

MIDDLESEX  
HOSPITAL  
ALLIANCE

# ANNUAL REPORT



2023/2024



This report provides an overview of the Middlesex Hospital Alliance's accomplishments during the 2023-2024 fiscal year. These achievements have been made possible through the dedication and commitment of our outstanding staff, physicians, volunteers, donors, and community partners.

# Table of **CONTENTS**

<b>04</b>	Message from Leadership
<b>05</b>	About Us & Our Strategic Plan
<b>06</b>	2023/24 Financials
<b>07</b>	By the Numbers
<b>08</b>	Highlights from the Past Year
<b>13</b>	Looking Ahead



# MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP



As President & CEO, Chief of Staff, and Board Chair of the Middlesex Hospital Alliance, we are thrilled to share our Annual Report for the 2023/24 fiscal year. This report provides an overview of our teams' incredible achievements last year, and we are so proud to share them with you. Our Annual Report is back after a hiatus during the COVID-19 pandemic.

L-R: Dr. Elisheva Chernick- Chief of Staff, Julie McBrien- President & CEO, Melanie Stanley- MHA Board Chair

This past year we were very hard at work on the MHA's new [Strategic Plan](#) which will guide our work for the foreseeable future. Our new plan outlines our organizational commitment to providing patients, families and communities with the healthcare we would expect for our own families, and to honouring our exceptional team of employees, physicians, and volunteers who go above and beyond every day for our patients and families.

Another area of considerable success has been the development and strengthening of our [Senior Leadership Team](#). 2023-24 saw four incredible new leaders join us – Dr. Chernick as our Chief of Staff and VP of Medical Affairs, Krista Shea as our VP of Clinical Services and Chief Nursing Officer, Devin Sturdy as our VP of Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer, and Ryan Whitney as our Director of Facilities, Redevelopment & Support Services. All four of these leaders are deeply committed to making the MHA the best it can be and have already made tremendous impact in their respective service areas. We are extremely grateful to have them with us and look forward to all that they will accomplish in the years ahead.

This year the MHA has also benefitted tremendously from the extraordinary contributions of our volunteers. From those who sit on our [Board of Directors](#), serve on our [Patient and Family Advisory Council](#), and all our volunteers who support our staff in delivering exceptional patient care in our hospitals – we are so grateful for everything you do to make the MHA the wonderful place that it is.

Many of you will know that we have exciting news on the technological horizon as the SMGH is preparing to receive our community's first Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine in 2025. We are pleased to share that construction of the suite is both on-time and on-budget. We are extremely appreciative to the [SMGH Foundation](#) for their dedicated work on raising the funds we need for the MRI Suite and are profoundly grateful to our donors who have already stepped up in such a big way to support this critical project.

We hope you enjoy reading through our Annual Report and [please follow us on social media](#) to keep up with all the exciting MHA news!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie L. McBrien".

Julie McBrien  
**President & CEO**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melanie Stanley".

Melanie Stanley  
**Board Chair**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elisheva Chernick".

Dr. Elisheva Chernick  
**Chief of Staff/VP Medical Affairs**

# ABOUT US & STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-FORWARD

## About the MHA

The Middlesex Hospital Alliance (MHA) is comprised of two partner sites – Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital (SMGH) – a medium-sized 54-bed facility, and Four Counties Health Services (FCHS) – a small, rural 12-bed facility in Newbury, ON. Both hospitals are fully accredited and serve patients and families from across Lambton, Middlesex, Elgin, and Chatham-Kent Counties. Together, we offer a full range of services including 24/7 emergency services, inpatient acute care, robust surgical and diagnostic services, and ambulatory and outpatient rehabilitation services.

## Strategic Plan: 2024 - Forward

We spent considerable time prior to and in 2023/24 consulting with staff, physicians, volunteers, and community partners to inform the revision of our MHA Strategic Plan- Caring for our Communities: Building our Future Together. Our mission remained constant, but our vision was updated slightly to put more focus on our exceptional people.

### *Vision*

Exceptional People Providing Exceptional Care.

### *Mission*

To provide the healthcare we would expect for our own families.

We also established new organizational values and added descriptions to clarify expectations.

### *C*ompassion

We will listen, seek to understand and through our words and actions, show our genuine concern for others. We will foster an environment that is patient-centered, caring, and helping to others.

### *A*ccountability

We will embrace responsibility in all that we do, each of us owning our actions and behaviors. We are committed to acting with honesty and integrity.

### *R*espect

We will support an inclusive space in which we seek to understand and honour each other's diversity and individuality. We will foster an environment that is fair, and supports a sense of belonging and engagement.

### *E*xcellence

We will continually strive for exceptional patient, family, caregiver and provider experiences. If we do not meet expectations, we will learn and take action to improve.

Additionally, we stated our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation:

*We acknowledge our role in history and the injustices faced by Indigenous Peoples in Canada. We are committed to building a renewed relationship with local Indigenous Peoples and communities, fostering an environment of healing, trust, partnership and respect. By listening and learning, we can take meaningful action to support the specific health care needs and experience of Indigenous Peoples.*

And shared three (3) NEW Strategic Priorities:

**Collaborate** for Exceptional Care & Experiences  
**Engage**, Support and Inspire Our People  
**Advance** How We Deliver Care

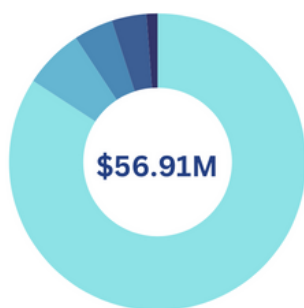
To explore our new Strategic Plan, please visit our website here: [Strategic Plan – Middlesex Hospital Alliance \(mhalliance.on.ca\)](https://mhalliance.on.ca).



# 2023/24 FINANCIALS

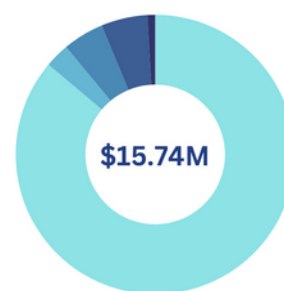
We are committed to being transparent and accountable to the communities we serve which includes sharing the summary of our financial position as of March 31, 2024. Our audited financial statements are available on our website here: [Financial Reports - Middlesex Hospital Alliance \(mhalliance.on.ca\)](https://www.mhalliance.on.ca/financial-reports).

Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital  
Revenue (Millions): \$56.91



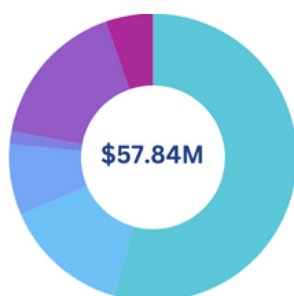
Ministry of Health & Ontario Health	\$47,918,562
OHIP & Patient Services	\$3,710,268
Recoveries & Miscellaneous Revenue	\$2,446,818
Amortization of Donations & Grants	\$2,150,009
Differential & Co-payments	\$685,405

Four Counties Health Services  
Revenue (Millions): \$15.74



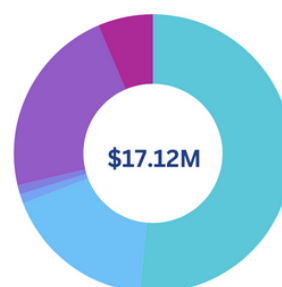
Ministry of Health & Ontario Health	\$13,619,265
OHIP & Patient Services	\$435,641
Recoveries & Miscellaneous Revenue	\$728,700
Amortization of Donations & Grants	\$821,502
Differential & Co-payments	\$137,722

Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital  
Expenses (Millions): \$57.84



Salaries, Wages & Benefits	\$31,456,287
Medical Staff Remuneration	\$8,154,781
Medical & Surgical Supplies	\$4,605,967
Drugs & Medical Gases	\$843,256
Other Supplies & Expenses	\$9,713,173
Amortization	\$3,068,334

Four Counties Health Services  
Expenses (Millions): \$17.12



Salaries, Wages & Benefits	\$8,935,882
Medical Staff Remuneration	\$2,945,320
Medical & Surgical Supplies	\$181,965
Drugs & Medical Gases	\$175,691
Other Supplies & Expenses	\$3,813,634
Amortization	\$1,069,933

# BY THE NUMBERS

Our People (Across both sites)



**505**  
**employees**  
+58 Volunteers



**200**  
**Physicians**  
(and specialists  
with privileges)



**Board of  
Directors**  
15 Elected, 5 Ex-Officio

MHA hospitals are very busy places, and are constantly growing in order to better serve the healthcare needs of our communities. Please see our 2023/24 clinical statistics below:

Department Activity	SMGH	FCBS
Emergency Visits	27,208	13,274
Ambulatory Clinic Visits	17,291	1,396
Physio Outpatient Visits	13,438	9403
Diagnostics Imaging Exams	63,824	12,095
Surgical Procedures	3,058	0
Endoscopy Procedures	3,062	126
Births	59	0
Patient Days	17,137	4,375
Community Support - Diabetes Education Clinic Visits	5,584	2,455
Beds Funded	54	12
Lab Tests Performed	258,332	45,442

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PAST YEAR



## Making Way for the MRI at SMGH

The MHA has been very focused on preparing for the arrival of our community's first Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine. We are thrilled to share that the project is both on time and on budget to launch successfully in March of 2025.

In order to accommodate the MRI at SMGH, the difficult decision was made to relocate the hospital's Diabetes Education and Outpatient Rehabilitation programs into the community. The relocation was the most fiscally responsible given the renovation costs to re-create new space within the hospital would cost millions.

The latest MRI technology offers high-resolution images that enable precise diagnoses for a wide range of conditions, including ligament and tendon injuries, joint issues, tumors (including cancer), and brain or spinal cord injuries. Very soon, our patients and families will no longer need to travel outside of our community to have these important diagnostic tests and procedures done.

The MHA is very grateful to the Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital Foundation (SMGHF) for their continued dedication to fundraising for this critical and costly piece of equipment and renovations.

**DID YOU KNOW?** A hospital's operating expenses- for example staff salaries, medications, supplies etc - are mostly and generally funded by the provincial government.

CAPITAL expenses on the other hand are not - those expenses related to medical/patient care equipment (ie. replacement of aging equipment and new technology innovation) and physical infrastructure ie. the SMGH's new MRI and the renovations the hospital requires to house it.

This is why hospital Foundations are so important. Hospital Foundations are organizations that are dedicated to raising the funds needed to facilitate those critical capital purchases that are not covered by the government.

We still have some work to do to reach our fundraising goal for the MRI. If you would like to donate to the MRI project at SMGH, you can:

- Donate quickly and securely online at [www.smghfoundation.com](http://www.smghfoundation.com), or
- Call 519-246-5906 to give a donation over the phone.



## **MHA's Commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism (JEDI -R) and Anti- Indigenous Racism**

At the MHA, all patients, families, staff, physicians and volunteers are valued and deserve the respect, dignity and standard of care that we would expect for our own family members.

We are deeply committed to ensuring that systemic and discriminatory barriers do not affect the healthcare and interactions provided at our hospitals and that everyone feels safe, welcome, and respected in our facilities every time they visit.



Here are some highlights from the MHA's 2023/24 JEDI Journey:

- The MHA formed a JEDI-R working group to promote and champion justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion within the organization. The group's goal is to help us create an environment that respects and values the unique backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of all employees, physicians, volunteers, and patients/families.
- Introduced mandatory JEDI training for all MHA leaders
- Provided MHA leaders with Indigenous Cultural Safety training
- Substantially increased LGBTQ+ support and focused initiatives including sponsorships and attendance at Strathroy's Pride in the Park and flying Pride Flags at both hospitals during Pride Month, and
- Initiated engagement with local Indigenous communities to understand how we can better meet their health care needs.

## **Celebrating Our Exceptional People**

### *MHA Wellbeing Program*

We understand that our greatest asset is our amazing team. This is why we prioritize wellbeing and wellness and have created a Wellbeing Committee to deliver wellness programs and resources to help our staff, physicians and volunteers thrive in all aspects of their lives.

The MHA Wellbeing program has seen the introduction of relaxing wellness rooms at both hospitals, so our people have a peaceful place to take a break from the busyness and intensity of their work.

The program also includes weekly Wellness Wednesday emails and monthly Wellness Travel Carts where committee members bring snacks and chat with staff, physicians and volunteers at both hospital sites. Travel Carts are also a great opportunity to deliver important organizational information to staff in person.

We also offer an Employee and Family Assistance Program for staff which offers virtual personalized health and wellness supports, tools, and resources for those who need support in the areas of mental health, family and relationships, work and career, financial, legal, and more.

## Long Service Awards

The MHA values and appreciates the loyalty, dedication, and hard work of its staff and physicians. To celebrate and honour their contributions, we celebrate years of service achievements for employees who reach specific service milestones. In 2023/24, we recognized 65 physicians/staff, across both hospitals, for their years of service including several in the 15-, 20- and 25-year categories and even one team member who has been with the MHA for 50 years!

## Team Appreciation Events

The MHA is extremely fortunate to have 50+ volunteers who regularly donate their time to help us provide exceptional service to our patients and families. Individual Volunteer Appreciation Celebrations were held at both of our hospitals in 2023/24 to honour our wonderful team of volunteers and to recognize several individuals with 5, 10, 15, and even 20 years of dedicated service. Further, Several MHA volunteers received the Volunteer Service Award from Service Canada in 2024.

To learn more about volunteering at the MHA, [click here](#).

The MHA's senior leadership team also hosted a Physician Appreciation event and two Staff Appreciation events, including a BBQ, to give us the opportunity to thank our teams in person for all of the amazing work they do.



## The MHA's Commitment to Patient & Family Experience

Our Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) was established in 2022 and has since been doing the important work of advising the MHA on how to improve patient and family experiences in our hospitals. In 2023/24, we increased both membership and diversity of membership within our PFAC as well as launched two very important patient experience projects:

### (1) Launched our New Patient Declaration of Values

In 2010, the Province of Ontario introduced the Excellent Care for All Act (ECFAA) which states that every health care organization will have a publicly available Patient Declaration of Values developed in consultation with the public.

In 2023, we engaged our PFAC to help us revise our Patient Declaration of Values to ensure it reflects what matters most to our patients and families. Our new Patient Declaration of Values highlights the partnership between the MHA and our patients/families, and we are so grateful for our PFAC's work on this very important project.

## Patient Declaration of Values MY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### I, as your patient, have the **right**

- To receive care guided by the MHA Mission Statement "To provide the healthcare we would expect for our own families"
- To be treated with compassion and respect
- To inclusive, diverse and equitable quality care, free from discrimination, abuse or harm
- To privacy and confidentiality
- To ask questions, to receive answers and to express concerns
- To be engaged in my healthcare plan and to receive information to help me make an informed decision to accept or refuse treatment
- To have my family, or my chosen support, engaged in my care and healthcare plan
- To know the names and roles of my health care team

### I, as your patient, have the **responsibility**

- To treat physicians, staff, volunteers, other patients and families with courtesy and respect
- To ensure that I share accurate and up-to-date information about my health
- To inform my care team of my Substitute Decision Maker or Power-of-Attorney and any healthcare wishes I have expressed
- To accept the consequences if I refuse recommended treatment or I don't participate in my care
- To understand that treatment I ask for may not be medically or ethically appropriate for me
- To respect hospital property and help the hospital maintain an environment that is safe and clean

## *(2) Introduced our Paediatric “Bears that Care” Initiative*

In 2023, one of our PFAC council members’ children had surgery at both SMGH and at another much larger regional hospital; he shared how different their experiences had been and that there was an opportunity for the MHA to strengthen patient experience of paediatric patients having surgery at our hospitals.

The MHA consulted with its Operating Room (OR) nurses, social worker, and anaesthetists to get their thoughts on the improvements we could make, and the results have been amazing.

Prior to this program, a paediatric patient and their parent/s/caregiver/s would come into the hospital for surgery the morning of and would be greeted by their nurse who would answer any questions they might have. But now through the Bears that Care program, patients receive an age-appropriate book about the surgery they are having for their parent/s/caregiver/s to read to them, as well as a stuffed animal fitted with a paediatric mask and hospital bracelet to provide some comfort.

Patient and family feedback since the Bears that Care initiative was introduced have been overwhelmingly positive with parents and caregivers sharing how much the book and teddy bear helped their little ones (and them!) to feel better about having surgery.



**Kathryn Chalmers, RN, Same Day Care gets the book and teddy bear ready for the patient the night before their surgery.**



**Scarlett, MHA's first Bears that Care recipient.**

## **The MHA's Commitment to Our Strategic Priorities: Highlights**

### *Patient Safety*

Through the implementation of bedside reporting and huddle boards, plus extensive investment in quality improvement processes, we are always considering and improving patient safety. 2023/24 also saw the hire of the MHA's first specific patient care and experience specialist.

### *Patient Care Equipment and Technology*

We continue to invest in new patient care technology. 2023/24 saw the purchase of several important patient care items including:

SMGH – C-arm (high resolution Xray machine for operating room), a surgical chair, a radiology system, an operating room tower (which provides the digital picture surgeons watch during surgery), a vital sign monitor, three ultrasound machines, and a workstation on wheels.

FCHS – a new hospital bed for larger patients, two portable blood analysis systems, an ergonomic ultrasound table, a Patient Wander Management system, a workstation on wheels, and a bladder scanner.

We are so grateful to our two incredible hospital foundations – the Four Counties Health Services Foundation and the Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital Foundation – whose staff work tirelessly to raise funds for the specific needs of the hospital they serve.

To learn more about our foundations, click here: <https://mhalliance.on.ca/donate/>

## *Capital Redevelopment Projects*

The Middlesex Hospital Alliance prioritizes capital development projects to ensure that we have the infrastructure we need to execute our mission—to provide the kind of healthcare we would expect for our own families. As such, we completed the following infrastructure projects in 2023/24 through the support of Hospital Infrastructure Renewal Funding (HIRF) :

- Chiller replacement project at SMGH which improved cooling to 70% of the facility
- Equipped SMGH with an unlimited power supply system to provide power to the hospital during short interruptions
- Initiated planning and renovations for SMGH's MRI suite
- Replaced rooftop exhaust fans at FCHS, enhancing indoor air quality and energy savings and reducing maintenance costs

## *Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)*

The Excellent Care for All Act (ECFAA), effective June 2010, requires all Ontario hospitals to create and make public an annual Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

In 2023/24, the MHA released its annual QIP plan which outlined our organizational priorities for the year ahead in order to ensure positive patient experiences and the delivery of the highest quality health care at both of our hospitals.

To read our Quality Improvement Plan, click here: <https://mhalliance.on.ca/performance-and-public-reporting/quality-improvement-plan/>

## **The MHA's Commitment to Quality Care**

### *RNAO Best Practice Spotlight Organization*

The MHA is proud to have been selected as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO). This designation has been awarded to the MHA in recognition of our long-term commitment to implement, evaluate, sustain, and spread RNAO's Best Practice Guidelines (BPGs).

To learn more, visit our website here: <https://mhalliance.on.ca/about/bps/>

### *OneChart Electronic Health Record*

The MHA is working toward fully digitizing our patient health records at our hospitals through our engagement in the OneChart program. We completed Phase 1 of OneChart in 2022, and we moved into Phase 2 in Spring 2024 which started with a regional Anesthesia module which integrated data from the Operating Room with patient data and transitioned that data from paper to the Electronic Medical Record).

Next steps for this project include image capture, dictation advancements, document scanning and moving toward electronic documentation in Ambulatory Care and Infection Control, and Pharmacy Clinical Surveillance modules in 2025.

### *Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN)*

The MHA's Strathroy site is proud to be an affiliate of the Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN) which works to save lives through organ and tissue donation. Since beginning to work with TGLN in 2015, Middlesex Hospital Alliance has supported 3 organ donors, saving the lives of 8 individuals. Across both sites, the corporation has also had 83 tissue donors, enhancing the lives of many others.

# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024-2025



## Women's Health Service Changes

In 2023, the MHA's Senior Leadership Team recommended, and supported by the MHA Board of Directors, that the organization transition obstetrical deliveries to regional partners London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC) and St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital (STEGH) due to a steady decline in birth volumes at the MHA in recent years and ongoing obstetrical health human resource challenges. Upon transition of the program, the MHA embarked on a robust stakeholder engagement process to inform the MHA's re-envisioned women's health services. This outreach included a survey which was distributed across the community with the help of our community healthcare and Indigenous partners to obtain as many responses as possible. In the 2024/25, the MHA will make a recommendation on the strategic direction of the women's health services based on this community input and we expect to be able to share more information about the MHA women's health program in 2025.



### Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital

395 Carrie Street,  
Strathroy, ON N7G 3J4  
(519) 245-1550



### Four Counties Health Services

182 Concession Drive,  
Newbury, ON N0L 1Z0  
(519) 693-4441

