

Stevenson Foundation launches online group in support of healthcare workers

As communities continue to battle COVID-19, the importance of healthcare workers is being recognized around the world.

Locally, the Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation (SMHF) launched a Facebook Page called "Performances for Stevenson's Superheroes" last Friday, where members of the public can post positive messages or their special talents with frontline staff.

SMH's Director of Development, Melody McLean said they're encouraging "virtual performances" and "no talent is too big or small."

"It can be anything from music, dance, art, performances, a word of gratitude - it all means a tremendous amount to the staff that are working at the hospital and it really provides positive messaging that helps keep them going when it's sometimes a bad day," she explained.

Stevenson has received many positive emails and communications for healthcare workers since COVID-19 hit and the Facebook group acts as a central space for them to visit when they're in need of mental support.

So, even if individuals don't have a special talent to share, messages of encouragement or gratitude are always welcome.

"This is just another way that allows people to share their thanks," McLean noted.

She said to not feel limited as to what to post, some individuals in the community have been painting rocks with supportive messages for frontline staff, which have been really well received.

"Any kind of messaging is welcome," McLean stressed.

The community has really pulled together to support Stevenson throughout the pandemic, she told The Times.

Two weeks ago, students from a local elementary school wrote letters thanking hospital staff, which are now being posted to the Facebook group.

"There's already a lot of momentum in the community," McLean said.

At Stevenson, frontline workers have to physically distance while taking their lunch break so they don't quite receive the same level of positive communications from their co-workers that they usually would.

"It's not the same when you have to sit several feet apart and have barriers in between you to make sure your social distancing," McLean explained.

While the Performances for Stevenson's Superheroes group is just shy of a week old, it's gaining traction as more people join and McLean said it will only grow as people continue to post.

Meanwhile, SMH is still in need of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and is extremely grateful for the support it has received from the community, since launching their PPE Drive.

The hospital is still in need of wrap around gowns, procedure masks, hand sanitizer in pump bottles, and monetary donations. Needs are constantly changing an up to date list can be found at: <http://stevensonhospital.ca/stevenson-ppe-drive.html>

"We know it's not an easy time for everybody, but for those who are able to make a donation, it makes a big difference for

Stevenson,? said McLean.

?It allows us to still be able to fund not just items that are required for the COVID-19 Response Fund but? all the other regular equipment that we have to purchase on an annual basis to keep the hospital running as well.?

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