
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Munson Healthcare Charlevoix Hospital Receives Generous Grant

CHARLEVOIX, MI – Munson Healthcare Charlevoix Hospital recently received a grant from the Charlevoix County Community Foundation in the amount of \$10,000 to help finance the hospital's Patient Needs Fund. This important fund is available to help cover often urgent and expensive needs for patients or other persons involved in their care during a health-related crisis and provides welcome and unexpected relief for our patients and their families when they need it most.

Often, when undergoing a health-related crisis, patients are unable to work. They are told to rest and recover, but that can seem impossible when there are bills to pay. In addition, family members and/or caregivers are also called upon to help with expenses, transportation, and child care, placing a further strain on the patient's family situation.

The Patient Needs Fund enables the hospital's medical social workers and case management staff to assist the patient and family during their health-related crisis, as necessary. A well thought out process is in place to appropriately dispense funds. An application form is completed that details other resources considered (such as the Department of Human Services, Northwestern Community Action Agency, Good Samaritan Family Services, etc.), what the need is, how assistance through the Patient Needs Fund will resolve the patient's financial situation, and a copy of the bill the hospital will assist with as a result.

Practical ways in which we can provide assistance might include:

- Gas cards so patients can get to and from medical appointments
- Childcare expenses so parents can be available for their own or another family member's appointment
- Payments for utilities, groceries, and rent/mortgage payments
- Payment for uninsured medical devices related to care
- Other needs as determined by the medical social workers and case managers

It is important to note that this fund is not used to pay for patient's medical bills.

Just last year, Charlevoix Hospital wrote off over \$1.6 million in charity care and bad debt. Before the Affordable Care Act, that figure was twice as much. Charity care is when a patient is not able to pay their hospital bill. Bad debt is when patients have financial capacity, but choose not to pay their bill.

This grant to the Patient Needs Fund will go a long way to help those who are trying desperately to pay their bills yet are struggling to decide between paying a medical bill and meeting basic living expenses such as rent, utilities, food, and phone payments. It can also help with the expenses of transportation and child care so patients can be available for their medical appointments.

"We've long been known as the hospital that believes in 'hometown care' and this generous grant helps us to provide exactly the kind of compassionate, practical help that is sometimes needed," said Joanne Schroeder, president of Munson Healthcare Charlevoix Hospital. "It allows us to 'go the extra mile' in making sure that our patients are cared for at those times when making ends meet becomes a hardship."

"We are grateful for the extraordinary generosity which the Charlevoix County Community Foundation has continued to show us over the years," said Chelsea Platte, leadership giving officer at the hospital. "We've been the grateful recipients of their love for our community and their concern for the health and well-being of its members. There's no telling how many people will be helped by their commitment to our hospital."

About Munson Healthcare Charlevoix Hospital

Munson Healthcare Charlevoix Hospital is a 25-bed, critical access hospital located in Charlevoix, Michigan. Part of the Munson Healthcare system, the hospital was established in 1919 and serves Charlevoix and northern Antrim County residents as well as thousands of vacationers each year. For more information, visit munsonhealthcare.org/charlevoixhospital.

About the Charlevoix County Community Foundation (C3F)

The C3F is a local charitable organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for all citizens of Charlevoix County by building permanent endowment, addressing needs through grantmaking, and providing leadership resources to serve the community. More information about the C3F may be found at www.c3f.org or by calling 231-536-2440.

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CONTACT:

Cathy Fischl
Munson Healthcare Charlevoix Hospital
Marketing/Public Relations
231-547-8685
cfischl@mhc.net