



October 10, 2024

*For immediate release*

### **Foundation launches Growing TogetherER Campaign for Emergency Department Redevelopment**

**BARRY'S BAY** – Today, St. Francis Valley Healthcare Foundation announced its \$2.7 million Growing TogetherER Emergency Department Redevelopment Campaign, marking the largest fundraising campaign to date for the Foundation.

On September 18, 2020, the Province of Ontario announced its financial commitment to the redevelopment of the Emergency Department at St. Francis Memorial Hospital. This includes a 6,000 square foot addition to our emergency department and a 6,000 square foot renovation of the hospital's ambulatory care clinic.

The project will address key challenges in the emergency department and ambulatory care clinic:

- **Privacy and confidentiality:** All exam rooms will be self-contained with doors for privacy. Designated registration and triage areas will ensure confidentiality and safety. Separate waiting rooms will be created for emergency patients and ambulatory care patients.
- **Infection control:** A standardized decontamination space will help prep patients from chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear events. The redevelopment will make way for a new major treatment area and an isolation room with private washroom for immunocompromised patients or those suspected of infectious disease.
- **Occupational health and safety:** Healthcare staff will have proper sightlines to the exam rooms and waiting area from the centralized communications centre. A dedicated space will be created for Emergency Medical Service personnel, including a secure waiting/working area. There will also be an enclosed ambulance entrance inside a secure garage.

The Ministry of Health requires that St. Francis Memorial Hospital come up with 10% of the overall emergency department redevelopment cost, and 100% of the medical equipment inside the building. As the fundraising organization for the hospital, the St. Francis Valley Healthcare Foundation launched the quiet phase of its Growing TogetherER Campaign back in June 2023.

Since then, a Campaign Leadership Team (consisting of Ray Pastway, Chris Briggs, Robert Howe, Bruce Willmer, Dr. Joe Cybulski, Pat Pilgrim, Jane Dumas and SFVHF Executive Director Erin Gienow) has been meeting with donors, sharing information about the project with an invitation to support it financially.

"We are simply blown away by the generosity of our donors," Gienow said. "They welcomed us with open arms in the early days of this Campaign. They shared their stories with us; we laughed together and sometimes even cried together. These donors formed the cornerstones of this Campaign through their selflessness and positivity. We look forward to continuing these relationships and cultivating new ones as we enter into the Campaign's public phase."

At the community launch held on October 10, the Leadership Team revealed that thanks to generous donors, they have helped the Foundation raise an incredible 85% towards its \$2.7 million goal.

“It is difficult for me to put into words what an inspiration this team has been to work with,” Gienow said. “Our Leadership Team recognized the importance of the project and put their hearts into raising funds not only for the needs of healthcare today, but for generations to come.”

Dr. Jason Malinowski, a family physician at St. Francis Memorial Hospital, said this is the largest renovation to the hospital since its construction in 1960.

“It’s an exciting and historic time for St. Francis Memorial Hospital,” Dr. Malinowski said. “Once this renovation and redevelopment is complete, our hospital will be well-positioned to not only address present needs but also future considerations, as we estimate the patient numbers and complexities in ER only growing in coming years.”

The project will be tendered in the coming months. Construction is anticipated to start in 2025 and will take around two years to complete.

“We recognize that the construction period will be a bit of a heavy lift,” hospital Chief Operating Officer Greg McLeod said. “It will be like renovating your kitchen while you are cooking. However, the outcome will be amazing and transformative for our hospital. We will continue to provide the service that we have all come to rely upon throughout the project.”

There are a number of ways to help the Growing TogethER Campaign reach its goal. A new lottery will be launched on Oct. 23 (stay tuned for details), and proceeds from the annual Tree of Lights mail-out will be directed to Emergency Department Redevelopment. Donors can give directly through the Growing TogethER Campaign by contacting the Foundation, or plan a third-party event.

For more information on how to help, visit [www.sfvhfoundation.com](http://www.sfvhfoundation.com) or call 613-756-3045 ext. 217.

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**For more information:**

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***About the St. Francis Valley Healthcare Foundation***

Incorporated in 2001, the St. Francis Valley Healthcare Foundation is dedicated to raising funds to ensure support for capital projects, equipment purchases and services at our local healthcare organizations including: St. Francis Memorial Hospital, Madawaska Valley Palliative Care and the Valley Manor Long Term Care Home.

***About St. Francis Memorial Hospital***

St. Francis Memorial Hospital (SFMH) is a 20-bed community hospital located in the village of Barry’s Bay. It serves a catchment of approximately 10,000 population dispersed over a large geographic area that includes 1,800 sq. kilometers in Renfrew County, a portion of South Algonquin Township in the District of Nipissing and Algonquin Park, Hwy 60 main corridor. SFMH's mission is "To provide high quality, patient centred healthcare in collaboration with our partners" and is committed to performance.