



O'Brien Institute
for Public Health



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Empowering lifelong health for everyone

Join us to support healthier communities
through evidence-based, actionable solutions



If we truly want to transform health care — if we want the healthiest lives for our community — we must broaden our view of health beyond the emergency room, beyond the hospital, beyond the visit to the doctor.

**We need to step back.
We need to see the whole picture.**

Gail O'Brien

Founding donor to the O'Brien Institute for Public Health, with her husband and co-founder, David



70%

Percentage of health outcomes influenced by social determinants such as where you live, your education, and whether you experience poverty

4 years

How much longer people can live when they have support to overcome social determinants

\$12 trillion

Estimated addition to the global GDP by 2040 if people get help to overcome social determinants of health

O'Brien Institute for Public Health

Inspired by their passion for health and education, Gail and David O'Brien established the O'Brien Institute for Public Health at the University of Calgary's Cumming School of Medicine. Since 2014, further contributions from visionary individual and industry supporters have positioned the institute as a global hub for transformative health research, analysis and evidence-based improvements to health policies and practices that save lives.

The mission of the O'Brien Institute for Public Health is to improve health for everyone through research excellence. We support academic scholars to tackle public health challenges, bringing them together with health practitioners, citizens, governments, businesses and non-governmental organizations to drive change. We champion bold, actionable research that unlocks solutions to promote population health and high-quality sustainable health care for all.

The O'Brien Institute will raise a total of **\$47 million** in philanthropic support to accelerate this critical work.

Help transform lives by supporting a public health initiative that matters most to you and your family.





Shorter waits for everyone

O'Brien Institute researchers helped Alberta Health Services build the province's electronic health records system. Smarter information sharing helps discharged patients get better follow-up care and avoid a return to the hospital, reducing pressure on health care we all rely on.

Since launching in 2014, the O'Brien Institute has become a trusted part of our community, partnering directly with frontline health and social organizations to drive research that helps Canadians stay healthier.



What is public health?

Public health is the science of improving the health of communities through research, policymaking, education, disease prevention and health promotion.

Public health focuses solely on the well-being of populations, rather than on individual patients, to create more resilient societies, save lives on a large scale, and improve the health and wellness of everyone.



Why public health?

Public health efforts are crucial. They improve the quality of our lives, reduce outbreaks and diseases, safeguard vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly, and ensure the safety of our environment including clean air and water. Public health efforts promote healthier behaviours that reduce stress and cost to our health-care system.



Why support the O'Brien Institute?

The O'Brien Institute is unique. It bridges research and science with community needs and provides unbiased and trusted evidence to inform public health policy and practice. It mobilizes the expertise of 1,000 members — including scientists and clinicians, scholars and analysts, educators, and citizens and professionals from the public and private sectors — to rapidly innovate and define solutions for urgent and emerging health issues.

Your journey back to health with the O'Brien Institute for Public Health

Imagine you experience a heart attack. It's scary and painful, but you receive excellent care at the hospital and feel fortunate a few days later when you walk out the front doors. Your treatment cost the health-care system \$155,000.



Thanks to O'Brien Institute health policy research actioned by governments, you know you should avoid second-hand smoke, sodium and other health risks.



Thanks to O'Brien Institute healthier populations research, your neighbourhood is designed to encourage walking and healthier nutrition with access to fresh whole foods a short distance away.

Thanks to O'Brien Institute health-care research, you and your cardiologist have the tools to decide between surgery or other treatment options.



Thanks to O'Brien Institute health-care research, your family doctor reviews your electronic record and plans your follow-up care. She and your pharmacist both know you're taking new medication.



Thanks to the O'Brien Institute, your risk is lower for another heart attack, which also reduces pressure on the health-care system. **Most importantly, you're on track for plenty of quality time with your loved ones.**



Every project, partnership and policy recommendation out of the O'Brien Institute is guided by three core areas of public health.

1. Healthier Populations

Long before you walk through the doors of a hospital, factors such as where and how you live have shaped your health outcomes. The O'Brien Institute brings together researchers and community to better understand and change those determinants of health — from access to primary care to addressing poverty, violence and racism.

Aspiring to help shape a world where everyone enjoys good health, well-being, safety and inclusiveness, the institute strives to reduce health disparities and prevent people from getting sick in the first place. Uncovering risk trends in specific clinical areas or with specific populations enables O'Brien researchers to use precision population health approaches to prevention. It's not simply a matter of compassion. Improved outcomes for the most vulnerable reduce the burden on our health-care system and benefit the health of everyone.



The O'Brien Institute seeks a total of **\$29 million** to help reduce risk factors of chronic disease, improve refugee and immigrant health, increase opportunities to safely stay at home as we age with supports, and more.

Champion healthier populations by making a gift that will reduce health inequities and help make good health a fundamental right, not a privilege.



Transforming lives

Estranged from her family as a teen, Calgarian Lexi Marr slept outside or couch-surfed for years. Thanks to a community program that leveraged O'Brien Institute research to unlock additional government funds, the 22-year-old is now safe and thriving in her own apartment.



Patient-centred research

O'Brien Institute researchers helped create a new way to empower families as active partners in neonatal intensive care, adopted across all 14 neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) in Alberta. Parents stay as close as possible to their babies and get education and support to care for their newborns while in the NICU and once they go home. Now, these babies safely go home on average a half day sooner. Since 2019, it has already saved more than \$5.3 million in health-care costs.

2. Better Health Care

Current health-care systems are unsustainable. Wait times in urgent care are longer than ever and there is a critical shortage of licensed family doctors in many communities. Our goal is to transform health care to make sustainable, high-quality care available to all people. That goal requires bold ideas.

Based at the O'Brien Institute, the W21C Research and Innovation Centre is a testing site for new approaches to health-care delivery and innovative medical technologies. Electronic and mobile health initiatives bring health care to patients virtually or to where they are — including patients facing barriers to good health.

W21C's "living laboratory" leads efforts to design, test and implement interventions — such as technology that allows paramedics to perform ultrasound scans for rural patients recovering at home while physicians read these remotely in real time to optimize care. Or partnering with a local continuing care centre to test whether a Calgary company's nanotechnology-infused wound-care gel heals patients' bedsores better than previous products.



The O'Brien Institute and W21C are seeking **\$12 million** in philanthropic support to accelerate health-care innovation.

Invest to develop, test and implement solutions to current and future health-care challenges.

3. Health Policy

With health policy, the whole society is the patient. Smart, research-driven health policy helps people remain or become healthy, strengthens health care and keeps health innovations flowing. The Centre for Health Policy within the O'Brien Institute brings together citizens, researchers, policymakers and all levels of government to lead evidence-based solutions to Canada's pressing public health challenges. The institute's experts help guide decisions on health policy across all sectors.



The Centre's first-of-its-kind Health Policy Trials Unit uses rigorous methods to test the social, economic and health impacts of policy interventions. For example, will financial incentives improve the health of people with low incomes and chronic diseases? Will the elimination of prescription drug co-payments or targeted education programs help people commit to chronic disease medications? The O'Brien Institute for Public Health leads these and other trials.

\$6 million will enable smarter health policy and deliver evidence-informed action, by expanding the Centre for Health Policy and Health Policy Trials Unit.

Support better co-ordination and operation of a system we all rely on.



Improving food safety

O'Brien Institute public health experts advised the Alberta government on how to improve food safety after the 2023 E. coli outbreak in Calgary child care centres sent 38 children and one adult to hospital.

The recommendations may lead to food safety improvements in the entire food service industry.

Join us!

With your support, the O'Brien Institute for Public Health can solve the challenges that impact our loved ones, friends and all of society with evidence-based, actionable solutions. Together, we will empower lifelong health for everyone.

We're excited to continue the conversation about the public health priorities that matter most to you and your family.

For more information

Lindsay Bureaux

Director of Development, University of Calgary

403.220.2590

lindsay.bureaux@ucalgary.ca

obrienph.ucalgary.ca





Lindsay Bureaux

Director of Development
University of Calgary

403.220.2590

lindsay.bureaux@ucalgary.ca

obrienph.ucalgary.ca



**O'Brien Institute
for Public Health**



**UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY**