

## **Covenant Foundation announces merger with Mary Immaculate Hospital Foundation**

*Mundare long-term care residents to benefit from continuing legacy of support for specialized care at Mary Immaculate Care Centre*

**EDMONTON / MUNDARE, March 25, 2024** - The Mary Immaculate Hospital Foundation will merge with the Covenant Foundation as of April 1, 2024. Starting in April, all funds raised locally and designated to the Mary Immaculate Care Centre through the Covenant Foundation will stay local to help advance and innovate care for seniors and other continuing care residents at Covenant Health's facility in Mundare.

*"The Mary Immaculate Hospital Foundation and its dedicated volunteer board have done an outstanding job in raising funds since 2005 to transform Covenant Health's long-term care in Mundare," says Lisa Munro, president & CEO of the Covenant Foundation. "We are proud to continue their work with the community and build upon their legacy to help provide the best quality of life possible for residents and their families who rely on the Mary Immaculate Care Centre."*

Since 2016, the Covenant Foundation has committed nearly \$7 million to drive health innovation, enhance specialized care and improve quality of life for residents and their families at Covenant continuing care centres in rural and urban communities across Alberta.

*"We're excited to merge with the Covenant Foundation and for our community to benefit from the foundation's greater capacity to increase awareness of fundraising and partnership opportunities that will make a tremendous difference for long-term care residents in Mundare," says Sylvia Zacharkiw, Board Chair of the Mary Immaculate Hospital Foundation.*

The Covenant Foundation is asking local donors, community leaders and organizations for their continued support with events and fundraising that will enable the foundation to invest in specialized programs, leading-edge equipment and training, and enhanced care spaces at the Mary Immaculate Care Centre. Priority projects include support for the specialized recreation therapy, music therapy, and gardening programs that help keep residents more mobile and independent, feel a greater sense of purpose and enjoy a better quality of life.

*"Donor support is critical to better equipping our staff and providing the best care possible for our residents," says Thomas Metlin, site administrator at the Mary Immaculate Care Centre. "The merger with Covenant Foundation is exciting because it will bring more opportunities for local and provincial partnerships to raise funds that go beyond the standard of care the government provides to make an even greater impact on continuing care in Mundare."*

With the merger of the Mary Immaculate Hospital Foundation, the Covenant Foundation will support 22 Covenant Health, Covenant Care, and Covenant Living hospitals and continuing care sites in ten communities across Alberta, including Mundare.

Mundare's Mary Immaculate Care Centre offers quality, compassionate care to 30 residents, with services that include long-term and palliative care, occupational, physical and recreation therapy, a mental health adult day program, and spiritual care to residents and families regardless of faith, background or tradition.

About 90 per cent of residents at the facility are seniors. As the fastest-growing age group in Canada, keeping up with the demand for seniors' care and taking bold steps to drive innovation in health delivery across Alberta, particularly in rural communities, is a priority for Covenant Health and Covenant Foundation.

Innovative donor-funded initiatives for residents at the Mary Immaculate Care Centre have included specialized equipment such as "ABBY" Ambient Activity Technology, which is a wall-mounted touchscreen unit with sensors and tactile activities designed for independent engagement and meaningful activity. The unit helps trigger memories and reduces responsive behaviors such as wandering or feelings of frustration, particularly for residents with dementia. ABBY has been shown to promote independence, emotional well-being, cognitive stimulation, physical activity and a sense of calm in long-term care.

Laurie Kadatz, a resident at the centre, loves using the ABBY unit and mentioned how it's available whenever she needs it, even if that's at 3 a.m. if she's unable to sleep. Kadatz says, "That ABBY is the best thing that ever graced this place. Others are excited about it, too; they say we should have another one here. I love it here!" Kadatz enjoys all the features of the ABBY, including "petting the cat" with feline images that automatically appear on screen, and the interactive games. During a recent site visit by Covenant Foundation staff, Kadatz demonstrated a fun competition with site administrator, Thomas Metlin, popping balloons together on the touch screen.

Other initiatives have helped reduce social isolation and improve residents' quality of life through donor-supported programs such as recreation and music therapy, and gardening. Social isolation and loneliness, particularly amongst seniors, is associated with a greater risk of dementia, stroke, cardiovascular disease, depression, anxiety and premature death.

A notable gift in memory of Mary Homenuk in 2022 helped purchase new garden boxes for the facility. Drawn to the new gardening space in the outdoor courtyard, complete with a gazebo, canopy and adjoining three-season room, Kadatz has taken the lead and is already excitedly planning for and talking about the vegetables and potatoes all residents will get to enjoy. Kadatz says, "I plant everything out there. It's nice to see residents' faces brighten up when they see what's in the garden. I'm honoured to do it, and it's a pleasure."

Eileen Leffler, a family member who helped provide the donation says that her mom, Mary Homenuk, was at the centre for 10 years until her passing at the age of 107. Leffler says, "Life wasn't just standing still. My mom received great care at the Mary Immaculate Care Centre and programs such as gardening really gave her something to look forward to."

As of April 1, 2024, donors can give online at [covenantfoundation.ca](https://covenantfoundation.ca) or call the foundation office toll-free at 1-866-342-8126 to make a gift to the Covenant Foundation in support of advancing and innovating healthcare delivery for continuing care residents at the Mary Immaculate Care Centre.

**About the Covenant Foundation ([covenantfoundation.ca](https://covenantfoundation.ca))**

The Covenant Foundation proudly supports Covenant Health, Covenant Care and Covenant Living and their more than 155-year legacy of healing the body, enriching the mind and

nurturing the soul. The foundation raises funds to invest in compassionate programs, leading-edge research and training, enhanced care spaces, and state-of-the-art equipment at 22 Covenant hospitals and continuing care facilities across Alberta. Focusing philanthropic support on health issues facing vulnerable and under-served populations, and on the unmet needs of communities, the foundation's priority areas include seniors' care, rural health, palliative care, and mental health and addictions.

### **About the Mary Immaculate Hospital Foundation**

The Mary Immaculate Hospital Foundation, which has raised awareness and funds for Covenant Health's Mary Immaculate Care Centre in Mundare since 2005, will merge with the Covenant Foundation on April 1, 2024. With the help of donors, community partners and the volunteer board, the Mary Immaculate Hospital Foundation's legacy of philanthropic support includes investing nearly three-quarters of a million dollars in enhancements that have helped transform Covenant's long-term care in Mundare – from small items such as a television or chairs to large projects like the refurbished chapel, three-seasons room, state-of-the-art beds, and a minivan, 20-passenger bus, and garage.

### **About the Mary Immaculate Care Centre**

Covenant Health's Mary Immaculate Care Centre opened in Mundare in 1979. The facility offers quality, compassionate care to 30 residents in private and semiprivate rooms, with services that include long-term and palliative care, occupational, physical and recreation therapy, a mental health day adult program, and spiritual care to residents and families regardless of faith, background or tradition. The Mary Immaculate Care Centre is founded upon a century-long legacy of care by the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate. Learn more: [Sisters' Mission Continues in Mundare](#) (The Vital Beat, Nov. 2019).

### **For more information, contact:**

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### **Media interview opportunities and resources**

- **Media interviews** are available with Lisa Munro, president & CEO of the Covenant Foundation, and Thomas Metlin, site administrator at the Mary Immaculate Care Centre. Please contact Jackie Fowler for details and to arrange a time.
- **Web page** with links to a photo gallery, past stories and the news release for the Mundare merger can be viewed at: [covenantfoundation.ca/mundare](https://covenantfoundation.ca/mundare).