

Victoria Hospitals Foundation launches new *Caring Spirit* program to honour outstanding hospital physicians and staff

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For Immediate Release

Victoria, BC – Today marked the official launch of the Caring Spirit program, the new grateful patient program that will give patients the opportunity to recognize outstanding care through a donation to the Victoria Hospitals Foundation in tribute of a caregiver at the Royal Jubilee or Victoria General Hospital.

Caring Spirit is a recognition program where grateful patients, family members and friends are able to express their gratitude in a meaningful way to the physicians and staff who cared for them. Donations raised through the 12-month pilot program will be redirected to the Victoria General and Royal Jubilee Hospitals in order continue improving patient care through the purchase of priority medical equipment or supporting special projects and staff education.

“We are very excited about the launch of the Caring Spirit program as it provides the opportunity to support excellence in patient care at the Royal Jubilee and Victoria General Hospital, through the recognition of outstanding, professional service by our health care team,” says Mike Conroy, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of VIHA. “Our team of dedicated healthcare professionals are here to serve the health needs of our community and this is one way that patients can pay tribute to and support excellent patient care.”

Four nurses from the Enterostomal Therapy Clinic, who treat patients with stomas, such as colostomies or urostomies, were the first to be recognized today for outstanding patient care. Maureen Mann, Donna Tait, Marilyn Elder and Lorna Wood were presented with a custom crafted Caring Spirit lapel pin

“It is a great honour to be one of the first care providers being recognized under this new program and we are truly grateful for Peter and Wendy’s support,” says Maureen Mann, Clinical Resource Nurse, Enterostomal Therapy Clinic 3 at Royal Jubilee Hospital. “For those of us who work in Enterostomal Therapy, this is a dream nursing job – we know what we do makes a difference in people’s lives because we have the opportunity to follow people through their rehabilitation process and see them become independent.”

Peter Kappel, a recent patient and the first donor story being highlighted under the Caring Spirit program, spoke today about his “angels” at Royal Jubilee Hospital who have helped him manage his complex ileostomy over the last 5 ½ years, made more difficult by the fact he lives on Pender Island.

Peter and his partner Wendy Hacking – donated their Climate Action Dividend cheques and then personally matched the funds, requesting they be dedicated to the Enterostomal Therapy nurses at RJH for their amazing care and support over the past few years.

"I have talked with the ET nurses on dozens of occasions by phone, by email and in person at the clinic . When we see them – whether it's a scheduled visit or an emergency one, these nurses always give us their knowledge, skills and some hope," says Kappel. "We felt there was no better way to thank those who are always there when I need them, than to make a meaningful and lasting donation to provide them with an even greater opportunity to excel."

Once nominated through Spring Spirit program, the care provider will receive a Caring Spirit lapel pin; a thank-you card from the donor and a return card to allow the nominated recipient(s) to send a message back to the donor.

"The Victoria Hospitals Foundation is very excited about this program. Our donors are often people from our community who have had a very positive experience with healthcare in our local hospitals and are looking for a way to give back," explains Rob Cooke, Board Chair of the Victoria Hospitals Foundation. "This program will not only offer personal recognition to the care provider or healthcare team by the patient, but also provide a way for donations to continue directly improving care at the Royal Jubilee and Victoria General Hospital."

Ways to Support the Caring Spirit Program

There are many ways for patients to make donations including by mail using the form provided in the Caring Spirit brochure, which are available at the patient billing offices at the Victoria General or Royal Jubilee Hospital. Forms can also be picked up at the Victoria Hospitals Foundation's office (Suite 620 - 602 View Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1J6), online at www.victoriahf.ca or a donation can be made over the phone at 250-414-6688.

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. The Foundation raises more than \$7 million annually 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 \$64 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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