



Spirit *of the* **North**
HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**REVOLUTIONIZING HEALTHCARE: INTRODUCING
THE MOBILE ULTRASOUND MACHINE**



**THIS INNOVATION HOLDS
THE POTENTIAL TO
REVOLUTIONIZE MEDICAL
PRACTICES ACROSS
DIVERSE SETTINGS, FROM
REMOTE HEALTHCARE
FACILITIES TO EMERGENCY
RESPONSE SITUATIONS. ITS
VERSATILITY AND EASE OF
USE MAKE IT AN
INDISPENSABLE TOOL FOR
HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS
SEEKING TO DELIVER
SUPERIOR PATIENT CARE.**

**“I HAVE EXPERIENCED SO
MUCH THANKFULNESS
FROM PATIENTS AND
STAFFING IN THE
COMMUNITIES THAT I HAVE
TRAVELLED TO FOR WORK.”**

KENDRA D.



**MORE INFORMATION AT
WWW.SPIRITOFTHENORTH.CA**



WITH GRATEFUL HEARTS:

This past year, thanks to the generous support of an anonymous donor, Northern British Columbia launched the Regional Mobile Ultrasound Program to help mitigate the challenges faced by Northerners with respect to ultrasound services. Given the vast distances between communities and critical equipment and staffing challenges, many residents are forced to travel to receive basic ultrasound diagnostics and echocardiography services.

This combination was highlighted as causing significant barriers to care throughout Northern BC, which called for innovative thinking with the aim of reducing barriers to diagnostic services throughout the North.

Northern Health had identified a Diagnostic Imaging Strategic Plan for Northern BC aimed at closing this very gap, with that strategic plan, the Mobile Ultrasound and Echocardiography Service had been highlighted as the third and final pillar of the strategy to bring stronger, more accessible care to the North.

This program is the first of its kind in the North and has highlighted the importance of mobility to respond to the challenges seen in our communities. Beyond the tangible diagnostic numbers, the indirect impact of this program is vast and reaches more patients each and every day. The travel, cost, and time it saves our residents is invaluable and highlights what can be done to bring care to very remote and rural communities.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Mobile Ultrasound Team, and Northern Patients, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to this generous donor and their commitment to our Northern BC communities, and for seeing the impact this program would have on so many residents. We hope you feel, as we do, the direct impact this program is having towards removing barriers to care, once thought impossible. Thank you.

- *Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundation*



PROGRAM BENEFITS AS OF 2023

REDUCING PATIENT TRAVEL

The first month of ultrasound service at Burns Lake saved 40 patients from travelling in November. January showed an increase of 70 patient exams being done locally and that trend has continued month after month.

VACANCY RELIEF & SITE SUPPORT

The mobile team has provided more than 750 days of relief at several Northern Health sites throughout the North, including PRRH, KGH, UHNBC, DCDH, FNGH, GRB, BVDH and VSJH all who have seen significant waitlists or delays in diagnostics.

INCREASING ACCESS OF SERVICE TO PATIENTS

Starting the ultrasound service in communities like Burns Lake has seen an increased exam volume by over 20% to date for diagnostics that would have otherwise not been booked. We now have 3 mobile machines, and we just recently received our first fleet vehicle which will help us continue to ensure access to more remote communities.

IMPACT TO DATE

Over 5750 exams completed to date throughout Northern BC thanks to your generosity.

2023 ADVANCEMENTS

Plans for the program continue to develop as its impact continues to grow. One of the most exciting additions includes having a collaboration live service which will allow sonographers to talk, text, screen share and video with other colleagues such as practice leads, radiologists, and specialists. This is expected substantially improve patient care in very remote communities that otherwise would not see this level of care. The program also plans on

increasing support in Dawson Creek to help mitigate wait lists, as well as increasing Sonographer days in communities like Burns Lake as the demand continues to grow.