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Donation funds specialized pediatric emergency care ‘pod’

New South Health Campus space funded by \$3.9M donation to Calgary Health Trust

CALGARY – A specialized emergency care space for children is expected to open this summer at the South Health Campus – a \$3.9-million project fully funded by an anonymous donor to Calgary Health Trust through the Calgary Foundation.

The new space, or pod, will have capacity for 14,500 patients annually. It will have nine beds and child-friendly murals to help make the hospital setting less intimidating for young patients. The pod will enable front-line staff to care for pediatric patients in a dedicated space that does not expose them to the environment of an adult emergency room.

Currently, about one of five patients seen at the South Health Campus emergency department is under the age of 18.

“This is a great example of how communities and health foundations often work in close partnership with the Government of Alberta to make this province a great place to live and raise a family,” says Health Minister Tyler Shandro. “The development of a specialized pediatric emergency care space will support families not just in Calgary but throughout southern Alberta.”

With a 40-kilometre distance between South Health Campus and the Alberta Children’s Hospital, the southeast Calgary hospital sees pediatric patients from south Calgary communities, Okotoks, High River, Strathmore and other surrounding towns.

“It is a great honour for Calgary Health Trust to work with the Calgary Foundation in representing a donor who wants to build community legacy and make a lasting, tangible impact in our very own city,” says Mike Meldrum, President & CEO, Calgary Health Trust. “This project is an exciting opportunity to bring donors to the table to respond to our city’s growing health needs faster and ensuring that what we build is truly world-class.”

“For a child and their family, a trip to the emergency room is one of the most stressful, fragile moments of their lives,” adds Calgary Foundation President and CEO Eva Friesen. “What a privilege for us at Calgary Foundation, thanks to the extreme generosity of an anonymous donor, to help provide a safe, calm, welcoming space for these young patients. As part of our ongoing commitment to mental health and community well-being, Calgary Foundation is so proud to support Calgary Health Trust through this impactful grant.”

Alberta Health Services President and CEO Dr. Verna Yiu says the new pod will help improve the healthcare experience for young patients and their families.

“As a pediatrician, I’m aware how much a welcoming space can ease the stress parents and children feel when they come to a hospital for care,” says Dr. Yiu. “This new space will help comfort families during a difficult time, while helping AHS meet the demand for pediatric emergency services in south Calgary and surrounding areas.”

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Calgary Health Trust is a Calgary-based charity focused on fundraising that will transform health care in Alberta. The incredible generosity of our donors has helped to raise more than \$459 million for healthcare since 1996. Funds raised benefit Foothills Medical Centre, Peter Lougheed Centre, Rockyview General Hospital, South Health Campus, many community health programs and 12 Carewest care centres in our community. For more information about Calgary Health Trust and its strategic priorities, visit calgaryhealthtrust.ca

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than four million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

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For further information, contact:

Calgary Health Trust

Valerie Ball
Director of Communications
403-990-7943

Alberta Health Services

Melanie Veriotes
Senior Communications Advisor
403-312-4352