From anonymous individuals to private companies and non-profit organizations, the generosity of donors in supporting the Carlile Youth Concurrent Disorders Centre has been nothing short of overwhelming.

When Lions Gate Hospital Foundation launched the $5 million fundraising campaign in March 2016 to help build the 10-bed unit in the HOpe Centre on the LGH campus, donations started to flow, and flow quickly.

In fact, the $5 million target was surpassed in September and now totals $5.095 million for the unique new resource for young patients struggling with mental health and substance use issues across Vancouver Coastal Health. Donations are still trickling in.

“It’s incredibly uplifting to know that there are so many people who belief in helping provide a caring and safe environment for vulnerable young patients,” says Tanis Evans, Carlile Centre Interim Operations Director. “We are beyond grateful to every single donor who has contributed to this project to make it a reality.”

The majority of donations came from the North Shore. The foundation also received 2% of its donations for youth mental health from Ontario, Alberta and Quebec.

Of the $5 million, $2 million came from Jack and Leone Carlile, after whom the centre is named. Other multiple large gift donations came from organizations such as Variety – The Children’s Charity, which donated $250,000, and Telus ($150,000 matching gift).

Equally important were the huge number of donations to youth mental health for $1,000 or less, including some for $10. Combined, these donors contributed $400,000 to help support the Carlile Centre.

“Without each and every one of these donors, we wouldn’t be looking forward to the opening of such a centre in 2017,” says Tanis. “I, personally, am very grateful to the Lions Gate Hospital Foundation for their tireless efforts in supporting youth mental health.”

When it opens in April, just over 1,600 donors will have helped make the CYCDC a reality.
Carlile Centre will broaden ability to help, says Mountainside principal

“If only there was a place where this kid could go, where they would be safe and get the help they needed.”

Jeremy Church can’t count the number of times he’s said these words over the last few years when all options have been exhausted to help a student in need and it still wasn’t enough.

Jeremy is the principal at Mountainside Secondary School, the smallest and newest secondary school in the North Vancouver School District that functions as part of the continuum of social/emotional/behavioural supports for students in Grades 9-12 (ages 14-19). Some students’ school days at Mountainside are fairly traditional. But the school also accommodates those who are working and may only be able to attend for part of the day.

“We have exceptional, amazing and complex learners where the mainstream school is not a good fit,” explains Jeremy, “whether it’s because of mental health issues, anxiety, substance use, or family turmoil.”

Although the school has strong community partnerships with VCH, Ministry of Children and Family Development, Parkgate Community Centre, North Shore Neighbourhood House Youth Services and has access to an onsite doctor and nurse, some students have fallen through the cracks. So he was thrilled, if not relieved, when he heard that a facility like the Carlile Youth Concurrent Disorders Centre was going to open on the North Shore and serve young people throughout Vancouver Coastal Health.

“A place like this has been missing regionally and is needed right now,” says Jeremy. “For us at the school, the challenge is when we have a situation that is too complex and the needs of the individual are too immediate and require help now. We don’t want any student ending up on the street where they can hurt themselves. I’ve come across three or four youth where the Carlile Centre would have been the natural next step.”

Jeremy has worked closely with VCH over the years and he’s optimistic about what the centre will be able to do for vulnerable young people.

“The Carlile Centre will offer an intense level of intervention for youth providing them with time to stabilize and get the support they need,” he says. “Ultimately, the Carlile Centre will broadly deepen our ability to continue serving students when the situation gets really complicated.”

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