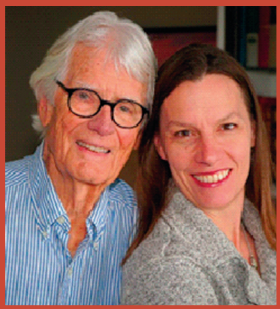




HEALTH CORNER



Longevity Isn't For The Faint Of Heart

By Diana Gifford

I have been lucky as my parents aged past 90. My father, Dr. W. Gifford-Jones, stayed vibrant longer than most people dare hope. In his nineties he was still hopping on planes, giving talks across Canada, researching and writing his next column, and scheming about the next promotion or the next stunt that would amuse him – like rappelling down Toronto's 35-storey City Hall to raise money for the Make-a-Wish Foundation. He relished a challenge. Growing old, for him, didn't mean slowing down. It meant a development of new priorities. He was well past 95 when I offered to help with the computer work involved in distributing his weekly column to editors. He suffered too much frustration from IT. I should have helped sooner. But once I did, I grew closer not just to the logistics of his writing, but to the writing itself. Wouldn't it be fun, I proposed, to write together? He agreed and the collaboration took off. We talked through ideas, shaped arguments, laughed (and feuded) over opposing ways of seeing the same thing. It was an era of our long relationship I will forever hold precious. As the youngest of his children, born when he was 44, I was still relatively youthful as he extended his extraordinary longevity. I had a lot of energy to give. But not everyone's story looks like this. In many cases, people find themselves in their seventies caring for parents in their nineties, pushing eighty supporting centenarians. A close look at what is happening in those situations reveals scenes that are anything but easy. Not everyone ages as healthily as my father did. Most elderly seniors are wrestling with chronic diseases. Add dementia into the mix and the loving commitment to care shifts to an exhausting, sometimes heartbreaking, endurance test. The problems are varied: refusing to eat; resisting walkers or other safety supports; forgetting medications; making unsafe decisions; losing the ability to manage finances or medical appointments; neglecting property or household tasks. There are those who get very angry and sometimes violent. These issues often begin quietly and seem manageable – especially to children who are themselves aging and determined to respect their parent's independence. But over time, the strain mounts. The risks mount. And the emotional toll mounts. What would my father advise? He was never hesitant to speak plainly. When writing, he would use a quote, as from Will Rogers, who said, "Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment." My father would say, "Don't kid yourself. No one gets it perfect, but don't make foolish mistakes." He would remind people that caring for aging parents requires equal measures of compassion and practicality. He would urge families to plan early, before a crisis, and to involve physicians, trusted friends, and community supports. He would insist that safety is not a betrayal of dignity. And he would encourage caregivers to look after their own well-being too, because no one can pour from an empty cup. Now it's my turn to offer counsel. I can speak to the matter of love. And I can attest that it doesn't always look like those old greeting cards. Sometimes love is repetitive, tiring, and unglamorous work. Sometimes it is stepping in sooner than you expected. Sometimes it is saying "no" to someone who once taught you to say "yes." But it is still love. And if my father taught me anything, it's that the hardest work we do for the people we love often becomes, in time, the work we treasure most.

This column offers opinions on health and wellness, not personal medical advice. Visit www.docgiff.com to learn more. For comments, diana@docgiff.com. Follow on Instagram [@diana_gifford_jones](https://www.instagram.com/diana_gifford_jones)

Ontario Reducing Wait Times for Orthopedic Surgeries

Provincial investment of \$125 million will support up to 20,000 additional publicly funded procedures

TORONTO — The Ontario government is investing \$125 million over two years to add four new community surgical and diagnostic centres licensed to deliver orthopedic surgeries across the province. This expansion will reduce wait times and support up to 20,000 additional publicly funded orthopedic surgeries as part of the government's plan to protect Ontario's health-care system.

"Our government is leading the country with continued investments that have resulted in the shortest surgical wait times of any province, as we continue taking bold action to help more Ontarians live fuller, more active lives," said Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "By expanding orthopedic surgery capacity across Ontario, we are redoubling our efforts to reduce wait times and get more people access to life-changing procedures sooner, helping them regain mobility, reduce pain and return to the activities they love."

Following a Call for Applications, four new licences will be issued starting in early 2026 to deliver orthopedic surgeries for hip and knee replacements. This expansion will ensure that 90 per cent of Ontario patients receive orthopedic care within clinically recommended timeframes, up from the current level of 80 per cent for hip and knee replacements and continuing the government's goal to connect every patient to convenient care faster.

Minister Jones made the announcement at OV Surgical Centre in Toronto, one of the four sites receiving funding to begin offering orthopedic services. Additional recipients of orthopedic licenses include: Academic Orthopedic Surgical Associates of Ottawa (AOAO)

Windsor Orthopedic Surgical Centre

Schroeder Ambulatory Centre

This announcement builds on the government's \$155 million investment to add 57 new community surgical and diagnostic centres to connect over 1.2 million people to MRI scans, CT scans and gastrointestinal endoscopy services across the province and a \$235 million investment to expand and create more than 130 primary care teams that will link 300,000 more patients to care this year.

As the government expands the number of surgeries and procedures being done through community surgical and diagnostic centres, it is also ensuring these centres are integrated and linked with the broader public health system. This includes requiring new facilities to provide detailed staffing plans that protect the stability of staffing resources at public hospitals, report into the province's wait times information system and participate in regional central intakes, where available, to ensure people get the care they need as quickly as possible.

All community surgical and diagnostic centres are under the oversight of Accreditation Canada's new quality-assurance program, which applies many of the same requirements of public hospitals to ensure consistent patient safety and quality care.

As part of Your Health: A Plan for Connected and Convenient Care, Ontario continues to take bold and decisive action to expand the number of community surgical and diagnostic centres, connecting more patients to high-quality care, and ensuring people and their families have access to high-quality care, closer to home, for generations to come.

For over 30 years, community surgical and diagnostic centres have been providing publicly funded diagnostic imaging, surgeries and procedures in the community. There are currently over 900 community surgical and diagnostic centres throughout Ontario; the majority provide diagnostic imaging services. New community surgical and diagnostic centres build on the progress the Ontario government has made since the launch of Your Health: A Plan for Connected and Convenient Care including: Achieving the shortest surgical wait times for key procedures of any province in Canada in 2024, with over 83 per cent of people receiving their procedure within clinically recommended target times. Funding up to 65,568 MRI and 31,220 CT operating hours in existing community surgical and diagnostic centres over the past year. Adding 50 new MRI machines in 43 hospitals across the province to increase MRI capacity and services. Adding four new licensed cataract centres to provide more publicly funded cataract and other eye surgeries. In the past year, the government has funded 40,000 eye surgery procedures at community surgical and diagnostic centres. Eliminating the backlog of cervical cancer screening tests at the end of August 2023. Testing turn-around times returned to the pre-pandemic standard of 10 to 14 days. No centre can refuse an insured service to a patient who chooses not to purchase uninsured upgrades and no patient can pay to receive insured services faster than anyone else.

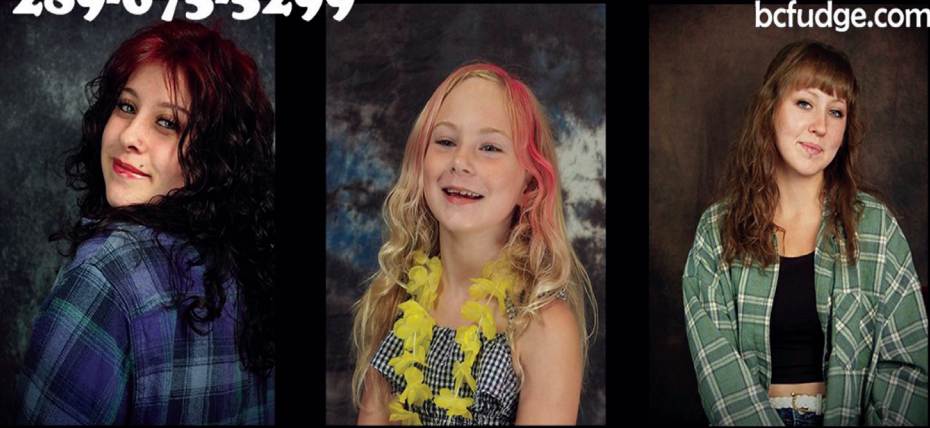
"We are very pleased to have been selected by the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Health as a partner with a shared goal to provide greater access to OHIP funded orthopedic diagnostics and surgeries as an Integrated Community Health Services Centre. We believe that ICHSC facilities such as ours will contribute to the Ministry of Health's vision to accelerate hip and knee replacement procedures for all Ontario residents in need." - Christopher Wein CEO, OV Surgical Centre Limited

Ben Fudge

Portrait Photographer
289-675-5299



bcfudge.com



CALL FOR A
FREE ESTIMATE

905-251-2233

Email:
qmr_masonry@gmail.com

QMR

Quality Masonry Restoration

Specializing in high quality masonry.

Fully insured, free estimates.

12+ years experience. - Brick and Blockwork

- Stonework - Window Sill Replacement

- Parging, Concrete Repairs - Chimney,

Repointing and more...