

Inspired *by you.*



Your support guides Linda Weatherford in giving back with purpose and intention to benefit cancer patients.

You Brought Lifesaving Care Closer To Home

Donors Fund Advanced Dialysis Equipment for Rural Communities

Nearly 786,000 Americans live with end-stage kidney disease, and for patients in rural communities like Dillon and Cheraw, this often meant leaving everything familiar behind. Families faced an impossible choice: travel long distances for lifesaving dialysis treatment or go without care close to home.

Donors like you have helped change that.

Before your support, patients in these communities endured exhausting three-hour round trips to Florence for each treatment. Some delayed care rather than make the difficult journey. Others relocated entirely, leaving behind jobs, family connections, and the communities they loved.

Your generosity supported the funding of portable dialysis equipment that brings this critical care directly to local hospitals.

The new machines transform rural healthcare. Small enough to move where patients need them most, they require only basic utilities that any hospital can provide. Whether treating someone in the Intensive Care Unit or providing scheduled dialysis sessions, the equipment delivers the same lifesaving care patients would receive in larger medical centers.

“In-house dialysis’ is essential for critically ill patients, providing timely, monitored dialysis therapy in a hospital setting,” says Kasey Bustamante, Chief Nursing Officer at McLeod Health Dillon. “It reduces complications and improves patient outcomes.”

Your support means patients can now receive treatment minutes from home instead of hours away. They stay connected to family, maintain their routines, and avoid the physical and financial strain of constant travel. Local businesses keep valued employees, and communities stay strong.

For rural families who once faced the heartbreak of choosing between health and home, donors like you provide something invaluable: excellent medical care without having to leave the people and places they cherish.

Your generosity proves that quality healthcare should never depend on your zip code.



Taron Dixon, RN, and Caitlin Cox, RN, prepare William Culver for a dialysis treatment at McLeod Health Cheraw.

Donors Like You Provide Groundbreaking Technology

New Treatment for A-fib Changes Lives

You probably know someone who struggles with atrial fibrillation (A-fib), a common heart rhythm disorder that can lead to irregular and fast heartbeats, increasing the risk of stroke. **It is disruptive and dangerous.**

For Lake City native Randy Matthews, A-fib was making it impossible to work. Randy co-owns an autobody shop in Scranton and the work requires strenuous physical labor.

“There were days at work that I would get so physically tired. My heart rate would spike, and I would go into A-fib...sometimes for minutes and sometimes for the entire day,” explains Randy.

After sharing with his son that he was having issues with his heart fluttering and racing, his son surprised him by scheduling an appointment for his birthday to consult with Dr. Prabal Guha, an Electrophysiologist with McLeod Cardiology Associates.

Dr. Guha suggested treatment with traditional ablation, a catheter procedure to reroute the heart’s electrical activity in the upper chambers by destroying small areas in the heart involved in the abnormal rhythm.



Randy Matthews is grateful to Dr. Prabal Guha for giving him his life back.

This prevents any abnormal electrical signals from moving through the heart. Randy had the ablation, and at first his A-fib subsided. However, the ablation only provided temporary improvement, and the A-fib symptoms returned. Dr. Guha then offered Randy the option to try a medication before attempting another ablation.

He was admitted to the hospital and administered the medication and closely monitored. Quickly, they realized that the drug was causing him to have A-fib in the lower chamber of his heart, so they had to stop the medication, because this would cause major issues if continued.

Not long after this hospital stay, Dr. Guha shared exciting news with Randy that McLeod Regional Medical Center was now able to offer a new, groundbreaking technology called Pulsed Field Ablation (PFA), and he was a candidate.

McLeod Health Foundation donors like you provided funding to support the availability of this specialized treatment for patients in our region. PFA offers a promising alternative to traditional cardiac ablation methods with the potential for shorter procedure

times, improved safety, and enhanced patient outcomes in the treatment of atrial fibrillation.

Randy underwent the PFA procedure on a Thursday, and he was back to work on the following Monday.

“I feel very grateful to Dr. Guha, his team, and the McLeod Foundation donors who helped make this treatment available to me. They have given me my life back,” shares Randy.

Thanks to your support, McLeod Regional Medical Center is the first hospital in the Pee Dee Region to offer this improved treatment to patients battling this frightening condition.

McLeod Foundation Donors Understand The Little Things, Too

Your Gifts Cool Anxiety for New Moms

McLeod Health Foundation donors like you have generously supported the McLeod Children's Hospital for decades, funding critical care for our tiniest and most vulnerable patients.

This year, you also demonstrated that meaningful impact often comes from providing exactly what is needed at exactly the right moment.

Imagine going into unexpected labor at 28 weeks. Your baby is transferred to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at McLeod Regional Medical Center, 45 minutes from home. It is the height of summer and money is incredibly tight. The only way you have to transport your breast milk, your baby's lifeblood, is a plastic bag, with no ice, and it is July. Formula and donor breast milk are expensive,

and your stress makes it difficult to produce milk. Situations like these prompted Leslie Rogers, Director of Nursing at the McLeod NICU in Florence, to act on behalf of all moms and the tiniest of babies as she requested funding from the Foundation.

Leslie's passion and experience have shown her that the best way to assist moms and babies is to put the tools they need directly in their hands, in this case, insulated cooler bags full of supplies like bottles, freezer packs, hand sanitizer, a journal, pen, and lip balm -- nearly everything a mom needs to provide the best for her baby.

"McLeod Foundation donors know that the little things separate good from excellent," she continued. "Removing this burden, melting away this anxiety, increases moms' trust in us and

helps make our NICU top-notch." On a final note, Leslie added, "Without the McLeod Health Foundation supporters, we would not have been able to start this program, which means so much to us and our moms."



New mom Elizabeth Rogers and her son Tillman are pictured with one of the insulated cooler bags for transporting breast milk and supplies.

"Breast milk is the best medicine for premature babies and gives them the greatest long-term health outcomes. Whatever makes it easier for moms to provide their infants breast milk, is what we should be doing," Leslie says.

You can help provide comfort to new NICU mothers with a gift to support cooler bags and essential supplies. To make a gift, please call (843) 777-2694 or return the enclosed reply envelope.

YOU ARE THE HERO OF THIS STORY

Foundation Donors Support Athletic Trainers with Lifesaving Equipment



McLeod Sports Medicine Athletic Trainers (from left to right) Simone Nelson, Trevor Hess, Jordyn Heckler, Mike Rice and Andy Bearden are pictured with an "Oh Snap" bag and its contents.

"Ideally, we would have what I call an 'Oh Snap' bag at each of the 50 schools our athletic trainers cover, but the cost is around \$1,000 per bag. Plus," he continued, **"athletic trainers can only buy equipment like blood glucometers if a physician agrees to cover it with his or her license and getting that is not guaranteed."**

A \$50,000 grant was approved from gifts like yours which enabled McLeod Sports Medicine to purchase all 50 bags needed.

The "Oh Snap" bags' utility was proven at a single football game one fall. Within 20 minutes, Mike encountered two emergencies. First, he used

For Mike Rice, a McLeod Certified Athletic Trainer and EMT, the 15 minutes before the ambulance arrived could have been a century. At a basketball game he was working, a two-year-old in the stands began experiencing seizures and lapses in breathing. Without emergency equipment, Mike could only watch, react, and hope.

"On the outside I was holding it together, but on the inside, I felt helpless," Mike reflects. **"I only had two options to restore breathing: repositioning and CPR. That is not good."**

Fortunately, the child survived, and the ordeal motivated Mike to reach out to the McLeod Health Foundation for help.

Donors like you stepped in to solve this frightening situation.

specialized splints from his bag to stabilize a player's torn ACL and possible leg fracture. Then, he used an oxygen tank and blood glucometer to assist an unconscious woman who was eight months pregnant. In both cases, he was able to provide critical care until emergency responders arrived.

"You never know what will happen at these events," Mike recalls. **"Having these bags gives us peace knowing that we can meet patients' needs."**

"In addition, when newly graduated athletic trainers ask me what McLeod can do to support them in their careers, I can point to this bag. This type of excellence is what McLeod Health represents."

Thanks to donors like you, this excellence now extends to all 50 schools where McLeod Certified Athletic Trainers serve.

You Inspired *The Best Dogs Wear Pink!*

Donor Generosity is Contagious

Each day, HOPE (Helping Oncology Patients Everyday) Fund donors like you provide lifesaving services to cancer patients and you also inspire other acts of generosity.

Your support guides Linda Weatherford, President and CEO of SPC Credit Union, in giving back with purpose and intention. After walking through a cancer journey with her sister, father-in-law, and numerous loved ones, Linda knew that she wanted to find a way to give back to those undergoing cancer treatment in her own community.

In September of 2019, Linda began serving on the HOPE Fund Advisory Committee lending her heart, compassion and life experiences to determine the direction of the fund that you faithfully support.

After observing the impact HOPE donors make each

day, Linda felt led to pen a children's book -- "The Best Dogs Wear Pink" -- directing all proceeds to benefit the HOPE Fund and, in turn, assisting patients with heartbreaking financial needs.



Pictured above is Nash, the top dog in Linda Weatherford's children's book, and Linda reading her book to Campbell Averette.

"The Best Dogs Wear Pink" is a heartwarming and inspiring story featuring Nash, Linda's pup, and his friends who wear pink. Several of his friends are written in honor and memory of the special people in Linda's life who have battled cancer.

"From the moment I envisioned 'The Best Dogs Wear Pink,' its purpose was clear, born from my family's and friends' experiences with cancer. I know firsthand that during overwhelming times, a caring word and meeting basic needs can be a lifeline," Linda shares.

Not only has Linda chosen to donate proceeds from the book's sales, but she has also donated books to be placed in the HOPE Resource Center, located in the McLeod Center for Cancer Treatment and Research. HOPE Coordinator Sarah Beth Averette gives these books to patients with small children, allowing them to share about their cancer diagnosis in a way that is less frightening, and on a level that they can comprehend.

"At McLeod, HOPE Fund donors are the very heart of the Cancer Center, providing vital support for those undergoing treatment," emphasizes Linda. "I am so pleased to join with others in this noble effort."

You Provide A Home Away From Home

South Carolina Farmers Provide Critical Sustenance

Donors like you helped build The Guest House at McLeod in 1995 and have assisted in maintaining this special haven ever since. Through your support you have given the gift of hospitality to patients and families facing an often-frightening healthcare crisis. **We are so thankful to you.**

You have been joined in helping the Guest House by a dedicated team from the South Carolina Farm Bureau. Since 2015, members from across the Pee Dee with their Women's Leadership Committee annually provide support to the Guest House and its food pantry with generous financial and food contributions.

All too often, families find themselves in tragic situations like the following.

They are on the way home from a special trip full of family memories, when a sudden traumatic accident along the interstate completely upends their lives. Miles away from home in an unknown city, fear and panic set in. While their loved ones receive care at McLeod Regional Medical Center, where can they stay?

Fortunately, because of donors like you, the Guest House is there, providing a safe, clean, "home away from home," for moments of respite during an otherwise stressful, emotional experience.

Thanks to the Farm Bureau, within the kitchen there is a fully stocked food pantry, providing guests with nutritional provisions. Instead of worrying over where to find food, or how to obtain transportation to nearby grocery stores or restaurants, guests can easily access the pantry at all hours, allowing them to focus on the recovery of their family members.

Tracy Woodard, current chair of the South Carolina Farm Bureau Women's Leadership State Committee, shares, "Our Farm Bureau members serve as grass-roots volunteers. We not only want to promote agriculture in our state but also impact our communities. South Carolina farmers just have a generous heart, and this is a tangible way for us to share the message of agriculture and the accessibility that we can provide for families staying at the Guest House."

Together, donors and the Farm Bureau make critical hospitality a reality for families in crisis.



Representatives with the South Carolina Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee present their annual Food Check-Out Week donation to McLeod staff for the Guest House food pantry.

You can help stock the Guest House food pantry for families facing medical emergencies. To support the pantry and the Guest House at McLeod, please call (843) 777-2694 or return the enclosed reply envelope.

You Change Lives: Empowering Staff To Empower Patients

Donors Fund Specialized Lift Equipment to Help Patients Walk Again

For most of us, walking is a blessing which is taken for granted.

Yet, for many patients, the ability to walk is often a goal following hard-fought recovery work.

Donors like you have made the difference for patients struggling to regain their independence. Through your gifts, specialized equipment has been made available across the McLeod Health system, helping neurology and limited mobility patients regain critical movement.

For Jean Flohr, McLeod Mobility Coordinator, your generosity inspired her to write grants for additional equipment. She wanted to ensure safety for both patients and staff as they work to meet their goals of regaining independence and mobility.

Jean recalls her work years ago with an elderly patient. This beautiful lady had not walked in two years. She had been aging in-place at home and without assistance, she lost her strength. She was admitted to the hospital with numerous health issues. Jean was able to use a piece of lift equipment funded by McLeod Health Foundation donors to help her



Jean Flohr is pictured with Sarah Woodbury who demonstrates how specialized mobility equipment assists in helping patients stand.

stand and then slowly begin walking. She was overjoyed to return home and be able to move about with a walker.

“When our patients realize we are here to help them reach their goals to regain mobility they change emotionally and mentally. I was inspired by this determined patient’s desire to walk and knew we could change lives,” explains Jean.

This experience led Jean to reach out to the

McLeod Foundation to help her establish specialized training and updated equipment for direct patient care staff on all McLeod campuses.

Mobility issues are an ever-increasing problem as patients struggle with obesity, orthopedic surgery, strokes, injuries, or general loss of strength due to age or inactivity. Thanks to your generosity, staff are thoroughly trained in working with their patients using equipment which protects them from injuries when lifting and moving patients.

“Foundation donors provided the resources which empowered our staff to empower our patients in reaching their goals,” shares Jean. “Thank you is just not enough.”