

# Inspired *by you.*



Your support provides families with the knowledge and resources they need to protect their children.

# Hope Fund Donors Like You Ease Fears

*Your Gifts Provide Comfort Beginning With the First Treatment*

## Fear of the unknown.

You may have experienced this yourself. And as a donor to the McLeod Health Foundation, you help patients deal with the wave of emotion that comes with a cancer diagnosis.

When a patient first hears the word “Cancer,” they often are struck by anxiety over what is to come. These feelings can overwhelm patients as they prepare for their first radiation or chemotherapy treatment.

**Through your support of the HOPE (Helping Oncology Patients Everyday) Fund, you are there to help ease these fears as patients begin their lifesaving treatments.**

Before a patient ever receives their first cancer treatment, HOPE Fund Coordinator Sarah Beth Averette is busy preparing a tote bag filled with items specifically chosen by local cancer survivors to comfort patients during their journey. The bags contain items like a crocheted blanket, a calendar and pen, lip balm, and a thermometer. Upon request of one HOPE Fund donor, lozenges formulated to soothe dry mouth (a common symptom following chemotherapy) are now also included.

On day one of treatment, Sarah Beth personally visits each patient. She explains the numerous ways the HOPE Fund is there to

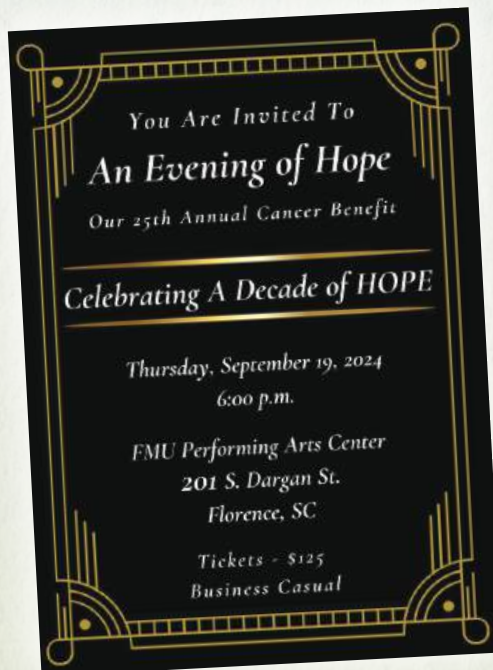


*HOPE Fund Coordinator Sarah Beth Averette gives one of the HOPE tote bags to patient Wardie Sanders.*

help them if needs arise. For instance, if patients find themselves in challenging financial situations, they can contact her directly to see if they qualify for immediate assistance. Sarah Beth also explains why each item was included in the tote bag and how it can help during treatment.

**“Our patients are truly grateful for this gesture,” Sarah Beth shares. “One patient came to tell me what a blessing the throat lozenges were for him. He had no clue he would need them on his first day of treatment but was so grateful for them when he started experiencing severe dry mouth.”**

Donors like you give selflessly to the HOPE Fund to provide patients with a wide range of assistance while undergoing grueling treatments. Through these special bags, all patients receiving treatment at the McLeod Center for Cancer Treatment and Research are reminded that you care and that you are here to help during the fight of their lives.



# Generous Supporters Provide Meaningful “Little Things”

*HERO Fund Uplifts Frightened and Exhausted NICU Parents*

In healthcare, attention to the little things separates “adequate” from “excellent.” The mission of McLeod Health is to improve the overall health and wellbeing of people living within South Carolina and eastern North Carolina by providing excellence in healthcare. One way we accomplish our mission is by identifying gaps that hinder the wellness of the whole person.

Hospital. Since 2020, you have helped to provide formula for babies discharged from the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), specialized car seats for children with disabilities, and other immediate needs for families who struggle financially. Your support also ensures children receive necessary medication and equipment.

**But HERO Fund donors also address seemingly everyday needs... the “little things” that elevate McLeod’s care for children from adequate to excellent.**

One example is the *Sweet Beginnings* program.

The average NICU stay is 14 days. This can feel like an eternity for parents as they wait, racked with anxiety and

restlessness, until their baby is stable enough to be taken home.

*Sweet Beginnings* helps families see the light at the end of the tunnel. Parents are given commemorative beads at each of their baby’s milestones – first feeding, first

bath, hearing screening, car seat test, and NICU graduation day – encouraging them along their family’s first major journey. Upon discharge, they also receive a bracelet to put the beads on from Volunteer Coordinator Lauren McKenzie.

This program is especially meaningful for Tiffany Snyder whose daughter, Maggie, was born at just 31 weeks and admitted to the NICU at McLeod Children’s Hospital.

**“Everything has been totally overwhelming,” Tiffany recalls. “But *Sweet Beginnings* gives me something to look forward to and helps me remember that we won’t be here forever. It is a huge relief. I am grateful for donors who remember the little things.”**

Tiffany recently received a bead to mark Maggie’s transition to an open crib, lifting the family’s spirits even further.

“It’s very exciting because I know we are only two steps away from getting Maggie home,” Tiffany explains. “I know we will always treasure this keepsake and the generosity of others who made it possible.”



*McLeod preemie Maggie Synder is pictured with one of the Sweet Beginnings bracelets given to NICU families. The beads represent milestones their baby reaches during the NICU journey.*

**Often, it is McLeod Health Foundation donors like you who help fill those gaps.**

The HERO (Helping to Eliminate and Remove Obstacles) Fund meets pressing needs of underserved children at McLeod Children’s

**You can volunteer for this year’s McLeod Children’s Hospital Radiothon which is being held October 2-4, 2024. Volunteers are needed to help answer phones and assist in this exciting live broadcast from the concourse of McLeod Regional Medical Center. To get more information or to volunteer, please call 843-777-2694 or return the enclosed reply envelope.**

# The Precious Gift Of Time

*Presence and Compassion Provide Comfort in Final Hours*

Your generous support of the McLeod Health Foundation funds numerous programs and services that might not otherwise be available. We are incredibly grateful to you, our donor.

**One special group of donors at McLeod Health Seacoast and McLeod Health Loris is also giving one of the most precious human gifts: time. Their commitment is to be present for patients who are alone in their final hours.**

The “No One Dies Alone” (NODA) program, a nationally recognized initiative, reflects the culture and mission of McLeod Health. Driven by volunteers, the program provides specialized training to ensure a reassuring and comforting presence for dying patients who would otherwise be alone.

It all began last year when Michelle Davies, Director of the Operating Room, went to Volunteer Manager Peggy Skudera. Michelle had just left a patient’s room where she stayed all night to be present with a patient who had no family to sit with them.

**A spark was ignited.**

McLeod Volunteer Chaplain Connie Lawson, a retired nurse and the force behind the volunteers for

this program, began researching and discovered NODA. She quickly introduced the program to McLeod Health. Connie brings eight years of experience, profound compassion, and dedication to her role as team leader for pastoral care.

**“NODA is the right program for McLeod Health,” she stated with tears in her eyes. “No one came into the world alone, and no one should leave alone.”**

Monica Vehige, CEO of McLeod Health Seacoast, shares her gratitude for the dedicated volunteers who brought this program to our region.

“Our first ‘No One Dies Alone’ experience was with an ICU patient estranged from his family, but not from the McLeod Health Seacoast family. This emotional journey began on Thursday, and he passed gently on Sunday. Because of our dedicated volunteers, he was never alone. This

gentleman was truly a gift to us, someone we came to identify as our hero. The experience is something we will never forget.”



*McLeod “No One Dies Alone” Volunteers include: from left to right, first row: Lisa Garneau, Nancy Rousselle, Jaydee DeFloure, U’lyrica Williams, and Connie Lawson; second row: Peter Resz, Karyn Francis, Jean Aldrich, Sharon Rosenberger, and Tom Cochrane.*

The volunteer group is guided by these wishes for their patient:

**“May the touch of my hand give you courage for the journey.”**

**“May the touch of my caring bring you comfort and peace.”**

**“May the touch of my presence say to you, ‘you are not alone.’”**

Through your support, our steadfast donors, you echo these words and ensure that our patients do not face their challenges alone.

# You Provide Beautiful Moments Of Respite For Hospice Patients And Their Caregivers

*How Your Support Makes Our Communities Healthier and Happier*

This year, your generous donations to the McLeod Health Foundation’s Butterfly Fund provided an additional nurse’s aide for McLeod Hospice and Palliative Care patients.

**If you have ever been a caregiver, you know the tremendous relief it is to have time to accomplish critical errands or have a few blissful moments of rest.**

George Riley of Clarendon County is incredibly grateful for your support.

George has spent the last 10 years caring for his 93-year-old mother, Doris, in her home. Moving to South Carolina from New York to care for his ill mother, he sacrifices much to ensure she has proper care. George is the only family his mother, who is bed-bound and struggles with dementia, has in the area.

Melanie Daney, one of our compassionate hospice nurse’s aides, has been helping care for Doris. But until recently, she had only been able to help with small things during her visits and did not have as much time as she would have liked.

**Because of your additional support, we now have another nurse’s aide. Increasing the size of our hospice aide team gives each aide the option to provide extended stay visits to patients like Doris, who need extra assistance.**

When Melanie told George that she could start staying longer and not have to rush off to see another patient, he was so grateful.

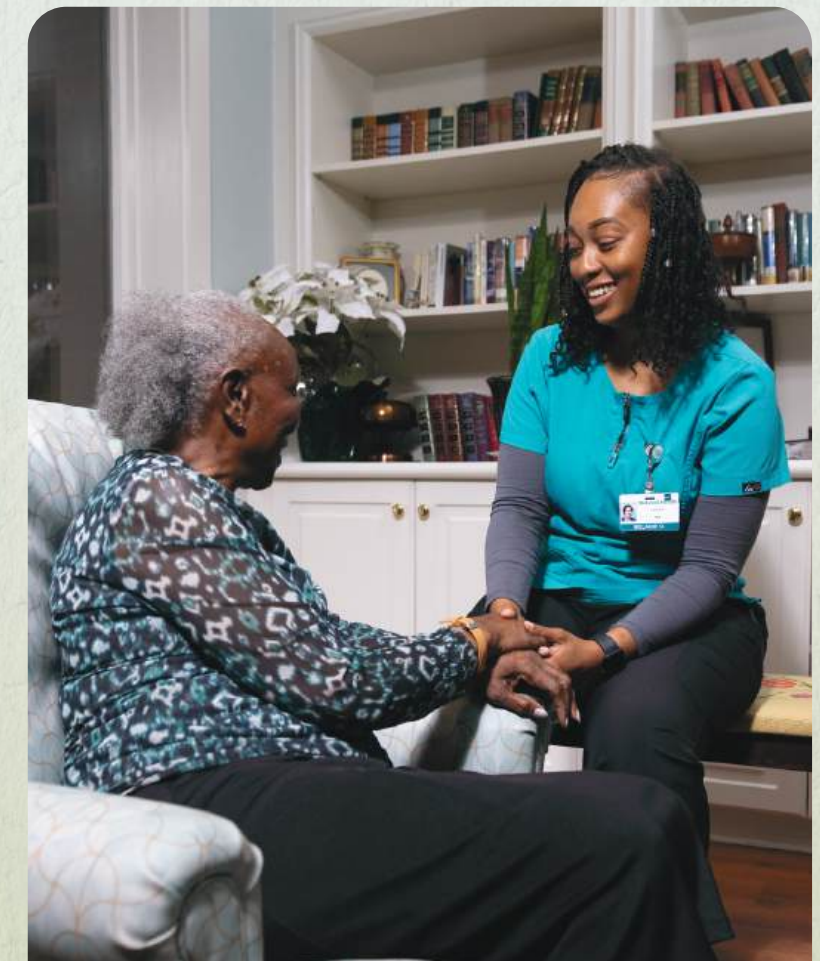
“Before, Melanie only had enough time to help with basic things,” George explained. “But now, she has time to feed my mom, change the bed sheets, and even provide light housekeeping.

This means so much because I usually do chores when mom is asleep. Now, I can rest a little myself.”

Donors like you have been a blessing to George and Doris and so many other families in similar situations.

Melanie has also been touched by the enhanced care she can now provide because of your support.

**“Patients and families express their gratitude for those extra hours providing relief and comfort,” Melanie said. “I am pleased to be one of those people making a difference because of our Butterfly Fund donors.”**



*McLeod Hospice nurse’s aide Melanie Daney provides a comforting touch to Azalee Willoughby.*

# A Message Of Gratitude For Donors Like You

*Your Gifts Provide the Breath of Life for Pulmonary Rehabilitation Patients*

**F**or longtime patient Shaun Burgess, the word “grateful” truly sums up how he feels about donors like you who support McLeod Pulmonary Rehabilitation.

Born and raised in Florence, Shaun was working as a welder at a nearby plant when he suddenly fell ill and was admitted to the hospital for double pneumonia. After being hospitalized and intubated for four long weeks, his lungs were in dire shape. The pneumonia had caused severe scarring resulting in long-term and debilitating side effects.

Following his discharge from an inpatient rehabilitation facility, Shaun’s medical team removed his tracheostomy. Not long after its removal, Shaun began experiencing severe shortness of breath and weakness. A short time later, a permanent tracheostomy was inserted due to scar tissue that had formed near his airway.

Shaun’s physician Dr. Carmen Taype-Roberts, a McLeod Pulmonologist, urged him to enroll in Pulmonary Rehabilitation where a team comprised of a Pulmonologist, Respiratory Therapist, Exercise Psychologist, and Registered Nurse would create a comprehensive treatment plan tailored to Shaun’s specific needs.

Shaun worked diligently, completing specialized exercises to increase his lung function.



*Shaun Burgess is grateful to McLeod Foundation donors who make it possible for him to continue receiving pulmonary rehabilitation.*

He also received nutrition counseling, instruction on breathing techniques, and advice on how to conserve his energy.

All was going well as Shaun finished the first two phases of Pulmonary Rehabilitation. However, he was concerned upon learning that his insurance would not cover his much needed continued participation. Unable to go back to work due to his illness, Shaun knew he could not afford to continue in the program.

**But then he received some astounding news -- McLeod Foundation donors, like you, had provided funds to**

**help him remain in this lifesaving program.**

“When I phased out of insurance coverage, the nurses told me not to panic because the cost of my care would be covered by the McLeod Foundation,” Shaun explained. “I was overjoyed that people I do not even know were kind enough to assist me.”

As Shaun continues attending Pulmonary Rehabilitation, he feels blessed for the difference donors have made in his health and wellbeing.

**“This program continues to help me get back to how my life was before. I am so thankful for those special donors who have given to support me in my recovery,” added Shaun.**

# You Provided Blessings For A Couple In Crisis

*Through Your Support of Pastoral Services, You Helped Save a Life*

**M**cLeod Health Foundation donors have long understood the value of McLeod Pastoral Services. Over the years, our donors’ gifts have funded crisis intervention responses for patients and staff, and educational resources for our chaplains.

Recently, the Foundation team learned of a message from a very grateful family. It told the story of how Chaplain Sam Turbeville, Director of McLeod Pastoral Services, provided thoughtful guidance in their time of crisis.

Michelle and Scott Storzillo moved to Myrtle Beach 12 years ago when Scott retired from law enforcement. They were enjoying retirement when Scott’s addiction with alcohol created a life-threatening emergency. A nearby hospital did not have the necessary services, so Scott was transferred to McLeod Regional Medical Center in Florence in the middle of the night.

Upon learning the severity of Scott’s condition, Michelle asked for a priest to perform the last rites. There was no priest on-site at that hour, but Sam arrived to lead her in prayer over her husband.

The physician told Michelle that Scott’s only hope was 24-hour dialysis. Michelle initially declined, wanting to honor Scott’s wishes not to be kept alive on machines.

Sam reassured her that the dialysis would only be temporary. It was the last remaining option, and at the very least, it would provide time for their son to fly in from Texas.

Scott miraculously survived the night. He remained in the hospital for a month until he was able to return home and receive care at a local clinic. After two months, he was discharged with a clean bill of health.

“We are so grateful that McLeod supports this wonderful Pastoral Care program,” Michelle shares. “It is essential to have the calming words of comfort and guidance that chaplains like Sam provide. He was heaven-sent. Scott would not be here with us today without Sam’s reassurance.”

**Our dedicated and compassionate chaplains help patients through difficult emotions, whether they are persons of faith or not. Donors like you ensure that chaplains are available around the clock at McLeod Regional Medical Center.**

*“Sam, you were the calm in the storm that night. Coming from the beach I was alone and overwhelmed. I was prepared to let him go but your presence, your words, and prayers convinced me to try the doctor’s last resort of dialysis. It worked, and he survived. We will forever be grateful.”*

*—Michelle Storzillo*



*Scott and Michelle Storzillo benefitted from the comfort and guidance they received from McLeod Chaplain Sam Turbeville.*

# Superheroes Like You Are Keeping Our Children Safe

*Donor Support for Safe Kids Prevents Accidents and Injury*

**N**ot all superheroes wear capes. You, our generous McLeod Health Foundation donors, are probably more comfortable in street clothes while you help keep our children safe.

**“The Pee Dee region is a dangerous place for kids,”** says McLeod Safe Kids Coordinator Angie Dillon. **“Florence County’s death rate from preventable accidents is 36% higher than across the country.”**

Too often, area children end up in the hospital from accidents that could have been avoided. **Your support of Safe Kids provides parents with the knowledge and resources to protect their children.**

Safe Kids Worldwide is an international nonprofit that strives to reduce unintentional injuries to children. McLeod Regional Medical Center has hosted a Safe Kids chapter since 1996. As coordinator of our chapter, Angie trains car seat safety technicians, builds partnerships with local organizations, and travels the region providing safety education at community awareness events.

A major feature of these events is distributing safety gear like helmets

and car seats to parents of limited financial means free of charge, and ensuring they know how to install them properly. Thanks to a series of grants from the Honda USA Foundation and McLeod Foundation donors like you, Angie expanded her reach to include water safety, gun safety, ATV and bike safety, and medication security awareness.

**“Learning about injury statistics is a big part of my job,”** she explains. **“The data shows me where we need to offer more training and resources to keep kids safe. If we can provide a car seat or safe sleep equipment parents can’t afford for their children, that can make the difference between life, hospitalization, and death.”**



*McLeod Safe Kids Coordinator Angie Dillon is pictured with Grace Prescott and Mason Timmons after checking to ensure their bike helmets are secured properly.*

Angie often encounters situations where children are injured due to a lack of funding for safety equipment. By providing items such as bicycle helmets with instructions on how to properly wear them, she hopes to reduce life-changing injuries to children.

**“Knowledge is lifesaving, and education is 1,000 percent the biggest benefit Safe Kids provides,”** Angie says. **“Our dedicated donors, like you, make this blessing possible.”**