boucher as "a beloved treasure" and say that in their department, patients are like family. "We often see them more than we do our families at home!" they add.

As for Mrs. Boucher, her strength continues to inspire everyone around her. Her family, both at home and at HGH, are thankful this special lady is able to receive the care she needs, closer to home.

The dialysis program exists at HGH thanks in part to your support. Your generous donations help ensure patients like Mrs. Boucher are able to receive care at HGH. Thank you!

HOW YOUR DONATIONS ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Treatment of Anxiety With the Use of Virtual Technology at HGH

Anxiety disorders are the most common of all mental health problems. In fact, the Government of Canada estimates that one in 10 Canadians is affected by an anxiety disorder. For most anxiety disorder sufferers, the brain interprets real or imagined events to be much more risky or dangerous than they really are, setting off an alarm reaction causing an incredible sense of fear and distress. This often interferes with personal and professional relationships and has a significant impact on the quality of life of the individual and their family.

HGH's Mental Health and Addiction Regional Centre, located on Spence Avenue in Hawkesbury, provides community mental health and addiction services to clients to help them achieve a better quality of life. The new three-storey building, which opened in July 2016, includes a fully functional cyber psychology lab, with virtual reality equipment funded entirely by your donations to the HGH Foundation.

Dr. Caroline Tadros, Psychologist & Clinical Chief at the Centre, explains that cyber psychology is used by psychologists and psychotherapists at HGH primarily to

treat anxiety disorders, phobias and gambling addiction. Dr. Tadros and her team will first meet with a client in order to confirm their treatment plan and will then start psycho-education and psychotherapy with the client before deciding whether to use cyber psychology as a tool in their treatment. "For our clients who suffer from anxiety, there is often a lot of avoidance of the thoughts, places, and things that they fear. The fear may prevent them from going to public places, speaking in front of a group or a variety of other situations or triggers which are anxiety provoking for the person. Generally, the most effective form of treatment for these clients is gradual exposure to these triggers, whether that be an imaginary exposure, direct exposure or in some cases, a virtual exposure."

Dr. Tadros goes on to explain that virtual exposure enables her and her colleagues to accompany and support their clients through a feared situation, without even having to leave their office. "The client wears earphones and a special helmet which covers their eyes with a screen, immersing them in the virtual environment. The therapist sits at a computer screen which shows them the same



Dr. Caroline Tadros gives a Foundation staff member the opportunity to experience HGH's cyber psychology equipment, which was funded entirely by your generous donations



environment, so they are truly able to share in the experience with the client, even being able to speak as some of the virtual people in the room.”

The system provides various different very realistic looking environments, including a classroom, where someone who suffers from social anxiety may be encouraged to speak in front of the class. Similarly, a client who suffers from a fear of germs may enter a virtual public bathroom and be encouraged to approach or touch a dirty surface. Someone who has struggled with a gambling addiction will likely be introduced to the bar environment, which has slot machines, in an effort to allow them to practice resisting the temptation to play.

These kinds of virtual exposures enable the therapist to recreate a feared situation which triggers the client’s reaction at an acceptable and monitored level. Repeated exposure to the fear will retrain the area of the brain which has become hypersensitive in sending signals of danger.

For most anxiety disorder sufferers, exposure treatment can feel daunting and scary. After all, clients are being asked to confront their biggest fears! For those who may not

be ready to tackle this in real life, virtual reality exposures are just as effective, and may be easier to confront while helping habituate a client to exposures in general.

Dr. Tadros says this state-of-the-art equipment is the envy of health professionals who do not have access to this technology in their work environment and notes that HGH is the first community based Canadian hospital with virtual reality technology.

“We are so grateful to the donors of the HGH Foundation for this incredible tool, which often results in quicker and more concrete outcomes for our clients. Those who are often isolated and unable to access care have reaped the benefits of this technology and I hope donors realize the impact they have had on many of our clients’ lives by supporting the purchase of this equipment for our hospital.”

– Dr. Caroline Tadros, Psychologist & Clinical Chief



LOCAL COUPLE CREATES GENEROUS LEGACY

Laurette and Lucien Piette were an inspiration to their family and friends. This hard-working couple made plans many years ago so that they could continue to make a difference in their community after their passing.

Their legacy included a bequest to the HGH Foundation, which was among 15 charities they supported. We are honoured and forever grateful.

Laurette and Lucien Piette were both raised in the Hawkesbury area and considered it home. Although they moved to the Hearst region for Lucien's work and raised their seven children there, they chose to retire back in Hawkesbury where they were surrounded by family and friends.

The couple was well known for their warmth and generosity; often welcoming and adding spots around the table for their children's friends and yet still finding time to volunteer in their community. Lucien sat on the board of directors of the local hospital in Hearst for many years, while Laurette spent hours visiting hospitalized patients who so benefited from seeing a kind, friendly face.



When they returned to Hawkesbury in 1983, Laurette volunteered her time at HGH's gift shop and took great satisfaction in knowing she was helping raise money to enhance the services available at the hospital. In 2004, after more than 50 years of marriage, when Lucien became ill and then later passed away, Laurette was grateful for the excellent care he received while at HGH.

It wasn't until last year, when Laurette passed away, that her children realized their parents had chosen together, years before, to leave gifts to numerous charities in their Will, including the Hawkesbury and District Hospital, where they had both received care.

They were touched and proud of their parents' incredible legacy, which is filled with generosity and kindness, much like how they lived their lives and supported each of their children.

Please support the HGH Foundation by returning this form with your tax deductible gift in the enclosed postage paid envelope. Thank you for your support!



YES! I want to help bring new equipment and services to HGH!

Here is my gift of \$ _____

You will find enclosed my cheque payable to HGH Foundation. **OR** Please charge to my account: VISA MASTERCARD AMERICAN EXPRESS
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Name of donor : _____

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