



RENFREW  
VICTORIA  
HOSPITAL  
FOUNDATION

## GRAND ROUNDS

### Inspiring advocate for dialysis care planning more fundraising events for RVH

Long before facing renal failure in his mid-thirties, Craig Dunbar knew the impact and importance of the dialysis unit at RVH in our community.

A cousin of his was one of the first kidney disease patients ever to receive hemodialysis in Renfrew. Dunbar would sometimes visit during the life-saving treatments to keep him company.

At the time, Dunbar took mental note that it was one of the friendliest and most compassionate medical environments he had ever witnessed. “The patients were all very well taken care of.”

His own diagnosis of acute kidney disease, which resulted in him spending two years on dialysis at RVH and then another four years on a home dialysis regimen, only reinforced his earlier impressions.

There was nowhere else he wanted to be than at RVH. “It’s very homey; there’s such a good quality of care and great access to doctors,” he says confidently about his own experience.

Hemodialysis treatments are required for patients with less than 15 per cent of kidney function. Their kidneys can no longer do their job of eliminating waste and excess fluids from the body. The patients in our dialysis unit need to be connected to a dialyzing machine for four hours every three days in order to live.

Dunbar is no longer reliant on a machine to clean his kidneys. The Carp resident recently received a healthy donor kidney less than two months ago and is feeling fantastic.

Now he’s ready to give some of his reclaimed vitality to the team who provided

comfort and support through the most difficult years of his life: “I want to do anything I can do to get behind that program.”

Statistics used to show that 10 per cent of the population had kidney disease or were at risk of developing kidney disease—now that has changed to 10 per cent *has* kidney disease. That figure is expected to triple for the next generation.

“Renfrew County has been experiencing staggeringly high rates of polycystic kidney disease recently—25 per cent compared to six per cent provincially—so the need for regionally expanded services is increasing,” says Chris Ferguson, RVH Vice President of Patient Care Services.

Dunbar is one of the organizers of Shake the Foundation, held last weekend.

The first two events have raised a total of \$15,000 for the Eastern Ontario chapter of the Kidney Foundation of Canada. The 2014 edition will share proceeds with the RVH Foundation in support of the nephrology expansion project.

“We are grateful for Craig’s initiative in supporting the dialysis program at RVH—we understand how grateful patients are for the care they receive at RVH, but when they take time to act on that gratitude by organizing events and rallying support it is very

inspiring,” says Barb Desilets, RVH Foundation Executive Director of Development. “People like Craig are the lifeblood of the Foundation and remind us that RVH is a special place that makes a profound difference every day for the people we love.”

Dunbar is grateful for the support from the headline acts on Saturday—a strong line-up of Canadian performers, including up-and-coming country artists Brett Kissell and One More Girl, along with four other local bands kept the dance floor busy all night.

“It’s always great to combine great entertainment with raising money for charity,” adds Dunbar. He shares that plans are in the works for a summer musical event that will generate more funds for the RVH Foundation.



**Craig Dunbar, Shake the Foundation organizer and former dialysis unit patient, knows firsthand the importance and quality of Renfrew Victoria Hospital’s services.**