



SickKids[®]

The Labatt Family
Heart Centre

STRATEGY 2025-2030



LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

We are thrilled to introduce the Labatt Family Heart Centre's new five-year strategy — a roadmap shaped by the dedication, expertise, and passion of our incredible staff, patients, caregivers, and community partners.

Rooted in the insights and experiences of our interprofessional team, this plan builds on past successes and sets ambitious goals for the future. It centers on four key priorities:

- Create an Exceptional Experience for People of the Heart Centre
- Establish Sustainable Heart Centre Foundations
- Drive Comprehensive and Individualized Heart Care, Research, and Education
- Embed Quality at the Heart of the Patient and Family Experience

Together, we will continue to advance pediatric cardiovascular care, research, and education, while fostering a supportive environment where every team member can grow and thrive.

Thank you for your commitment to our shared vision. Your engagement and collaboration will be vital in bringing this plan to life. We look forward to shaping the future of the Heart Centre with you and achieving new milestones in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

Labatt Family Heart Centre Executive



The LFHC is comprised of four Divisions, each with their own subspecialty areas.

Division of Cardiology

Offering the full range of paediatric cardiology services, the Division of Cardiology at SickKids provides a comprehensive cardiology program for Ontario's paediatric cardiac population while delivering ground-breaking research, quality improvement and teaching for our provincial learners.

Division of Cardiovascular Surgery

As one of the largest paediatric surgical programs in North America, our surgical program are pioneers in the field and undertake the majority of the congenital cardiac surgery in Ontario, with lower-than-average mortality as benchmarked against the Society of Thoracic Surgery registry.

Division of Cardiac Critical Care

Our Division of CCCU works in seamless collaboration with the surgical team to deliver our excellent outcomes. The CCCU team also manages non-surgical cardiac critical illnesses through innovation and team-working while providing superlative medical education to our trainees and staff.

Division of Cardiac Anesthesia

The SickKids Cardiac Anesthesia Division provides the expertise in paediatric cardiac anesthesia needed to undertake cardiac procedures on infants and children and works in close collaboration with the other cardiac divisions in this highly specialized environment.

WHO WE ARE

The Labatt Family Heart Centre (LFHC) at SickKids is among the top paediatric heart centres in the world, driving innovation that consistently leads to better outcomes for patients with heart disease. The LFHC provides world-class quality, comprehensive paediatric and congenital heart disease care from conception to adulthood using expert inter-disciplinary teams in an innovative, family-centered environment that integrates health care, education and research.

Our motto is: **Healthy Hearts. Healthier Lives.**

BY THE NUMBERS



2.3%*

Index Surgical
Mortality (2024)



192

Average Annual Publications
in Peer-reviewed Journals
(2019-24)



37

Average Annual Number
of Trainees (2019-24)



400 FTEs

Size/breadth of the
Heart Centre (2024)



85%

Percent of Paediatric Cardiac
Operations Performed by
LFHC in Ontario (2023-24)**



\$7.4M

Average Annual New
Research Grant Funding
Received (2019-24)

* Benchmarked against the Society for Thoracic Surgery (STS) Database. The LFHC outcomes out-perform the predicted early hospital mortality with an all comer index case mortality of 2.3%

**SickKids' LFHC acts as the surgical hub for a network of partner children's hospitals consisting of CHEO, London Health Sciences Centre, and McMaster University Children's Hospital.

HOW WE GOT HERE



213

Survey responses from staff, trainees, volunteers, and partners



13

Interviews



11

Current/former SickKids patients and family members or caregivers live session feedback



100+

Staff and learners live session feedback

INSPIRATION FROM OUR COMMUNITY

To inspire strategy development, we asked the LFHC staff to tell us what makes the LFHC a special place for patients, families, staff and the community we serve.

“Multidisciplinary approach, combining the expertise of physicians, allied health, researchers and educators to provide comprehensive and cutting-edge care to our patients.”

“A welcoming, optimistic, and caring atmosphere.”

“Exceptional people doing exceptional things at every stage of patient care.”

“A cohesiveness with clear communications and dual/ mutual sharing of plans, visions, and directions – focus on the health for paediatric patients with cardiac conditions.”

“Everyone works well together, and care of patients is the focus.”

STRATEGY 2025-2030

Healthy Hearts. Healthier Lives.



Embed Quality at the Heart of the Patient and Family Experience

- Drive optimal clinical outcomes, equity, and efficiency across health journeys
- Scale access to physical, mental, and behavioural health services for patients and families



Create an Exceptional Experience for People of the Heart Centre

- Attract, develop, and retain diverse Heart Centre talent
- Cultivate staff health, well-being, and psychological safety



Drive Comprehensive and Individualized Heart Care, Research, and Education

- Fuel discovery and accelerate translation to clinical care
- Educate, train, and support the professional growth of staff and the next generation of talent



Establish Sustainable Heart Centre Foundations

- Modernize digital and physical infrastructure
- Connect data assets and scale responsible AI
- Foster partnerships and outreach that advance heart health

Compassion

Integrity

Collaboration

Inclusion

Innovation

Excellence



CREATE AN EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR PEOPLE OF THE HEART CENTRE



Our objectives:

- Attract, develop, and retain diverse Heart Centre talent
- Cultivate staff health, well-being, and psychological safety

How do we create an environment where Heart Centre team members feel ready to thrive?

We know that the heart of the LFHC is its people; those who strive every day to provide high quality patient centred care and research to improve outcomes for patients and families. For our people, we will create an environment where they can thrive, innovate, and deliver value to the community we serve.

To do this, we will focus on attracting, developing, and training diverse staff across all disciplines, educating

and training recent graduates, as well as investing in the retention and development of our senior staff who have helped build the rich history of the LFHC. Along the way, maintaining the health and well-being of our staff will be essential. We are committed to reducing overload, modelling well-being in our leadership, culture, and daily activities, and creating psychologically safe environments where teams and individuals can unleash their collective creativity to drive progress in heart care.

MEET OUR HEROES



Asiya

When Ahmed and Thaiba, living in Ottawa, learned their unborn daughter Asiya had hypoplastic left heart syndrome (HLHS), they knew the journey ahead would be challenging. Born in 2019, Asiya required three major heart surgeries and faced additional complications, including having only one ear, facial palsy, and vocal cord paralysis. A planned two-month stay in Toronto turned into two years as her medical needs grew. Supported by a large team at SickKids, she eventually transitioned back to Ottawa, where her care continues in collaboration with CHEO. Now nearly six, Asiya is thriving — full of energy, confidence, and determination. Aware of her differences, she embraces them, shines in the spotlight, and keeps up with her older sister. Her feisty spirit and fearless attitude continue to inspire everyone around her.





ESTABLISH SUSTAINABLE HEART CENTRE FOUNDATIONS



Our objectives:

- Modernize digital and physical infrastructure
- Connect data assets and scale responsible AI
- Foster partnerships and outreach that advance heart health

How will we power a leading Heart Centre to deliver exceptional care every day?

We will enable the work of our people with responsible and responsive operations, ensuring access to the tools and required infrastructure to provide optimal care and experiences for patients and families.

The aim is to ensure that our spaces create healing environments, designing physical spaces and amenities that are safe, clean, accessible, welcoming, and comfortable for all. The LFHC has a wealth of data that we can use to drive innovation. We will work to connect

our data assets and identify high priority AI use-cases to transform how we do work each day. By leveraging the potential of digital technologies, we will provide more accessible, intuitive, convenient, and personalized care and services.

We are thankful to the commitment of our partners and will strengthen existing partnerships, and work to develop new partnerships, that continue to unlock value to advance heart health, together.

MEET OUR HEROES



Evan

Evan was born a month early in 2011, weighing just over four pounds. He quickly showed signs of distress and was transferred to SickKids, where he was diagnosed with tricuspid atresia — a rare heart defect requiring three open-heart surgeries. At just days old, Evan briefly went home but soon returned in full cardiac arrest, needing emergency surgery. He later underwent the planned surgeries, though each brought serious challenges, including strokes after his second and third operations. The second stroke left him with significant physical deficits. With determination and rehabilitation, Evan made a remarkable recovery. Now 14, he continues to be followed by cardiology and neurology teams and is thriving. He's sociable, loves travel, and is highly active — playing competitive basketball and earning a brown belt in martial arts, well on his way to black.





DRIVE COMPREHENSIVE AND INDIVIDUALIZED HEART CARE, RESEARCH, AND EDUCATION



Our objectives:

- Fuel discovery and accelerate translation to clinical care
- Educate, train, and support the professional growth of staff and the next generation of talent

How do we prepare and equip Heart Centre team members to deliver transformative heart health research and innovative precision care?

As part of this strategy's rollout, we will accelerate our commitment to and investment in interprofessional research, pushing the boundaries of discovery and translating new knowledge into care to improve heart health.

We will focus on educating, training, and supporting the professional development of all staff, including the next

generation of physicians, nurses, and professional staff within the culture of collaboration, quality, and family-centred care that is embedded in the Heart Centre's DNA. We will work to create an environment where we nurture this talent through formal and informal learning and mentorship, tapping into the wealth of knowledge in our interprofessional team.

MEET OUR HEROES



Harper

Before Harper was born in 2017, doctors discovered a heart defect. At two months old, she suffered a life-threatening episode of Supraventricular Tachycardia (SVT), with a heart rate of 260 bpm. After resuscitation and medication, she managed well until her first heart surgery at SickKids in 2021. Though the procedure was initially successful, she went into cardiac arrest days later, requiring CPR, life support, and another surgery. Harper spent six weeks in intensive care, relearning how to walk and talk. As her condition worsened, she was placed on the transplant list. In July 2022, she received a new heart! Now thriving, Harper loves dancing, singing, soccer, and hiking with her dad and brother. Her family recently adopted a dog, and she proudly helps train her new doggy sister.





EMBED QUALITY AT THE HEART OF THE PATIENT AND FAMILY EXPERIENCE



Our objectives:

- Drive optimal clinical outcomes, equity, and efficiency across health journeys
- Scale access to physical, mental, and behavioural health services for patients and families

How can we set a leading quality care standard for patients and families we support?

The LFHC is committed to providing equitable, high-quality care and experiences to the patients and families we serve. To ensure continued progress, we will identify quality improvement opportunities and dedicate resources to action them, using a consistent framework to analyse and prioritize opportunities, and reporting on the progress of our work.

We recognize the immense challenges faced by patients, siblings, parents, and caregivers when a child is experiencing illness. We will work with teams across SickKids to enhance access to support programs and services. We will also shine a light on caregiver wellness, reflecting SickKids' commitment to improve the health of children and youth, as well as their entire family unit.

MEET OUR HEROES

Maxen

At 23 weeks pregnant, Subrina learned her baby, Maxen, had a congenital heart defect affecting his tricuspid valve, requiring three major surgeries. A month before her due date, new concerns arose about his esophagus, and Subrina went into early labor the next day. Born in 2017 via C-section, Max was transferred to SickKids, where doctors discovered esophageal atresia — his esophagus wasn't properly connected to his stomach. Due to the complexity, doctors prioritized heart surgery and delayed the esophageal repair. Max spent nearly four months in hospital, tube-fed but growing well, and went home just before Christmas. In 2020, he experienced a seizure after heart surgery but recovered quickly. Now in grade 2, Maxen is thriving, excelling in karate, and proudly living up to the meaning of his name, “the greatest.”

