

# IMPACT REPORT

**2022**  

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**2023**



**COREWELL  
HEALTH  
FOUNDATION  
WEST MICHIGAN**

# With So Much Gratitude...

You are our difference-makers and life-enrichers, and you bring smiles, comfort, healing and hope to the patients and families we serve every day at Corewell Health in West Michigan.

It is a joy and privilege to be part of the lives of each person who chooses to come to us for their care. I am pleased to share this report of impact, with great gratitude to you for your support of Corewell Health Foundation West Michigan. We are grateful for philanthropy like yours that gives our clinicians and care teams the ability to provide excellent care.

In this report, you'll read about **Mary Heeren (pictured on the cover of this report)**, who was the first person at Corewell Health to undergo a lung transplant and a double heart bypass at the same time. You will also read messages from our **Renucci Hospitality House** and **Corewell Health Hospice** teams who are incredibly grateful for the philanthropic support they have received. To the right you'll see photos of Kathy Walker, a patient at Corewell Health who participated in Beautiful You, a salon in Lemmen Holton Cancer Pavilion. Thanks to philanthropy, patients undergoing cancer treatments can receive a little extra pampering from manicures and massage therapy to haircuts and free wigs.

On behalf of our patients, families, and teams throughout Corewell Health in West Michigan, thank you for partnering with us to improve health, instill humanity and inspire hope.

Gratefully,

*Kelly*

Kelly Dyer  
President  
Corewell Health Foundation West Michigan



*Philanthropy gave the Corewell Health cancer team the opportunity to pamper Kathy Walker during her cancer treatments.*

# Thank You for Providing Comfort and Rest!

Renucci Hospitality House is a special place. It's a home away from home for families and loved ones who have a patient in one of our hospitals. Philanthropy is essential to our team continuing to serve those who are in need of a place to rest their head at the end of what are often very difficult, stressful days. On behalf of all of us at the Renucci House, thank you.

Over the past year we have been able to make some purchases for the kitchen, which is truly the heart of the Renucci House. The kitchen is a space where our guests gather together to share a meal; where they find support, compassion, and even laughter. Seeing the families coming together around the dining room table, being able to be there for one another, is heartwarming. These families are in a situation that many others cannot relate to—being away from their home while going through a medical crisis. They bond during their stay and many remain in touch long after they have checked out.

After the pandemic, we have been able to welcome our wonderful community volunteers back—including churches, local businesses, civic groups, and even teams from throughout Corewell Health—to prepare meals for our guests several nights each week.

It is a privilege and an honor to host families here at Renucci Hospitality House. The friendships and the bonds formed is something that cannot be put into words. We are forever grateful for your support.

With gratitude for all that you make possible,

*Dana*

Dana Schmuker  
Manager, Renucci Hospitality House



*Because of your support, we were able to add some new tools and small appliances to the kitchen at the Renucci Hospitality House.*

**75,000+**

families served

**23**

**YEARS**

of serving patients  
and families

# Support and Dignity at the End of Life

Gifts to Corewell Health Foundation West Michigan are used to support many of the ways we are able to care for patients and families throughout their lives. One of the special programs you supported in 2022 is our Hospice and Palliative Care program. The Hospice team walks with the patient and their loved ones as they near the end of life, providing several services and therapies, including massage, to make sure the patient is comfortable. Our massage therapist, Ruzmir Kovacevic, shared, "Physical touch is easily overlooked in the context of treating a serious medical problem, but it has a profound impact on the patient's well being by providing healing, relief, and relaxation."

The bereavement team brings extra care and compassion through phone calls, mailings, one-on-one counseling, and special memorial events. They make sure families have all the support they need for the year following the loss of their loved one. Philanthropy has allowed us to purchase incredible resources for our patients and families, including young children: books, art supplies, memory stones, a Cricut machine to make fingerprint pendants, and large-print bibles for our elderly patients.

Because of you, our music therapists were able to add to their toolkit. They have new tambourines, rain sticks, an ocean drum, and a special stethoscope that they can use to record a patient's heartbeat and set it to a special song selected by the patient or a family member. The heartbeat recordings have been incredible gifts and provide patients and their loved ones with a unique memory.

We've also seen tremendous growth in our volunteer program, and philanthropy supported the "caring crafters" with items they need to create special gifts and helpful items for patients. These dedicated and creative individuals made everything from knitted socks and leg warmers to bereavement bears, which are made from the loved one's clothing and usually given to young children.

On behalf of everyone who is part of our hospice and palliative care team, including volunteers, thank you for all of the ways you bring hope and healing. We could not do this work without you.

With gratitude,

*Lisa*

Lisa VanderWel  
Senior Director, Hospice and Palliative Care  
Corewell Health

**2,300**

family members served by  
the bereavement team

**430**

massage therapy  
sessions

**750**

music therapy  
visits

**2,065**

cards sent to patients  
by 45 volunteers

# With a Grateful Heart...and Lungs



Mary Heeren noticed her health worsening, rather quickly. She had trouble breathing and she learned she had extremely low oxygen levels. She had lived with chronic bronchitis since childhood, but this felt like something more. “I thought it was just bronchitis, as it had always been,” she said. She learned she had pulmonary fibrosis before discovering that she would not only need a lung transplant, but she also had heart problems that required bypass surgery. After researching her options, she connected with Corewell Health’s Richard DeVos Heart & Lung Transplant Program, and met with Reda Girgis, MD.

It didn’t take long to find Mary a set of lungs, and she became the first patient at Corewell Health to undergo a double lung transplant and a double heart bypass at the same time—in a surgery that took 15 hours—with Edward Murphy, MD, the Richard DeVos Endowed Chair for Lung Transplantation. Just a day later, she could stand up, and by day four she found herself up and walking. “The nurses would tell me, ‘You’re blowing people away, even people who would have a single bypass,’” Mary said. “And that gave me hope and kept me motivated.”



**“I’ve been able to do a lot of visiting and a lot of things I wasn’t able to do before. I’m finally feeling like I’m giving back to those people who helped me out when I wasn’t doing so well. It’s just amazing how I’m feeling.”**

*Mary Heeren, patient*



“If it wasn’t for my donor I wouldn’t be here,” Mary said. In the initial stages of recovery, when she’d visit department stores to shop, she would use the buggies to scooter around the store. But nowadays, she’s mostly walking. “I’m told in about a year she’ll be back to 100 percent,” her husband, Greg, said. They are now enjoying getting back to living a fully-recovered life.