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# Spectrum Health United Hospital Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program

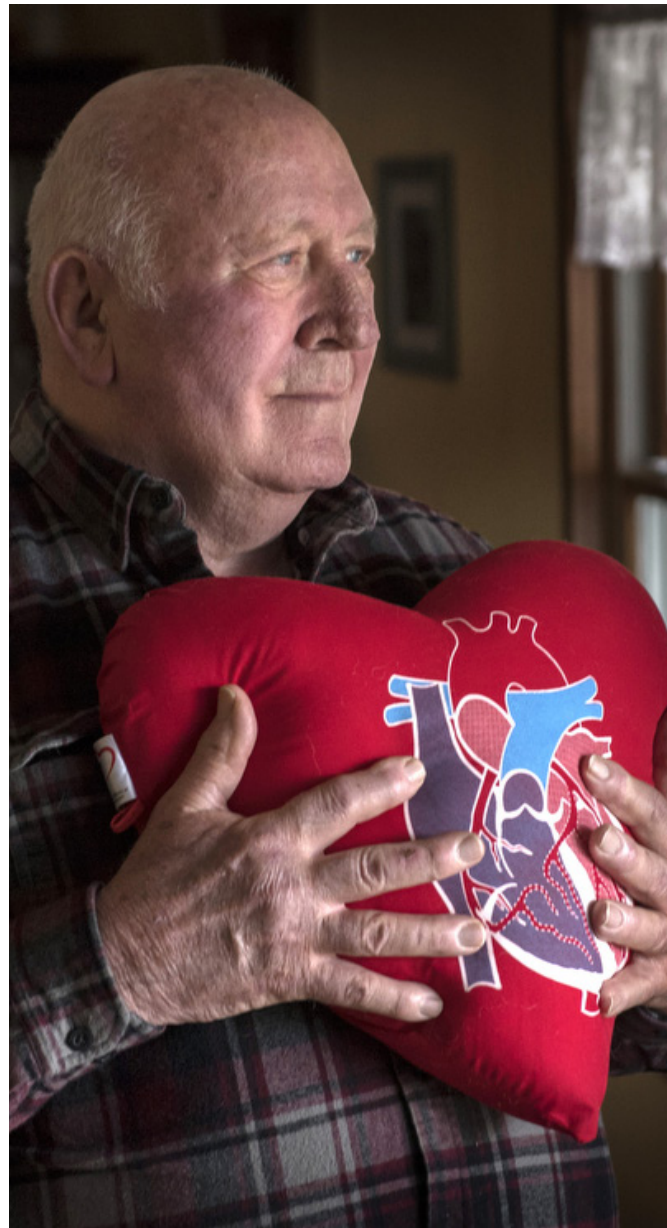


### Heart or lung disease can strike anyone

Shortly after apprehending a criminal in 1999, Greenville police officer Ike VanHorn couldn't catch his breath. VanHorn, who was 68 at the time, immediately saw his doctor.

Two days after failing a stress test Ike underwent triple bypass open heart surgery. "They said I caught it early enough," he said. "I recovered fine and was able to work for another year and a half, and then I decided to retire. I was old enough and had enough time in."

As the years rolled on, VanHorn developed more heart issues. His wife Jennifer feared for his life every time he'd step outside. "Walking out to the mailbox, you wondered if he was going to have the breath to make it back," she said of her husband of 49 years. "There were so many times he would walk in and I would look at him and say, "Do I need to call 911? Are you OK?" The look on his face, you just knew it wasn't right."



It wasn't. On April 5, 2015, at the age of 74, VanHorn underwent his second open heart surgery and two more bypasses. Then he hit the cardiac rehab center at United Hospital three times a week for a couple of months.

*"Rehab inspired me, not only physically but mentally," VanHorn said. "It's hard to explain the ups and downs you go through after a major surgery. The therapists take you under their wings and you come out of there feeling really good. I feel like I owe those girls (therapists) so much. They really got me back to where I needed to be."*

Ike accomplished his goal of returning to his recreational activities, including getting his farm back to pristine condition. In fact, there's very little that he can't do these days. "It's been such a turnaround," he said. "I'm able to take care of everything that has to be done now. I feel so fortunate it turned out as well as it did. My quality of life has really improved."

### Building Strength for Life

Cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation is a comprehensive, progressive education and exercise program designed for recovering heart and lung disease patients. Both programs are designed to increase confidence and quality of life through education, goal setting, strength and endurance conditioning.

The cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation gym looks similar to a traditional gym in that it contains exercise equipment such as treadmills, stationary bikes, elliptical machines and various weights. The difference between the two settings is the expertise of the staff. The personal trainers in a cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation gym are registered nurses and certified respiratory therapists that specialize in chronic disease management and rehabilitation. The medical component of this special program includes assessment of the patient's current condition, ability, and exercise tolerance. Patients are evaluated while exercising, each with an individualized exercise regimen, and are continuously monitored to ensure patient tolerance and safety. These regimens are adjusted throughout the program based on the individual's progress and to maximize the benefits.

Cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation is both an exercise and education program designed to improve cardiovascular and pulmonary function. Our primary goal is to enable patients to achieve their maximal potential to enhance their health, wellness and quality of life.

Our program is medically supervised and is led by a team composed of a respiratory therapist, a registered nurse and an exercise physiologist. The team creates an individualized treatment plan to meet each patient's unique needs. Patients exercise on equipment while monitoring their heart rhythm, heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen saturation and perceived exertion rate. Topics of education include managing risk factors, choosing good nutrition and lifestyle modifications. Cardiac and pulmonary rehab can positively impact a patient's future by improving overall health and reducing risk of future cardio or pulmonary events, symptoms, readmission rates to the hospital and mortality rates.

Financial constraints significantly affect success in the program. We have community members dropping out of the program because of inability to cover co-pays or even the \$5 out-of-pocket cost for the last phases of the program. It's heartbreaking to see so much progress and potential lost.

Each year, approximately 75 patients experience hardships that result in an inability to pay for their life changing and health restoring treatments, with many dropping out of the program. Participants work extremely hard, only to lose some of these essential benefits if the full program isn't completed.



### How Can You Make a Difference?

*Ike VanHorn saw great success from his experience in cardiac rehabilitation, and Jennifer said they are able to do so much more as a couple these days. "It's been wonderful. Before, he would just sit in a chair. Now if we want to go shopping or walking someplace, we can do it."*

Our goal is to offer financial support to qualified participants by creating an endowment fund for the cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation program. The total needed is \$200,000 to help patients, each year, in perpetuity, receive much-needed support. No one's finances should determine who should be able to breathe well and live with a healthy heart.

Please join our efforts in helping to improve the quality of life for those needing a local cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation program. Your support could be a matter of life or death and certainly is a matter of heart and breath.