

# Lyndhurst Newsletter

January 2026, ed3



## Welcome to the Lyndhurst Spinal Cord Rehab Program Newsletter!

We are thrilled to be able to bring you news from the program including updates, highlights and achievements. The goal for this newsletter is to connect with past and current patients, families and friends delivering information to help keep you healthy and engaged after spinal cord injury.

- Staff Updates: Meet new team members and celebrate those moving on.
- Education Corner: Learn about adaptive clothing and our new program on transgender health and inclusion at Lyndhurst.
- Merchandise: Learn about the new clothing line for purchase.
- Research Highlights: Discover the latest innovations improving care for people with SCI.
- Patient Experience: See how your feedback shapes our programs and why your voice matters.

Thank you for being part of our community! Your input helps us make Lyndhurst even better—share your ideas for future topics you would like to see highlighted in this space.

Michael Roberts - Clinical Director  
Dr. Cathy Craven - Medical Director

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## Contact Us

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520 Sutherland Drive	
Toronto, ON	
M4G 3V9	

# Staff at Lyndhurst



## STAFFING CHANGES AT LYNDHURST

Over the past 6 months, we have welcomed the following staff to the Lyndhurst team:

Randell Acuram - temporary part time OTA/PTA  
Jasjeet Chhoker - Occupational Therapist  
Keitha Descartes - Allied Health Administrator  
April Huang - 2B Unit Service Manager  
Sana Homsi - Speech Language Pathologist  
Kenedy Olsen - Occupational Therapist  
Henry Lin - Unit 1 Service Manager

We also welcome many new nurses and PSWs to our team!



### Saying Good-bye to Dr. N. Bharatwal

Dr. N. Bharatwal passed away the end of 2025. For many past patients of Lyndhurst, you will remember the passion, small stature and pristine appearance acting as a clever disguise for Dr. B's monstrous energy, and advocacy for patients and their rehabilitation care needs. Our condolences go out to Dr Bhartwal's family and friends.



If you would like to make a donation to UHN Foundation in memory of Dr. Bharatwal, please click on the QR code or go to:

<https://uhnfoundation.ca/DrBharatwal>.



Photo credit: Marlene Adams

# Education Corner



## Adaptive Clothing: Fashion That Works for Everyone

Adaptive clothing is transforming everyday dressing by blending fashion with function—making it easier and more dignified for people with limited mobility, seniors, or wheelchair users.

### Why Adaptive Clothing Matters

**Easy to Wear:** Think magnetic snaps, Velcro, open-back tops, side-zip pants, and tear-away legs—room for catheters, pressure relief, and seated comfort. These designs reduce twisting, bending, and fine-motor strain.

**Wheelchair-Friendly:** Hidden back pockets prevent creasing; pants and shorts are cut to sit comfortably, avoiding discomfort and skin irritation.

**Comfortable Fabrics:** Soft, breathable materials with tagless labels and smooth seams help protect sensitive skin during long wear.

These designs promote independence, dignity, and comfort for everyday life, recovery, or assisted care. Adaptive fashion is more than clothing—it's empowerment through thoughtful design.

*Adaptive Clothing for Seniors, Elderly & Disabled - Silverts – Silverts Canada*

*Adaptive Clothing | IZ Adaptive*

**Did  
you  
know?**

## Trans Gender Health at Lyndhurst

### Advancing Inclusion and Knowledge

A new volunteer group has been formed at Lyndhurst, comprised of trans clinicians, students, and individuals with lived experience of spinal cord injury (SCI).

#### Our Mission:

We are developing a library of workshops, modules, and literature to enhance staff knowledge at Lyndhurst and across UHN about transgender health and inclusion issues affecting people with SCI.

#### Get Involved!

If you identify as transgender, non-binary, 2Spirit, or gender non-conforming, we invite you to:

- Share feedback
- Recommend topics
- Join the initiative

 **Contact:** [rowan.cancelliere@uhn.ca](mailto:rowan.cancelliere@uhn.ca) for more information.



# Education Corner



## Physical Activity & Wellness Program

A new 6-week program to build strength, confidence, and independence after SCI.

### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Lyndhurst Physical Activity and Wellness Program is a 6-week exercise and independence program for people with spinal cord injuries. It focuses on safe, progressive exercise aligned with SCI Physical Activity Guidelines.



#### WHY IT MATTERS

By the end of six weeks, participants will have the knowledge, tools, and confidence to keep exercising independently—supporting long-term health and mobility.



#### DETAILS

Tuesdays and Thursdays  
Lyndhurst Hospital  
4:30 PM - 6:00 PM

Group 1 - Feb 3/26 - Mar 12/26

First pilot starts February 2026!

Interested?

Ask your care team about joining.

#### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Two sessions per week: education, guided exercise, and peer to peer support and encouragement.
- Learn FITT principles, safety tips, and home exercise strategies
- Practice exercises at home using simple equipment

#### WHO CAN JOIN

Adults with spinal cord injury / disease who are medically stable, discharged from Lyndhurst after June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, and ready to commit to regular participation.



# • • • NEW CLOTHES • • • NEW SPIRIT

>Show Your Lyndhurst Pride & Make  
a Difference!   
100% of sales from all merchandise  
goes directly to supporting Lyndhurst  
programs and initiatives!



Heather grey t-shirt and sweatshirt. UHN  
logo on the front and "Lyndhurst" on the  
back.

T-shirt \$36

Sweatshirt \$64



Navy blue t-shirt and ¼ zip sweatshirt. UHN  
logo on the front nothing on the back.

T-shirt \$36

Sweatshirt \$74

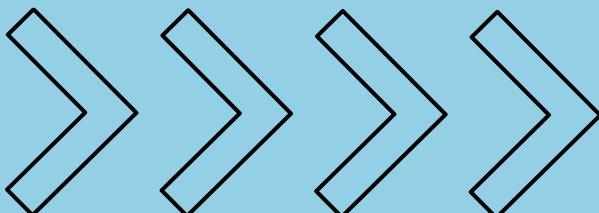


Cobalt blue t-shirt and sweatshirt. UHN logo  
on the front and "Team Lyndhurst" on the  
back.

T-shirt \$32

Sweatshirt \$58

Please contact [Winnie.Wu@uhn.ca](mailto:Winnie.Wu@uhn.ca) or [Sandra.Mills@uhn.ca](mailto:Sandra.Mills@uhn.ca) for help with ordering.



**NOTE: There is NO tax on the price of any apparel, the price is the price!**  
**Purchase must be made in person, no mail orders.**

Launched in 2019 with the goal to achieve equitable and optimal health care for Ontarians with Spinal Cord Injuries.



## Who We Are

A group of SCI rehabilitation centres across the province and country work together to improve quality of care. The Lyndhurst team consists of Allied Health clinicians, Leadership, and Research.

## New Initiatives We Are Working On



### Improving Arm & Hand Function

We've started work to improve the therapy patients receive to restore arm and hand function—known as Reaching, Grasping, and Manipulation (RG&M). Even small gains can boost independence, reduce caregiver reliance, and open doors to social and work opportunities.

### Improving Arm and Hand Function

### GRASSP

MEASURING ARM & HAND FUNCTION



#### Strength

How strong are the arm and hand muscles?



#### Sensation

How well can the person feel touch?



#### Prehension

How well can they hold and manipulate objects?

ASSESSMENT → PREDICT FUNCTION → GUIDE THERAPY

**Our first step:** training therapists to use the GRASSP tool to help guide therapy. On September 19, 2025, seven occupational therapists at Lyndhurst Center completed a workshop to sharpen their GRASSP skills. They're ready to use it with patients. Stay tuned!

### Supporting Employment After Spinal Cord Injury / Disease

#### Follow us:

<https://www.sciconsortium.ca>  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/sci-ieqc/>  
[sciconsortium@uhn.ca](mailto:sciconsortium@uhn.ca)



### Employment

Our goal is to help people living with SCI/D find and keep jobs after rehabilitation. In 2026, we'll be concentrating on **Employment, Community Participation, and Emotional Well-Being**—key factors for living a full and independent life.

# KITE Research Corner

## Restoring Arm and Hand Function After Paralysis

Losing arm and hand function after a spinal cord injury can feel life-changing—but breakthroughs in rehabilitation are opening new doors. At the Upper Extremity NeuroRestorative and Innovations Lab, we're committed to turning cutting-edge research into real-world therapies that help people regain independence. From advanced nerve transfer programs to spinal stimulation and activity-based therapy, our work is focused on practical solutions that make recovery possible.

## Restoring Arm and Hand Function After Paralysis

At the Upper Extremity NeuroRestorative and Innovations Lab, led by Dr. Kalsi-Ryan, we focus on helping people regain arm and hand movement after spinal cord injury (SCI).



- **ONWARD ARC-EX Uplift Study:** We led the Canadian site for this non-invasive spinal cord stimulation approach, now commercially available.
- **Peripheral Nerve Transfer Rehab:** At Lyndhurst, we helped create the world's only structured 24 month rehab program for nerve transfer patients.
- **Activity-Based Therapy (ABT):** Our upper-limb ABT program, combined with spinal stimulation, showed meaningful gains for people with chronic, incomplete SCI.

**Our goal: therapies that restore function and independence for people living with SCI**

**NOTE: These therapies are only available through research studies.**

**To find out if you are eligible and for more information, please email Sukhvinder Kalsi-Ryan at [Sukhvinder.Kalsi-Ryan@uhn.ca](mailto:Sukhvinder.Kalsi-Ryan@uhn.ca).**

# Spinal Cord Injury Ontario Update



## Staffing News

SCIO is delighted to share that **Michael Richardson** joined Spinal Cord Injury Ontario as our new Chief Executive Officer, on November 24, 2025. Michael comes to SCIO with more than twenty years of experience in social services and community leadership. Most recently, he served as CEO of United Way Winnipeg. This appointment marks an exciting new chapter for our organization, one grounded in optimism, collaboration, and the shared belief that together, we can continue to transform lives and communities across Ontario.

## TORONTO CATHETER FAIR

For information and options on catheter supplies and vendors, join SCIO for the next Catheter Vendor Fair.

Browse different products and options, sign up for samples, and learn more about funding programs.

**When:** Thursday, February 26, 2026

**Where:** Front foyer at Lyndhurst

**Time:** 11:00am – 2:00pm



**Visit:** [www.sciontario.org/events](http://www.sciontario.org/events) for information about SCIO Peer Connections, community fundraisers, and opportunities to try adapted sports.

# Patient Stories



## PAST PATIENT MICHAEL GAMBLE TELLS HIS STORY: HOW 3D PRINTING CHANGED MY LIFE

At 19, a diving accident left me a C3 incomplete quadriplegic. I've been a wheelchair user for almost 37 years, relying on a power chair for mobility. Back then, accessibility was minimal, and assistive devices were rare and extremely expensive.

Seven years ago, after more spinal surgery, I returned to Lyndhurst for short rehab stay. That's where I first noticed a 3D printer. I'd always been fascinated by technology, but 3D printing seemed intimidating — especially with the challenges of my disability. Still, I spent evenings and weekends learning everything I could. After leaving Lyndhurst, I bought my own 3D printer. That decision changed my world. Suddenly, I could create custom adaptations to make life easier. My first project was a cup holder — something I'd searched for unsuccessfully for decades. It turned out amazing and sparked a passion for designing solutions. Since then, I've made joystick modifications, utensil splints, toothbrush and shaver adaptations, and even an accessible Xbox controller so I could play video games again.

As technology advanced, so did online resources. People were sharing their designs with others around the world. 3D printing evolved from making trinkets to creating practical, affordable tools that improve everyday life. We've moved from "one-size-fits-all" products to fully customizable, convenient and cost effective solutions that meet individual needs.

For me, 3D printing has been life-changing. It's improved my independence and given me the ability to help others do the same.

By: Michael Gamble

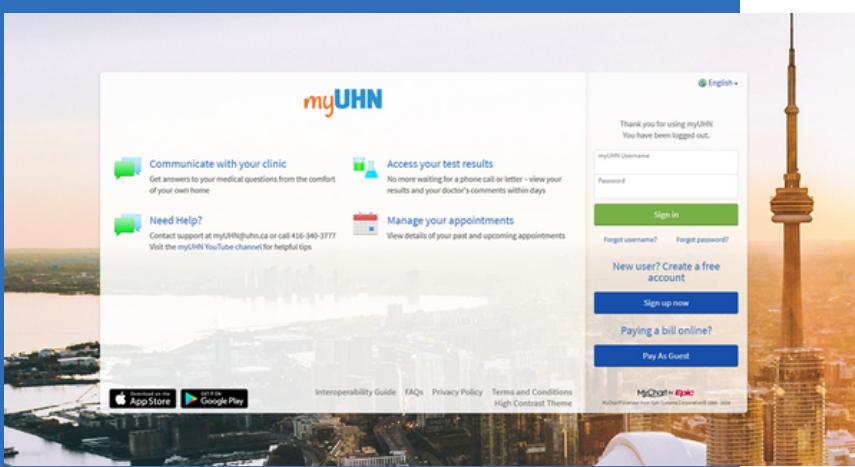


3D printed  
electric  
toothbrush  
control



Michael's 3D  
printed cup holder  
for his power  
wheelchair

# Patient Experience



## Get Connected with [myUHN](#)

**myUHN** is a secure website and app for patients of University Health Network (UHN). It gives you safe, easy access to your health information anytime, anywhere—on your phone, tablet, or computer.

With myUHN, you can:

- View appointments and test results as soon as they're ready
- Access your UHN record and Ontario lab results (OLIS)
- Message select clinics and update your health info
- Check in early and complete forms before your visit

### Need help?

Contact myUHN Support (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm):

 [myUHN@uhn.ca](mailto:myUHN@uhn.ca)

 416-340-3777

 Find us on YouTube: myUHN Patient Portal

 Patient Experience

### Become a Patient Partner

UHN is looking to engage with patients and family caregivers to help improve care and service.



**The Patient Partner program:**

- Recruits and prepares UHN patients and family caregivers in the role of a Patient Partner
- Matches Patient Partners to collaborate with leaders and staff on UHN initiatives by participating in committees, hiring panels, focus groups or sharing your story and care experience
- Provides supportive education and skill-building opportunities

**Patient partners are:**

- Living well in the community with their health condition
- Willing to talk about their experience to help shape care and service
- Patients and/or family caregivers who have had care at UHN

To join, contact us:  416-340-5085  [PatientExperience@uhn.ca](mailto:PatientExperience@uhn.ca)

*At UHN we are committed to championing accessibility, diversity and equal opportunity.*



## Patient Partners at UHN Lyndhurst

Do You Want to Make a Difference at UHN?  
Become a Patient Partner!

Are you a former Lyndhurst patient? We'd love to have you join us as a Patient Partner. By volunteering your time, you can help shape programs, join committees, or share your story to inspire others.  
Interested?

Contact the Patient Experience team at:

416-340-5085



or [patientexperience@uhn.ca](mailto:patientexperience@uhn.ca).

# YOUR VOICE MATTERS: TELL US ABOUT YOUR STAY!

At UHN, we're always looking for ways to make care better—and that starts with you.



About a week after you leave Lyndhurst, you'll get an email with a **Patient Experience Survey**. It's your chance to tell us what worked, what didn't, and how we can do better.

- ✓ Anonymous
- ✓ Confidential
- ✓ Completely voluntary

We won't share responses with your care team, but your insights will help shape future care for everyone



Surveys are sent by email, so we need your consent and a correct email address in EPIC to stay connected.

**Let's make sure every voice is heard—because better care starts with your feedback!**



Year  
two.  
More fun.  
More  
impact.

Last year, 4,000 participants raised \$1.43 million and 2026 will be even better, bigger and bolder!

On May 30, 2026, join us for We Walk UHNITED, a family-friendly fundraising event in support of the life-saving work of University Health Network (UHN).

Choose a 5 km or 2 km accessible route through downtown Toronto, finishing at Toronto General Hospital with fun, food and music!

**Learn more and register now at  
[WeWalkUHNITED.ca](http://WeWalkUHNITED.ca)**

UHN Foundation raises funds for research, education and excellence in patient care at Toronto General and Toronto Western hospitals, Toronto Rehab and The Michener Institute of Education at UHN.

Support from donors like you helps us to:

- Recruit and retain the world's brightest medical minds
- Innovate to develop new treatments and cures
- Educate the next generation of healthcare providers

Together with our donors, we are helping Canada's #1 hospital reimagine health care.

***Donate today at [UHNfoundation.ca](http://UHNfoundation.ca)***

**UHN  
Foundation**

**Make a  
Donation!**

# Lyndhurst Patient Seasonal Art Projects



Being in hospital during the holidays can be hard. The Therapeutic Recreation team helped make the season a bit warmer with festive craft projects.



## Connect with us!

We welcome your feedback about this Lyndhurst Newsletter.

Please contact:

Sandra Mills

Patient Education and Engagement Lead

[sandra.mills@uhn.ca](mailto:sandra.mills@uhn.ca)

(416)597-3422 x 6144



Look for our  
next edition in  
July 2026!

Previous editions of this newsletter can be found on the Spinal Cord Rehab page of the UHN website:  
<https://www.uhn.ca/TorontoRehab/Spinal-Cord-Rehab>

Sandra Mills