CARILION CLINIC FOUNDATION

APRIL 2026

Building Hope:

ADVANCING CANCER CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY



Community Foundation Pledges $500,000 for Proton Therapy

Momentum continues to grow for the proton therapy campaign, with the Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia pledging $500,000 and becoming the latest partner to invest in this vision. Carilion Clinic and the Community Foundation celebrated this announcement with a check presentation at the construction site, where the Carilion Taubman Cancer Center is taking shape.

“This pledge represents a special investment in the health and well-being of our community,” said Michelle Eberly, director of grants and donor engagement for the Community Foundation. “We are thrilled to support proton therapy as a significant advancement in cancer treatment that the Carilion Taubman Cancer Center will bring to our region.”

“We are grateful to the Community Foundation and its many donors for their generosity that will benefit thousands of patients each year,” said Mike Abbott, President of Carilion Medical Center. “With the support of dedicated partners like the Community Foundation, we can ensure our patients have access to the most advanced cancer care close to home.”

Advancing Cancer Care with Proton Therapy



Our region is edging closer to offering cancer treatment with fewer negative side effects for children.

“This is a very exciting time,” said Brendan Klein, DO, pediatric neurosurgeon. “Proton therapy, and its benefits for pediatric patients, is one of the reasons I wanted to come here and join the Carilion Taubman Cancer Center team."

Proton therapy is successful for younger patients because the targeted radiation minimizes exposure to developing organs. “That’s especially important when you’re treating tumors in delicate areas like the brain, spinal cord, head, and neck,” Dr. Klein said.

For pediatric patients, the difference can be life-changing. As survival rates improve, the long-term effects of treatment are becoming more visible.

“What we’re seeing years and even decades later is that standard radiation can have a profound impact on cognition as children grow,” Dr. Klein said.



Some patients experience significant processing challenges that extend beyond learning disabilities, affecting their ability to live independently and function day to day.

“Where proton therapy really shines is that we don't see those effects nearly as much,” Dr. Klein said. “We’re able to protect development, cognition, and the things that make patients who they are as they move forward in life.”

Carilion will be one of 50+ facilities in the country to offer this therapy, placing it alongside leading cancer centers and expanding opportunities for advanced treatment and research.

For many families, access to this care will mean fewer miles traveled, more time at home, and a better quality of life beyond treatment. Community support will make that possible.

SUPPORT NOW

A New Future for Childhood Cancer Survivors







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When a child rings the bell to mark the end of cancer treatment, it signals a major milestone. But for many survivors, the journey continues.

Juanita Prada knows that reality well. Now in her 20s, the two-time childhood cancer survivor lives with the long-term effects of her treatment. She hopes future patients at the Carilion Taubman Cancer Center will have a different experience.

“As I got older, I noticed my brain wasn’t working the way it had before cancer,” she said. “It wasn’t fair.” Over time, she began experiencing learning disabilities and seizures. Determined to understand why, she researched the long-term impacts of treatment. That journey prompted her to found BeholdBeGold, an organization that supports childhood cancer survivors undergoing delayed effects of pediatric cancer treatment and advocates for less harmful treatment options. Advancements like proton therapy offer new hope. This highly targeted form of radiation treats cancer while minimizing damage to healthy tissue, reducing the risk of long-term side effects, especially for pediatric patients who,
like Prada, might carry the impact of treatment into adulthood.

The Carilion Taubman Cancer Center has set its sights on bringing proton therapy to our community. Every gift moves us closer to our $50 million goal, which will make this precision treatment available locally and give pediatric patients and their families access to cutting-edge care without leaving home.

For Prada, this is more than a fundraising goal; it is the answer to a question she has carried for years.

“I know that this proton therapy is going to help with the late effects of treatment for cancer patients,” she said. “Perhaps somebody who had something similar to me does not have to live what I live through today.”

Community Investment in the Future of Cancer Care







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When Sean Horne learned about the vision of the Carilion Taubman Cancer Center and the potential of bringing proton therapy to Southwest Virginia, he didn’t hesitate to act. He committed his support both personally and through

Westwood Professional Services, where he serves as vice president of land development.

“On a personal level, I think like most people in the community, cancer has touched our family, has touched those that we love and hold dear,” Horne said. “Having the resources close to home can be a life changer for so many people, and would have certainly made a difference for us over the years.”

Professionally, he believes it’s an important investment in the region’s long-term vitality. As board chair of the Roanoke Regional Partnership, Horne understands the broader economic and workforce impact the Carilion Taubman Cancer Center and proton therapy will bring to the region.

“These initiatives will drive talent attraction. They drive investment in the community,” Horne said. “Proton therapy, for example, is a game changer for our region. To have that advanced technology here locally, in Roanoke, supports industries as they come in and people as they move to the area.”

Proton therapy will provide advanced care that will put Roanoke on the map, ranking Carilion among some of the top names in healthcare. More importantly, it gives patients access to a level of care they would otherwise have to travel hundreds of miles away to receive.

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