
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Helmsley Charitable Trust grants \$400,000 to Aster Health

WADENA, Minn. – Mar. 27, 2023 – The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust granted \$400,000 to Aster Health to purchase two ultrasound machines, one echo ultrasound, and two handheld point-of-care ultrasounds as part of a \$26.4 million ultrasound initiative in Minnesota. The initiative includes nearly \$18.3 million to help Minnesota hospitals and health centers purchase ultrasound imaging devices and an additional \$8.1 million to boost sonography and point of care ultrasound (POCUS) training opportunities across the state.

“We are so grateful for the support we have received from the Helmsley Charitable Trust. We just moved into a new building, and this equipment will go a long way in providing imaging services to the people of Central Minnesota,” said Kate Lachowitz, diagnostic imaging manager at Aster Health.

Walter Panziner, a Trustee for the Helmsley Charitable Trust, said the grants will help improve access to exceptional medical treatment for all Minnesotans, whether they live in the heart of Minneapolis or a smaller rural or underserved community.

“Our hospitals and health centers need to stay current with rapidly advancing technology so they can continue to provide top-notch healthcare close to home,” Panziner said. “These grants help ensure that facilities across Minnesota have the latest and greatest ultrasound equipment and training.”

More than half of the 196 devices purchased through the grants (109) are POCUS machines, which are used by providers at the bed or bedside for immediate assessment of a patient to quickly determine a course of action. The grants will also provide 69 general ultrasound systems and 18 cardiovascular ultrasound systems, which aid in imaging of the heart.

The initiative also includes more than \$8.1 million to train new sonographers, offer continuing education to sonographers and ultrasound technologists, and provide comprehensive POCUS training to doctors, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners. The training grants include more than \$917,000 to the Minnesota Rural Health Association to support sonographer training in rural and underserved areas of the state, more than \$1 million to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities to expand St. Cloud Technical & Community College’s sonography program, and nearly \$6.2 million to the



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Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians Foundation which will partner with High Quality Medical Education (HQMEDED) to provide POCUS training across the state.

ABOUT ASTERA HEALTH FOUNDATION

The Astera Health Foundation is a private charity established in 1994 by the hospital to attract and administer charitable funds for the benefit of the communities and surrounding areas served by Astera Health. Tax deductible gifts support education, technology, patient care and equipment. Financial donations stay local and have a direct and lasting impact on your family, friends and neighbors.

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