

AZRIELI FOUNDATION FUNDS RESEARCH TO TRANSFORM CAREGIVER SUPPORT WITH \$2.75 MILLION GIFT TO TRILLIUM HEALTH PARTNERS

Gift funds four-year research study at Trillium Health Partners' Institute for Better Health to empower caregivers with new tools and resources

Mississauga, ON. – February 20, 2025 – Trillium Health Partners (THP) is launching a four-year study to improve support and better integrate caregivers into health care teams. This ground-breaking research is made possible by Trillium Health Partners Foundation through a transformative \$2.75 million donation from the Azrieli Foundation and the Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence. This research will help reshape how caregivers are supported within the health system through innovative, inclusive solutions tailored to the diverse population of Peel Region.

Caregivers are vital members of a patient's care team, contributing significantly to patient safety and better health outcomes. The study, led by Dr. Kerry Kuluski, the Dr. Mathias Gysler Research Chair in Patient and Family Centred Care at THP's Institute for Better Health (IBH), will explore ways to help identify, support and integrate caregivers into health and social care teams, ensuring they receive the recognition and support they deserve.

"This initiative has the potential to transform how caregivers are recognized, supported and integrated into care, with local, national and global impact," says Dr. Kuluski. "By shining a light on these often-unacknowledged individuals, we will fill a system gap and take an important step toward a more inclusive and compassionate health care system. We are grateful to the Azrieli Foundation and the Canadian Centre for Caregiving Excellence for recognizing the critical role caregivers play in improving health outcomes and experiences for their loved ones."

This study will help fill a gap in supporting the rising number of Canadians filling the role of caregiver:

- In five years, approximately one in two people over the age of 15 will be a caregiver, up from one in four today.
- More than 7.8 million Canadians provide an average of 20 hours of unpaid care weekly.
- Caregivers contribute 5.7 billion unpaid caregiving hours annually, valued at \$97.1 billion.

"Anyone who has personally cared for a loved one can attest to the challenges of trying to balance caregiving with the demands of daily life," says Naomi Azrieli, Chair and CEO, Azrieli Foundation. "This research will lead to crucial changes in the way caregivers are identified, supported and empowered in Canada. We are proud to support Trillium Health Partners in leading this important initiative."

"Caregivers play a vital role in the health and well-being of those they support, yet they often go unrecognized within the healthcare system," says Liv Mendelsohn, Executive Director of CCCE. "Trillium Health Partners' living lab at IBH is changing that by prioritizing caregivers' needs—an approach that will ultimately improve outcomes for those receiving care. We're excited to support this initiative and look forward to scaling successful models across the country."

The Azrieli Foundation and CCCE's donation will support research and development in several critical areas, including:

- **Development of resources for better caregiver integration:** Programs, tools and best practices to identify, support and include caregivers in care teams. These resources will be shared with health care teams, including THP staff, to guide effective caregiver integration.

- **Creation of a co-designed tool:** A collaborative effort with caregivers to develop a tool that enhances caregiver identification, support and inclusion in care teams.
- **Innovative methods for evidence-gathering:** Insights will be collected using arts-based methodologies such as caregiver digital stories, photovoice albums and a digital documentary.
- **Testing and evaluation:** The new tool or intervention will be tested in two to three health care settings in Peel Region to see how well it works and how it can be expanded.

Researchers believe this study will have lasting benefits for patients and their caregivers at Trillium Health Partners and beyond. “Our work will mobilize global best practices and co-design local innovations for caregivers within the diverse population in Peel Region,” said Dr. Kuluski.

A Legacy of Giving

Established in 1989 by the late David Azrieli, the Azrieli Foundation is Canada’s largest non-corporate foundation, contributing more than \$100 million annually to education, research, health care and the arts. This latest investment underscores their commitment to improving lives through transformative initiatives.

“For decades, the Azrieli Foundation has profoundly impacted communities locally, nationally and globally,” said Caroline Riseboro, President and CEO of Trillium Health Partners Foundation. “This generous gift will empower our teams to better support caregivers, ultimately improving patient outcomes and experiences. Caregivers are the backbone of our health system, and this research will give them the tools, education and recognition they so deeply deserve. We are honoured to partner with the Azrieli Foundation and look forward to the meaningful progress we will achieve together.”

About Trillium Health Partners

Trillium Health Partners is the largest community-based hospital network in Canada. Comprised of Credit Valley Hospital, Mississauga Hospital and Queensway Health Centre, Trillium Health Partners serves the growing and diverse populations of Mississauga, West Toronto and surrounding communities. Trillium Health Partners is a teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Toronto and home of the Institute for Better Health. For more information, visit thp.ca. For more information about the Institute for Better Health, visit instituteforbetterhealth.com.

About Trillium Health Partners Foundation

Trillium Health Partners Foundation is dedicated to raising the critical funds needed to address the highest priority needs of Trillium Health Partners, the largest community-based hospital network in Canada. For more information, please visit trilliumgiving.ca.

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