

Advancing Health...

Caring for People

Spring 2023

Thank You!

When You Have to Travel for Care: Susie's Story

"A home away from home."

That's how Susie Laurie refers to the Aspirus Family House, where she stayed for four weeks while undergoing treatment for a recent cancer diagnosis.

A native of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Susie said she was diagnosed with cancer in December 2022, after going to the emergency department at her hometown hospital, Aspirus Keweenaw.

"I was short of breath and thought it had something to do with a heart valve that had been placed in 2021. They did a scan and found I had lung cancer."

Susie recalls initially feeling angry, but then said she just started listening to her doctors and focused her energies on following the plan her radiologist and oncologist had set up. When given a choice of where she wanted to go for treatment, she chose Aspirus Wausau Hospital because she'd had her heart procedure there and said it was a positive experience.

The physicians and nurses at Aspirus Wausau Hospital helped schedule her at the Family House, where she stayed during her 40 sessions of radiation therapy, followed by three rounds of chemotherapy. She had her fourth – and hopefully last – round of chemotherapy in April, and has already started immunotherapy.

"The Cancer Center and the Family House were wonderful," said Susie. "Everyone was so helpful and friendly. The Family House was truly a home away from home. I was fortunate that I was able to have my family come and visit often, but when they left, I didn't feel alone. The staff are so friendly; they give you hugs and are there to help with whatever you need. I've formed some nice friendships with other guests, too, and we keep in touch."



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Without the Aspirus Family House, Susie said she would have had to stay in a motel, which would have resulted in significant credit card debt. During her four weeks in Wausau, she said she didn't go home on weekends, but probably would have if she'd been in a motel.

“Having an affordable place to stay, with such wonderful people, was so helpful.”

“It would have been a cost savings, but a hardship to go home every weekend. It's a four-hour drive from Wausau to my hometown (north of Hancock), so I would have finished radiation at 3 p.m. then had to travel home and lose an hour on the way. It would have been such a burden on my family too, having to drive me back and forth.

Having an affordable place to stay, with such wonderful people, was so helpful. It was truly a blessing and made a difficult situation so much easier to bear.”

With the support of generous donors, the Family House can keep the lights on and the doors open for guests like Susie, when they need it most.

Gifts Support People and Needs in our Community

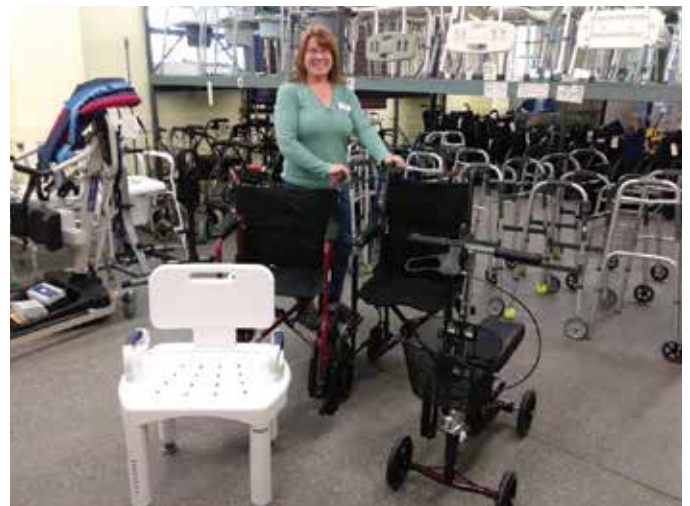
Helping fill the gap with bariatric equipment

In 2022, your gifts helped support community-based programs that align with Aspirus' efforts to address health priorities and needs of our communities.

One of those community-based efforts is the Good News Project, Health Equipment Lending Program (HELP), which offers rapid response when the need for home medical equipment arises. HELP served 2,461 families in 2022. These items are offered at no charge, but Good News Project suggests a modest tax-deductible donation per piece to keep their program running.

With your support, a grant from Aspirus Health Foundation enabled HELP to purchase 20 individual pieces of bariatric equipment, allowing 40+ more people access to durable medical equipment each year.

“We are grateful to have received this assistance,” said Christine Daniels, the group's executive director. “Most donations are provided by people in the community for people in the community to use. Last year, we received almost 1,500 pieces of standard-sized equipment. However, donations of bariatric equipment for people weighing over 300 pounds are rarely given to our program. Aspirus Health Foundation has generously stepped up to fill that gap.”



“The Aspirus Health Foundation is proud to be a small part of this very important project to help people obtain the medical equipment they need to remain in their homes and be safe and healthy,” said Lanna Scannell, VP of System Philanthropy for Aspirus Health. “Our mission is to heal people, promote health and strengthen communities and we know we can't do that alone. We do that through important partnerships. Thank you for your support and helping to make this possible.”

A Message from the Vice President of System Philanthropy



Lanna Scannell, VP
System Philanthropy
Aspirus Health

Since joining Aspirus in August 2022, I have had the pleasure of witnessing first-hand the generosity of our communities through gifts to the Aspirus Health Foundation.

It is truly humbling to meet and interact with people like you who believe in the Mission of Aspirus and have a passion for supporting quality healthcare in our communities.

Through your generous donations to the Aspirus Health Foundation, you have helped support patients in hospice care and their families who are facing the end of a life's journey. You have helped support the Aspirus Family House, which offers a safe, affordable, temporary home away from home for patients traveling from outside the Wausau community to Wausau for critical and extended medical care needs. You have enabled our staff to provide additional programs and services for cardiac patients; helped fund needed equipment and support services for patients living with a cancer

diagnosis; helped us provide support for newborns, our smallest and most vulnerable patients; and much more.

I was drawn to Aspirus in part because of its commitment to providing rural communities with convenient access to excellent care. Having grown up in a rural community in the Upper Peninsula, I appreciate and respect that mission. I also understand the important role philanthropy plays in helping to ensure the highest-level health care is available when and where it is needed most.

Gifts to the Aspirus Health Foundation have a significant impact on the lives of so many. We are immensely grateful for your generosity that helps support and strengthen our communities.

With gratitude,

Lanna

Generosity is Something You Can Give Back

Gifts to the Aspirus Health Foundation are a gift to our communities, helping to provide quality health care, programs and services for our patients and their families. As a donor, you are an important part of our mission. We are grateful for your support and strive to assist you by providing a broad framework for charitable giving, both in the present and the future. Gifts may be made online, by phone, or by mail using the enclosed gift envelope.

Memorial & Honorary Gifts

A donation or the creation of a named fund is a thoughtful way to express your sympathy for the loss of a loved one or to honor someone who has made a difference in your life.

Legacy Gifts

Your philanthropic goals may include a legacy gift through your will or estate plan. An estate plan with gifts to a charitable organization like the Aspirus Health Foundation may reduce tax liabilities, provide greater resources for your loved ones, and support causes important to you. Estate gifts may be direct, through a bequest, life insurance, retirement benefits like IRAs, or appreciated securities. They may also be made in the form of a Charitable Lead or Charitable Remainder Trust.



Philanthropic Gifts Help Address Physician Shortage

Earlier this year, the Aspirus Health Foundation welcomed four new medical students into the Aspirus Scholars program.

Now in its seventh year, the Aspirus Scholars program is a community partnership that was started to address the national physician shortage and meet the needs of people and communities in north central Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Within the next two years, it is expected the United States will be short more than 130,000 physicians, with primary care physicians most in demand and general surgeons and psychiatrists in short supply. A physician shortage affects our communities and our ability to provide high quality care where it is needed. When there is limited access to primary care, chronic illnesses can worsen, and preventable health issues like hypertension, diabetes and infections are more likely to occur.

The Aspirus Scholars Program was created with generous philanthropic support from local foundations, families, and individuals. The program provides scholarships for tuition to medical students and connects them to Aspirus and the communities served by Aspirus during their training. In return, students commit to employment at Aspirus in the areas of primary care, psychiatry or general surgery.

Scholars have ties to the local community and a passion for medicine and caring for patients. As we welcome them back to the community upon completion of their medical training, they will be a welcome addition to the Aspirus family and help us meet the vital health care needs of those we serve.

Through philanthropy, we can help ensure our patients and families have access to the best health care providers today and for future generations.



Lanna Scannell, center, Vice President of System Philanthropy for Aspirus Health, is pictured with this year's Aspirus Scholars, from left: Paige Boruch, Ellie Mallek, Giridhar Murali and Lauren Woyak.

The incredible moment when

*A husband overcoming loss finds laughter.
A child struggling with fitting-in finds a friend.
A new mother fighting cancer finds hope.*

You have the power to change worlds.
Supporting the **Aspirus Health Foundation**
makes a direct impact on the well-being
of our local families and communities.

Get involved at aspirus.org/foundation

