

First Open Heart Society donates \$50,000 to the Victoria Hospitals Foundation

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For immediate release

The Victoria Hospitals Foundation received a significant donation from The First Open Heart Society of British Columbia. President Doris Nicholson presented the Foundation with a cheque for \$50,000 for Cardiac Care at Royal Jubilee Hospital. Since 1980, the First Open Heart Society has donated more than \$706,000 to Cardiac Care in Victoria. Formed in 1973, the Society focuses on supporting patients and their families before and after cardiac surgery.

The donation will support the purchase of a sophisticated piece of equipment for Royal Jubilee Hospital called a Cell Saver. This technology is used during open-heart and vascular surgeries to counter blood loss. It recovers the blood a patient loses, and instead of being discarded, it is given back to the patient after being cleansed and filtered. “It is comforting for our patients to know that their own blood is being returned to them,” says Allen Davenport, a Perfusionist with Island Health.

“We are so grateful for the long time support of The First Open Heart Society and their efforts to improve Cardiac Care on Vancouver Island. Their generous gifts have helped so many people in our communities have access to the leading-edge cardiac technology that ultimately saves their lives,” said Cathy McIntyre, Board Chair of the Victoria Hospitals Foundation. “The leadership and commitment they have demonstrated to our community is extraordinary.”

The leading cause of death in Canada is heart disease. Royal Jubilee Hospital is the referral centre for Cardiac Care for all of Vancouver Island. Last year, Royal Jubilee Hospital saw over 3,000 cardiac inpatients – more than 50% of these patients were transferred from outside Greater Victoria. Patients from throughout the region count on the hospital for its diagnostic tools, treatment capacity, and the skill and dedication of the world-class Heart Health team. Nurses and doctors selected for the Heart Health team require extensive training to work with advanced equipment and special lifesaving drugs. A clinical teaching unit provides a forum for caregivers with diverse expertise to share their skills and knowledge. Patients receive state-of-the-art Cardiac Care and rehabilitation to regain their strength, endurance and confidence so they can embark on a new, heart-healthy life.

Doris Nicholson, President of First Open Heart Society, was on hand to present the cheque. “We are strongly committed to supporting Cardiac Care through the Victoria Hospitals Foundation. We take pride and comfort in knowing that when people from across Vancouver Island require live-saving heart surgery or treatment, Royal Jubilee is well equipped to provide state-of-the-art care.” For the convenience of out of town guests The First Open

Heart Society operates Heart House, a low-cost Bed and Breakfast within walking distance of Royal Jubilee Hospital.

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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. Last year, we raised nearly \$7 million for urgently needed medical equipment and special projects that help these two hospitals provide care to all 765,000 residents of Vancouver Island. Since 1989, the Victoria Hospitals Foundation has raised nearly \$114.5 million to benefit our hospitals. For more information, call the Foundation at 250-519-1750 or visit www.victoriahf.ca.

About First Open Heart Society of British Columbia

The First Open Heart Society of British Columbia is a non-profit, volunteer organization formed in 1973 on the initiative of cardiologists and early heart surgery patients to function as a support group for patients awaiting and recovering from heart surgery, and their families. The idea was first conceived by Dr. W. Glenn Freisen, a former Victoria cardiologist. He suggested that both pre-op and post-op stress and trauma could be eased if those patients who were about to undergo surgery could talk to those who had "walked the path".

Background information on Cardiac Care at Royal Jubilee Hospital

Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria is a Heart Health Centre of Excellence, caring for people from across the region. It is well known in Canada for providing leading interventional procedures, elder friendly initiatives, and outpatient rehabilitation programs/clinics. The diagnosis and treatment of patients with cardiovascular risk factors and disease consumes more resources than any other disease. Cardiac patients throughout the province may be referred to Royal Jubilee for treatments such as: open-heart surgery, cardiac catheterization (angiograms), echocardiology, cardiac rehabilitation, heart function clinic services, electrophysiology services (involving the management of life-threatening arrhythmias), and the implantation of pacemakers and other devices.

Every year, the Heart Health program performs approximately 700 open-heart surgeries, 3,700 angiograms and angioplasties, 800 electrophysiology procedures and 900 cardiac device insertions. No other cardiology programs exist in the Island Health region, which

covers all of Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands, and the mainland region between Powell River and Rivers Inlet.

In the Diagnostic and Treatment Centre, patients are diagnosed with cardiovascular disease and abnormal heart rhythm, and receive vital medical interventions such as open-heart surgery, angioplasty and implanting pacemakers. After their procedures they are transferred to the Heart Health Unit via a private overhead skywalk to the Patient Care Centre. Every patient bed is equipped with vital signs monitors that allow medical professionals to make immediate assessments right at every patient's bedside – and wireless communication devices alert them when a patient's vital signs change. Here patients receive state-of-the-art cardiac care and rehabilitation.

More information on Heart Health areas at Royal Jubilee Hospital:

Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit (CVU) is an eight-bed unit, where an average combination of three to five open heart, thoracic/abdominal aneurysm or laser lead surgeries are accommodated on a daily basis.

Coronary Care Unit (CCU) is an eight-bed unit caring for critically ill medical cardiac patients who are unstable and require intensive monitoring and interventions. Examples include: post myocardial infarction, heart failure and arrhythmia care and cardiac arrest management including hypothermia therapy, and ventilator management.

Post Open Heart Surgery Recovery Ward is a 16-bed telemetry unit where open heart surgery patients are cared for while they recover following surgery. This unit is located on the third floor of the Patient Care Centre.

Medical Cardiology is a 32-bed telemetry unit which is located adjacent to the post open-heart recovery ward within the Patient Care Centre. This unit's team cares for patients with a variety of cardiac illnesses and specializes in arrhythmia management. A pacemaker program is also part of the care delivery model encompassed by this team as is the highly recognized same-day cardiac surgical admission education program.

Cardiac Short Stay is an 18-bed, six-stretcher chair recovery unit for patients post heart catheterization and electrophysiology procedures. This is the first centre in Canada to implement a new chair recovery model following diagnostic and interventional procedures. The new model was made possible due to the care team's 95% use of radial artery access for heart catheterization.

Electrophysiology (EP) and Heart Catheterization (HC) Labs - In two EP labs and two HC labs, patients are diagnosed and treated for a wide spectrum of cardiac disorders. The EP Lab specializes in diagnosis and treatment of complex arrhythmias and leads the country in pulmonary vein isolation procedures. The HC Lab is internationally recognized for its innovative radial artery access approach for diagnostic and complex interventional procedures and for providing a Cardiology Fellowship program.