

An Open Letter to our Donors:

I have been contacted over the past two weeks by many of our Foundation's donors and supporters expressing concern about recent disclosures with respect to executive compensation at London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC). It has become clear from my discussions that there is considerable confusion about the role the Foundation plays in funding your Hospital – to the point that I feel it very important that we set the record straight.

Perhaps the first and most important point to make is that the Foundation has not, does not, and will not fund the administrative salaries and day-to-day operating costs of the Hospital. These expenses are funded by the Province of Ontario, through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. As an example, no Foundation funds were disbursed directly or indirectly to fund former President & CEO Cliff Nordal's salary, expenses or bonus, and the Foundation is simply not involved in the hiring policies and in setting or paying executive compensation at the Hospital.

It is important to understand that the Foundation is a completely separate legal entity from LHSC, governed by a completely separate unpaid, volunteer Board of Directors. While the Hospital is the beneficiary of our efforts, the Hospital has no free call upon the donor funds held and administered by the Foundation. Our obligation is to our donors and we are indeed trustees of donor funds received. Donor funds are disbursed as directed by our donors and we [account to our donors](#) for those disbursements. The funds support programs, research, equipment purchases, education and training not otherwise funded by the Ministry and/or granting agencies. It is often donor funding which allows the Hospital to advance care and research well beyond government-funded standards, for the benefit of the patients and families we serve.

I believe that we can offer better perspective, however, not by telling you what we don't do, but by emphasizing what we do, in fact, do to support care. The following are but a few examples of the resources made available by the contributions of our donors, and which the Hospital would most certainly not have were it not for those donations:

- The new [North Tower at Victoria Hospital](#) – which houses Women's and Newborn Care, the new birthing unit, the Children's Hospital and many other services – was made possible by donor dollars. It was the first purpose-built facility of its kind in Canada. Donor dollars funded the "community" portion of the funds required for this initiative, which was unprecedented, in scope and size, in London's history.
- The [Matthew Mailing Centre for Translational Transplant Studies](#), the [Centre for Clinical Investigation and Therapeutics](#), the [Dr. Sandy Kirkley Centre for Musculoskeletal Research](#) and the [Brent and Marilyn Kelman Centre for Advanced Learning](#), all housed within the Lindros Legacy Research building at University Hospital, and all fully equipped and operative, represent four of the leading research initiatives in Canada, attracting outstanding medical talent from around the world to our community, all made possible by donor contributions.
- The Ivey Heart Centre at University Hospital, a comprehensive treatment centre, was, in part, made possible by donor support.
- The new, state-of-the-art minimally invasive operating suite at University Hospital is funded by donor dollars.



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- A new dedicated orthopaedic operating room at University Hospital will be funded by donor dollars.
- The "C-arm" robotic neuro-angiogram machine installed in the neurosurgery operating suite at University Hospital, was, at the time, the first in North America and was completely funded by donor contributions.
- Patient Assistance Funds in our [cancer](#), trauma and [mental health](#) programs provide vital assistance to many patients confronting devastating disease and injury who, in many cases, could not otherwise afford treatment. These Funds are completely made possible by donor contributions and donor-sponsored events.
- The Foundation provides research dollars to many programs which are leveraged many times over by facilitating the qualification and application for government-sponsored grants. A recent grant in support of breast cancer research resulted in more than a tenfold return in grant support.

The examples are many, the result is that literally thousands of lives, now and in the future, will be saved, extended and improved, and it is simply not possible without donor support. More than ever, it is important to understand that you, our donors and supporters, make a real difference in the lives of families, loved ones, friends and neighbours, and we simply can't do it without you. Without question or doubt, you should make sure that your gifts are used for the purposes intended, and the Foundation will continue to embrace that responsibility and report to you. Demand that accountability, but please give. Otherwise, for our patients and their families, we will be less than we can be.

One needs only to witness the gratitude of our [600th heart transplant recipient](#), or hear the heartfelt words of a healthy and vibrant transplant recipient some 30 years after his successful surgery, all as recently recounted in the *London Free Press*, to understand the importance of what your Hospital achieves. To date, the Foundation has provided more than \$11 million to support and enable the [Multi-Organ Transplant Program](#).

None of this is intended to minimize public concern, but to hopefully draw a balance, and underscore the life-changing moments that truly do occur every day at your Hospital, many of which would not have happened, and will not happen in the future, without the [support of our donor community](#).

As donors, you are our heroes, our ambassadors and our advocates. I hope that this information will be helpful as you speak to your friends, neighbours and colleagues, and bring clarity to the role of the Foundation. The fact is that your Hospital delivers care and research at a level well above what might be expected for a community and region of our size. Our goal, with your help, is to keep it that way.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Ross'.

Dan Ross
President & CEO
London Health Sciences Foundation