



London Health
Sciences Centre



Children's Hospital
London Health Sciences Centre

MONTHLY CEO EXTERNAL LANDSCAPE REPORT

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MAY 2024**

The past month included several important external announcements as we shared how Team LHSC is advancing our 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. It also included a number of health care funding announcements from government and external partners.



Media and public engagement

Media coverage

The Communications and Public Engagement team issued four proactive media stories in April, including an innovative Canadian first robot-assisted direct lateral spinal surgery, two inspiring stories focused on organ donation, and a spring safety story aimed at helping families with children enjoy the season while also avoiding trips to the Emergency Department. We were also a partner to extensive media coverage on the renaming of the London Regional Cancer Program to the Verspeeten Family Cancer Centre at LHSC.

A total of 10 reactive media requests were also fulfilled. The following metrics highlight total media activity:

Total news media mentions (*media exposure*): **264**

- Positive: 217 (82.2%)
- Neutral: 47 (17.8%)
- Negative: 0 (0%)

Total potential reach (*number of people who saw LHSC mentioned in the news*): **283 million**

Earned media value (*how much LHSC would have to spend on ad placement to achieve this type of coverage*): **\$4.48 million**

Key phrases and trending key words most frequently associated with LHSC in media hits between April 1 and 30 included:

- 'Fight against cancer'
- 'Largest single donation'
- 'Care, teaching and research'
- 'Extraordinary care'

Top stories by reach in April included:

- [Verspeeten Family Cancer Centre Unveiling Marks a Historic Milestone in Cancer Research and Treatment \(yahoo.com\)](#) – 51M
- [LHSC performs first robotic assisted spinal surgery | CTV News](#) - 12M
- [Baby Gwendolyn celebrates 1st birthday after receiving rare liver disorder diagnosis | CTV News](#) - 12M
- [‘She gets to be 10’: Ontario child’s heart donated to girl the same age | Globalnews.ca](#) – 9M
- [‘Sciatica was gone’: hospital performs robot-assisted spinal surgery in Canadian first | Globalnews.ca](#) – 9M
- [‘Astounding’ results from London’s first highly supportive housing projects, officials say](#) – 4M

Impact on LHSC

In addition to meaningful local coverage, April’s stories garnered national attention highlighting how Team LHSC is advancing excellence across patient care, teaching, and research.

Social media

The Communications and Public Engagement team posted 32 pieces of content across LHSC’s social media platforms this month (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X). Content included a combination of patient stories, staff stories, recruitment content and highlighting hospital initiatives, all of which garnered positive sentiment and engagement for the month of April.

April 2024

Total social media followers (across all platforms): 70,194 (+1,207 new followers, +1.7%)

**number of stakeholders/members of the public that see and have the potential to engage with LHSC’s stories on a regular basis.*

Total social media impressions: 305,673

**number of times posts across all LHSC social media platforms appeared on someone’s screen*

Total social media engagements: 18,514

**number of people who liked, commented or shared LHSC's content/stories on social media*

Top social media posts by engagement in April included:

- [Provincial Donation Champion Award | Facebook](#)
- [Canadian first direct lateral robot-assisted surgery | LinkedIn & X](#)
- [Zeynah's story | Instagram](#)

Impact on LHSC

Social media content for the month of April showcased the variety of hospital initiatives and stories that have left a positive impression on the community. Audiences responded to emotional storytelling, a focus on innovation and advancement, and celebrations of staff accomplishments.

LHSC performs Canadian first robotic assisted spinal surgery

LHSC recently completed [Canada's first robotic-assisted](#) direct lateral spine surgery, performed on patient Dave Myen. Utilizing the advanced MazorX Spinal Robot, our Clinical Neurosciences team executed this minimally invasive procedure from the side. This innovative approach allowed them to treat two spinal areas in one go. Dave woke up from the surgery free from chronic back pain. This story was covered by [CTV News](#), [Global News \(National\)](#), [CBC London Morning](#), [London News Today](#), and [MSN Canada](#).

Impact on LHSC

This Canadian first robotic-assisted surgery reflects the Strategic Plan's advancing excellence priority as we leverage innovative technologies to improve patient care and outcomes.

Zeynah's story: Turning a family's loss into an incredible gift

Maryam De Groef recently [recounted the story](#) of her nine-year-old daughter, Zeynah, who tragically passed away last spring and generously donated her organs to help others. This story serves as a source of inspiration for those facing similar loss, urging them to consider the profound gift of life through organ donation. Gratitude is extended to Maryam and her family for their willingness to share such a deeply personal experience, especially during Be A Donor Month. The collaborative efforts of the teams at Children's Hospital at LHSC and the Ontario Health Trillium Gift of Life Network were instrumental in supporting Maryam and her family throughout the organ donation process. This story was covered by [The London Free Press](#) and [Global News \(National\)](#).

Impact on LHSC

Zeynah's story is a true reflection of how LHSC provides people-centred care and partners with caregivers to ensure they feel supported, especially during challenging and emotional times.

Unveiling the Verspeeten Family Cancer Centre at LHSC

On Monday, April 29, we celebrated the unveiling of the [Verspeeten Family Cancer Centre at LHSC](#). This marks a pivotal moment in our history of cancer care, teaching and research as we officially renamed LHSC's London Regional Cancer Program. The late Archie Verspeeten and his extraordinarily generous \$20 million donation will help LHSC's dedicated team members improve outcomes for patients across southwestern Ontario by:

- Improving patient care;
- Establishing the Verspeeten Chair in Translational Cancer Research;
- Enhancing the Verspeeten Clinical Genome Centre; and
- Supporting Medical Oncology and Radiation Oncology fellowships.

Impact on LHSC

Archie and Irene Verspeeten's visionary donation of \$20 million will enable us to continue our work to improve patient outcomes by advancing excellence in cancer care, teaching and research.

LHSC partnering with the 'Blood on Board' program

Ornge and LHSC have expanded [Ontario's 'Blood on Board' program](#) to London, allowing Ornge paramedics to carry blood on aircrafts for quicker administration to patients across southern Ontario and enhancing trauma patient outcomes. The collaboration launched on April 24, with LHSC supplying blood products to Ornge in specialized coolers. With the success of similar initiatives in Toronto and Thunder Bay, where over 250 units of blood have been administered since 2021, this expansion continues to address the need for rapid medical intervention in trauma cases. This story was covered by [Global News Canada](#) and [CTV London](#).



Impact on LHSC

This partnership aims to improve patient outcomes by providing timely access to critical care during air ambulance transport. It supports our strategic priority of integrated care.



External landscape

New investments for research in federal budget

On April 16, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Chrystia Freeland, introduced the Government of Canada's [2024 Budget](#). The federal budget includes significant new investments in research, including:

- \$1.8 billion over five years, starting in 2024-25, with \$748.3 million per year to increase core research grant funding and support Canadian researchers.
- \$825 million over five years, starting in 2024-25, with \$199.8 million per year to increase the annual value of master's and doctoral student scholarships and post-doctoral fellowships.
- \$30 million over three years, starting in 2024-25, to support Indigenous participation in research, with \$10 million each for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit partners.
- An increase in targeted artificial intelligence support of \$2.4 billion.
- The announcement of the new advisory Council on Science and Innovation, made up of leaders from the academic, industry, and not-for-profit sectors, responsible for a national science and innovation strategy to guide priority setting and increase the impact of these significant federal investments.
- \$26.9 million over five years, starting in 2024-25, to the granting councils to establish an improved and harmonized grant management system.

Impact on LHSC

The investments in research announced as part of the Government of Canada's 2024 Budget will enable LHSC researchers to further expand their research opportunities and better support our learners. The significant investment in Indigenous participation in research will assist the hospital in learning more about health challenges facing Indigenous communities and how to improve health outcomes and service delivery for this population.

Chief Medical Officer of Health releases 2023 Annual Report

Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. Kieran Moore recently released his [2023 Annual Report](#), "Balancing Act: An All-of-Society Approach to Substance Use and Harms." The report calls for a societal approach to reduce substance use harms and recognizes the complexity of human experience with substances, the factors that drive substance use, and how public health policies may conflict with economic policies, and with public attitudes and perspectives.

Impact on LHSC

The Chief Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report emphasizes a whole-of-community approach to substance use. LHSC is actively engaged with community partners to learn how to reduce harm, eliminate stigma and better serve patients who use substances.

Ontario Ministry of Health announces continuation of Health Human Resources programs

In March, Dr. Karima Velji, Assistant Deputy Minister, Office of the Chief of Nursing and Professional Practice, sent a memo to all Ontario hospital CEOs announcing that the Ministry of Health will continue to provide funding for Health Human Resources programs. The programs that will receive continued support include the Enhanced Extern Program, Supervised Practice Experience Partnership, Clinical Scholar Program, Community Commitment Program for Nurses, Temporary Reimbursement of Fees for Internationally Educated and Inactive Nurses Program, and Emergency Department Nursing Education Retention Workforce Strategy.

Impact on LHSC

The Ministry's ongoing support for Health Human Resources programs will continue to bring more people into the field of health care and offer enriched learning opportunities for Team LHSC.

Ontario connecting over 23,000 people to primary care teams in London area, Lambton, and Chatham-Kent

On April 18, 2024, the [Ontario government announced](#) a significant investment of nearly \$6.4 million to connect over 23,000 people in the London area, Lambton, and Chatham-Kent to primary care teams. This funding is part of a broader \$110 million initiative aimed at linking up to 328,000 individuals across the province to such teams, advancing Ontario closer to universal primary care access. The investment supports several new and expanded initiatives, including mobile services for Indigenous communities, a new Family Health Team in London, and expanded primary care services in areas like Tillsonburg and Chatham-Kent, focusing on vulnerable populations including seniors and newcomers. The Province's commitment, which includes adding over 400 primary care providers and enhancing operational capacities with an additional \$20 million, aligns with ongoing efforts to improve timely access to health services and reduce pressure on emergency facilities.

Impact on LHSC

LHSC welcomes provincial investments into primary care to help all Londoners receive quality care when and where they need it.