

**Local physician experiences intensive care unit first-hand
with life-threatening illness**

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For Immediate Release

Victoria, BC – Dr. Terrance Paul, a physician who works in the intensive care unit (ICU) at both Royal Jubilee and Victoria General Hospitals, today thanked staff and physicians for saving his life. Dr. Paul fell ill from a life-threatening pneumonia two years ago and found himself in the position of a patient being cared for in the ICU, the unit he works in on a daily basis.

“The last thing I after I got admitted to the hospital was riding up the elevator to the ICU,” said Dr. Paul. “I woke up the next day, breathing through a tube connected to a ventilator, and on full life support. I was looking around in disbelief about how sick I was — I just couldn’t believe I got so sick so fast.”

Dr. Paul was speaking today to support the Victoria Hospitals Foundation’s campaign for the purchase of new ventilators for the ICUs at Royal Jubilee Hospital and Victoria General Hospital. A ventilator is a machine that assists with, or provides all of the breathing for people who cannot breathe on their own. The goal of the Victoria Hospitals Foundation’s 2009 fall campaign is to fund six new ventilators that cost a total of \$375,000. Funds will be raised through a variety of activities including mail, events, the *Visions* gala and online gifts.

“Patients in the ICU are some of the most vulnerable and require urgent care of the best quality,” said Dr. Gordon Wood, site chief for intensive care medicine at Vancouver Island Health Authority. “And the majority of them require the assistance of a mechanical ventilator at some point during their stay.”

The ICU at Royal Jubilee Hospital is one of only two ICUs in the province that admits patients with severe burns, and the ICU at Victoria General Hospital is within the designated obstetrical and trauma centre for Vancouver Island, as well as the only hospital on the Island that performs neurosurgery.

“We are so fortunate to have exceptional medical staff in the intensive care units in our local hospitals,” said Starr McMichael, board chair for the Victoria Hospitals Foundation. “The new ventilators will benefit both intensive care units and help enhance the care they provide each day.”

Donations to the Victoria Hospitals Foundation’s fall campaign can be made by mail, by phone (250-414-6688) or online at www.victoriahf.ca.

About Visions 2009:

Visions is the annual gala event hosted by the Victoria Hospitals Foundation. The event is held at the Fairmont Empress and is a black-tie evening that includes an elegant sit-

down dinner, entertainment and both silent and live auctions. Last year, the event raised \$390,000.

This year's event will be held on Saturday, November 14. However, while Visions is a one-night affair, the Foundation will be working throughout the fall to reach out to all Vancouver Island residents for support of this worthwhile cause.

Did You Know?

- Most patients in the intensive care unit require the assistance of a ventilator at some point during their hospital stay.
- Many patients admitted to the intensive care unit have a failure of one or more vital organs. Lung failure is the most common problem.
- The first machine designed to assist patients with respiratory failure was the iron lung, which was in high use during the 1950s polio epidemic.
- Modern ventilators use *positive pressure* to assist breathing and are able to ventilate patients not only with weak breathing muscles like in polio, but also with far more common problems such as pneumonia.
- The sophisticated newer machines can be adjusted to be 100 per cent responsible or to provide only partial respiratory support, allowing the patient to take over their own breathing as they heal and recover.
- In June 2009, the World Health Organization declared a worldwide pandemic relating to the new H1N1 strain of influenza.
- Severe cases of H1N1 may require admission to an intensive care unit and patients may need the assistance of a ventilator to help them breathe.
- You can contribute to the Victoria Hospitals Foundation's campaign in support of six ventilators for the intensive care unit at Royal Jubilee and Victoria General Hospitals by calling 250-414-6688, mailing to #602-620 View Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1J6 or donating online at www.victoriahf.ca.

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 the Foundation funds 40 per cent of capital medical 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 Royal Jubilee and Victoria General Hospitals. For more information, please call the Foundation at 250-414-6688 or go to www.victoriahf.ca.

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