POWERING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

2020 ANNUAL SUMMARY
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Here at the FHN Foundation, we have powered through the COVID-19 pandemic just like many of you – with diligence, tenacity, and as much grace as we could muster. We worked to keep our key initiatives moving forward while helping our healthcare heroes care for you under challenging circumstances. To do so, we had to adapt to constant change, negotiate tricky terrain, and … ask for your help. You responded generously.

This annual summary gives you a look at how we responded to an unprecedented healthcare landscape in 2020 and found within difficult times a way to survive – and indeed thrive – in the midst of so much uncertainty. We are proud of FHN’s performance, pleased with our ability to provide service during a crisis, and most of all, gratified by the help that poured in from our community. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Your gifts make a difference every day!

TONYA THAYER
FHN Foundation
Executive Director

MOVING PATIENTS FROM POINT A TO POINT B IS NO SMALL TASK IN A HOSPITAL SETTING, WHERE COVERING A LOT OF GROUND IS THE NORM.

To help, the Foundation purchased several new Stryker wheelchairs using funds from the 2020 Partners in Giving (PiG) employee program. These ergonomically designed chairs cost approximately $2,500 each, and provide improved transport for patients and increased safety and mobility for caregivers. Here, Jessie Hutchison, the Foundation’s administrative assistant and PiG representative, tries out a new chair with the help of Andrea Klosinski, RN, and Tina Kluck, CNA.

Over the years, nearly $1.7 million has been donated to the FHN Foundation through the Partners in Giving program, providing invaluable support to our healthcare community. We thank our dedicated team members who give so generously year after year!

GRATEFUL PATIENTS GIVE FROM THE HEART

After receiving care at FHN, many patients feel considerable gratitude for the skilled and compassionate staff members who attended to them when they needed medical treatment. FHN’s “Grateful Patient” program provides an opportunity for many of these thankful people to donate to the Foundation and share a personal story about someone who made an impact on them during their stay.

This program has grown greatly during the COVID-19 virus, as the public has become so acutely aware of the training, commitment, and dedication of medical personnel – true heroes in pandemic times or not. Here are just a few lines of appreciation shared by actual patients:

“”To the gentleman who brought my breakfast – your smile made me feel less alone. Thank you."

“”To my nurse who reminded me so much of my daughter, thank you for caring for me with love."

“”To the doctor who found my cancer – thank you for trusting my intuition and never giving up!"

Donations to the Grateful Patient program – large and small – add up to provide big benefits for local healthcare initiatives. In 2020, the majority of these gifts have been directed toward the current campaign focused on our surgery center upgrade, though benefactors can select any project or specialty they choose. We appreciate each and every donation!
When vulnerable patients need constant observation for heart and pulmonary issues, a central station provides continuous monitoring of their heart rhythms, 24/7. FHN added an innovative new GE Central Station in 2020, thanks to a $74,000 gift from FHN Foundation donors.

This new equipment was earmarked for purchase before the COVID-19 pandemic, but became even more important when the complicated needs of coronavirus patients were determined. The new design not only helps technicians monitor complex cardiac rhythms, but can also provide blood oxygen monitoring, an important variable in those suffering from respiratory challenges commonly found in COVID patients.

This increased functionality helps improve patient care by increasing system flexibility and adaptability. Now, patients who need to be carefully watched because of cardiac complications, strokes, COVID-19, surgery, or other severe illnesses, can be observed from several locations with more integrated functionality. The result? Remote monitoring on a completely new level … literally from different floors of the hospital if needed, with expanded backup capabilities.

According to Director of Inpatient Nursing Andrea Klosinski, RN, PCCN, MSN, CNL, “This Central Station gives us the ability to monitor up to 40 patients at a time for subtle changes that can help detect the onset of adverse events. It integrates monitoring and historical data from multiple sources and presents it to caregivers, helping them make sound decisions, reduce errors, and deliver clinical excellence. We presented this potential purchase to the Foundation and really appreciate that they said ‘yes’ to the Central Station. Thanks to all the donors for helping to continually improve patient care at FHN!”

“GIVING IS NOT JUST ABOUT MAKING A DONATION. IT IS ABOUT MAKING A DIFFERENCE.”
– KATHY CALVIN
When dealing with the constant threat of COVID-19, it is important to have good-fitting, high-quality protection from the virus. Experts consider N95s the standard in masks, but not all employees who need this extra protection can pass a “fit test” – an assessment to make sure the mask is fitting properly.

These employees are considered candidates for CAPRs – Controlled Air Purifying Respirators, which deliver a better solution for certain individuals while providing safety, comfort, and convenience. What makes a CAPR different from traditional PPE is a built-in, battery-operated air handling system that draws air in through a HEPA filter and blows it into the “breathing zone,” creating positive pressure so virus particles are not inhaled. CAPRs also adjust easily, similar to a bicycle helmet, making them even more versatile for a variety of subjects.

In all, the Foundation purchased six CAPRs to help susceptible employees reduce their risk.

The Foundation received abundant donations from big-hearted businesses and individuals who reached out to provide assistance and comfort to our hard-working staff. This support included PPE such as N95 masks and disposable gloves; donated meals and treats to provide sustenance to exhausted staff; personal products like lotions and other special items to soothe skin agitated by long hours in PPE and provide stress relief; and thousands of homemade masks sewn by local crafters to protect the community. The FHN team is eternally grateful for these generous gifts, which helped us both physically and mentally face the challenges of each day.

The COVID-19 fund is still accepting donations through the Foundation, as we continue to face obstacles from this pandemic and prepare for future situations that we cannot envision today. FHN cared for hundreds of COVID patients in 2020, and our experts pledge to be forward-thinking as we plan for the medical maladies of tomorrow.
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This hungry group of employees from our Emergency Department enjoyed a bountiful breakfast courtesy of generous donations.

Bev Kruse made more than 500 masks to help fight COVID-19. She was not alone. Scores of community members got out their sewing baskets and went to work stitching masks for people they did not know. We appreciate their hard work and altruism, and know these masks helped limit local infection rates. Thank you, volunteers!

Our appreciation goes out to these sponsors and all the others that provided special meals for our staff members.

FHN received hundreds of thank-you cards from community members throughout the pandemic. The power of this gratitude cannot go unrecognized – these words of appreciation warmed our hearts and kept us going through some very difficult days.

CNA Amelia Huizenga, Dr. Erich Awender, and CNA Arica Watts wore CAPRs for protection against COVID-19. These high-tech respirators provide protection when N95 masks will not fit properly.
Continuous learning is valued and encouraged at FHN. Two innovative nurses are living proof.

The pair set out to enhance FHN’s emphasis on Evidence-Based Practice (EBP), an approach that focuses on learning best practices, conducting literature/research review, and applying that evidence to improve healthcare performance. The FHN Foundation is thrilled to help fund this exciting program, since EBP has been shown to enhance:

- The quality of patient care and outcomes
- Patient satisfaction
- Staff retention and autonomy
- Cost savings

Supervisor of Clinical Resources Jessica Larson MSN, RN, and Nursing Development Specialist Tammy Stadermann, MSN, RN, are heading up this innovative program. According to Jessica, “We are energized by this opportunity, and have enlisted an impressive array of subject-matter experts to support our curriculum. Participants will gain vital knowledge of what Evidence-Based Practice is and how to utilize this knowledge in everyday practice.”

**CLASS INCLUDES SEVEN RNS WITH SUBSTANTIVE GOALS**

Interest in the EBP program was high, and seven nurses were chosen as “fellows.” Each one identified a clinical question or area of interest within their application, encompassing varied subjects that affect a high number of patients. The EBP fellows and their projects are:

1. Preventing healthcare-acquired pneumonia in non-ventilated patients through improved oral hygiene – LeAnn Raders
2. Identifying and implementing best practices to help streamline processes in cardiac monitoring and documentation – Krista Montgomery
3. Improving processes related to blood glucose monitoring and meals with insulin administration – Tabitha Graves
4. Evaluating and improving processes for code blue (cardiac or respiratory arrest) training and drills/practice for the ICU nursing staff – Tonya Newill
5. Evaluating prevention of urinary retention, reduce repeat catheterization, and potentially reduce length of stay associated with urinary retention, especially in total joint replacement patients – Tracy Hayes
6. Identifying and implementing best practices for early mobility of the ICU patient (re-evaluation and improvement of current processes) – Sue Harmon
7. Improving retention and recruitment of CNAs (certified nursing assistants), exploring possibilities with elevation/growth/advancement, scheduling and workload, engagement, and more – Candice Nepean

**A YEAR-LONG COMMITMENT**

The fellowship is a 12-15 month program, including six months of training and classwork, done simultaneously with project work; five months of implementation, data collection, and data analysis; and up to three months of information dissemination. Participants work with a clinical mentor to help guide their projects. Upon completion of the program, they are encouraged to share their findings internally and externally through poster production and presentation, abstract submission, and/or article publication.
While 2020 slowed down activity in our surgical suites, with many elective procedures being delayed due to COVID protocols, fundraising for our surgical center transformation continued to build. This $1.4 million project will keep us at the forefront of technology for many years to come, and is the Foundation’s current campaign focus. Improvements will be impressive. New video equipment will be LED, all-digital, and high-definition. It will help distinguish critical anatomy with nine dedicated surgical camera specialty settings to provide an enhanced visual assessment of blood flow using fluorescent light. This advanced, military-grade technology helps surgeons see clearly through suboptimal conditions sometimes encountered during laparoscopic and arthroscopic procedures.

Innovative flooring and wall panels will be easy to clean and able to withstand hospital-grade cleaning solutions and disinfectants. They also will be durable, stain-resistant, and seamless to eliminate any areas that could harbor unwanted bacteria. This will not only ensure patient safety, but also enable staff to be more efficient in their processes, thus minimizing patient wait times.

The Foundation is thrilled to support this important project, and so thankful that our community understands the benefits it will bring to our local healthcare capabilities. Work is planned to be completed in phases, so our surgical teams will continue to provide uninterrupted, safe, and compassionate surgical services for FHN patients throughout this initiative.

Our appreciation goes out to all who have already donated … and those who may do so in 2021! Naming rights, in honor of a family or special individual, are available at various levels for consultation rooms and other upgraded surgical areas. Contact the Foundation to learn more about these opportunities!

Tammy, who acts as the program facilitator and lead instructor, is proud of the field of fellows. She shares, “Participants have demonstrated a great deal of dedication to FHN and their patients by committing to this program. It is a significant time investment, which we believe will yield impressive results. I look forward to seeing not only the end product of their projects, but more importantly, the positive impact their work will have for our patients and staff.”

EBP students are not paid an hourly wage for their study time, but do receive free continuing education credits for attendance as well as stipends from the Foundation at the midterm and end of the program in honor of patient care improvements. The Foundation also assists with supplies needed to complete projects and funds to help pay conference fees. According to FHN Foundation Executive Director Tonya Thayer, “We are pleased to make this investment in staff development and promote a culture of Evidence-Based Practice. We wish our first “class” great success in their studies!”
CRISIS STABILIZATION CENTER OPENS ITS DOORS THANKS TO FOUNDATION DONORS

Local behavioral health care became more accessible in 2020, thanks in part to FHN Foundation donors. The Dr. Ravi and Mrs. Minu Vyas Crisis Stabilization Center at FHN Family Counseling was completed in November and is already making an impact on our community’s well-being. The Center was a focus for the Foundation the past two years.

This new facility provides coordinated care for adults experiencing a behavioral health emergency. Rather than relying on a hospital’s emergency room (ER) or local law enforcement facilities, it provides a therapeutic, living room-type environment along with personalized care that is more comprehensive. It provides better treatment for behavioral health wellness and actually costs less than dealing with such issues through the traditional ER process.

Donors can take pride in knowing they made a difference for patients experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Their dedication to helping friends and neighbors in need is a wonderful example of our community’s generosity.

MORE DONATIONS AT WORK

Here is a look at more ways your 2020 donations helped enhance healthcare at FHN locations in northwest Illinois. Additional gifts included:

- Lucy birthing simulation
- Public transportation vouchers
- Apnea monitor
- Portable treadmill
- QA cross checker for radiation machine
- COIL pediatric lab training arm
- Fetal heart rate monitor
- AED and supplies
- Blue UV light cleaner
- Flow meters
- Temporal thermometers
- Sit-to-stand chair
- Surgical headlight
- Ultrasound Estim combo unit with cart
- Gel warmer
- Hydraulic engine crane
- NASCO venipuncture training aid
- Bariatric chair
- Phlebotomy chair
- Blood pressure machine with stand
- Tympanic thermometers
- Pulse oximeters
- And many more

During a “typical” year, or in a time of great turbulence, like 2020, the FHN Foundation is committed to using our community’s gifts to increase FHN’s technical expertise, improve staff training, focus on safety, and enable a more vibrant, vigorous region for you.

You helped us Power through the Pandemic. We ask for your continued support in 2021. Please consider a donation today!