



**Victoria General Hospital's new Pediatric Emergency Care Area
named for generous donor**

December 16, 2009

For Immediate Release

Victoria, BC – The new Variety Pediatric Emergency Care Area in the recently opened Emergency Department at the Victoria General Hospital was unveiled today in honour of the generous support of Variety- The Children's Charity.

Variety - The Children's Charity donated \$278,000 to the first ever Pediatric Emergency Care Area at this hospital. This gift brings Variety's cumulative support of pediatric care through the Victoria Hospitals Foundation to over \$1 million. Other key donors to the new Emergency Department also attended the event today. These generous donations were all given as part of the Victoria Hospitals Foundation's 2008 fundraising efforts to purchase equipment for the new emergency department at Victoria General Hospital which opened in September.

"This has been an incredible journey and a fantastic fit for us at Variety where we are dedicated to transforming the lives of children with special needs," says Barbie Hislop, executive director of Variety – The Children's Charity. "Visits to Emergency Departments can be quite traumatic for young children. The new Variety Pediatric Emergency Care Area will provide a safe, comforting area for young patients to be diagnosed and treated in a compassionate and caring way."

The Variety Pediatric Emergency Care Area will benefit Vancouver Island children and families. It has been purpose-designed and built specifically for child patients with specialized medical equipment suited to smaller patients – such as child-size oxygen masks and ventilators. This specialized area also has a separate waiting room, shielding children from the potentially traumatic sights and sounds of other patients in a busy Emergency Department.

"The design of the new Emergency Department incorporates several features that will enhance pediatric care in Victoria," says Brian Sinclair, medical director, child/youth and family health and department head of pediatrics for the Vancouver Island Health Authority. "Victoria General Hospital is the designated pediatric center for South Island, and the site of many specialized pediatric services for the island – including trauma, intensive care, and pediatric surgery. Emergency is the access point for many levels of care, whether provided by the Emergency Department staff, pediatricians, or other pediatric specialists."

Each year, more than 14,000 child and youth patients receive care at Victoria General Hospital for a variety of concerns ranging from a broken arm to more serious conditions such as cancer. Many of these patients enter the hospital through the Emergency Department.

Bill Thompson, vice chair of the Victoria Hospitals Foundation board of directors is excited about the pediatric-specific care area. "Providing child-centered emergency care in our

community is something that we should be extremely proud of," he says. "We all have or know young children who are dealing with everything from broken arms and high fevers to more serious health conditions. It is comforting to know that thanks to Variety and our other generous donors we now have the Variety Pediatric Emergency Care Area designed specifically for them."

About Pediatric Care at Victoria General Hospital:

- More than 90 per cent of Vancouver Island children needing hospital care are treated at Victoria General Hospital.
- Victoria General Hospital provides pediatric services for local residents as well as for all of Vancouver Island. It is the pediatric hospital for southern Vancouver Island and the pediatric referral centre for all of Vancouver Island – meaning that child patients living elsewhere are sent here for specialty treatment that is not available locally.
- Most Vancouver Island children requiring specialty hospital treatment now come to Victoria General Hospital rather than being sent to BC Children's Hospital in Vancouver, as was the case in the past.
- Being able to stay on the Island is far less stressful for families, where they can be close to family and friends.

About the Victoria Hospitals Foundation:

The Victoria Hospitals Foundation works in partnership with the Vancouver Island Health Authority to enable donations to Vancouver Island's two largest and most comprehensive hospitals: the Royal Jubilee and the Victoria General. Every year we fund 40 per cent of capital equipment purchases for these hospitals, and last year this amounted to more than \$6 million for urgently needed medical equipment and special projects that help these two hospitals provide care to all 752,000 residents of Vancouver Island. Since 1989, the Victoria Hospitals Foundation has raised more than \$70 million to benefit our hospitals. For more information, call the Foundation at 250-414-6688 or go to www.victoriahf.ca.

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