

## **Young Patients Thank Firefighters for Ongoing Support of Pediatrics \$50,000 Cheque Presented to Victoria Hospitals Foundation**

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**For Immediate Release**

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**Victoria** – Pediatric patients today presented members of the Professional Firefighters of Greater Victoria with a giant thank you card to express their gratitude for the investment they have made in pediatric and neonatal intensive care at the Victoria General Hospital.

“We are honoured to receive a special thank you from some young patients today,” said Jared Barker, Director of the Saanich Firefighters Charitable Foundation. “We are inspired by the bravery of these children and we are dedicated to doing everything we can to help them get well and go on to lead full and healthy lives.”

Today, the firefighters from Saanich, Oak Bay, Victoria and Esquimalt departments made a \$50,000 payment to the Victoria Hospitals Foundation towards their 10-year, \$250,000 pledge made in 2011. Today’s pledge payment will go towards an OmniBed, an advanced neonatal care unit that brings together the features of an incubator and a radiant warmer. Infants staying in an OmniBed do not need to be moved for procedures, allowing them to better regulate their body temperature. This leading-edge unit also allows parents greater access to their babies.

Including today’s cheque, the firefighters’ pledge payments total \$108,000. Funds raised thus far have gone towards life-saving equipment, such as an infant resuscitation unit and a ventilator for the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. Funds are raised through a variety of initiatives, including firefighter calendar sales and the KidsRun Victoria.

“We are so grateful for the dedication and passion the Professional Firefighters of Greater Victoria bring to improving healthcare for our community’s smallest patients,” said Victoria Hospitals Foundation Executive Director Melanie Mahlman. “Having a sick child is incredibly difficult for families. We hope they can take some comfort in knowing that we have a team of inspiring individuals working hard to ensure our hospitals have the very best equipment.”

More than 90% of Vancouver Island children who need hospital care are treated on the Island. Victoria General Hospital is the Island’s pediatric specialty hospital, operating the only high-level neonatal and pediatric intensive care units in B.C. outside the Lower Mainland.

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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](http://www.victoriahf.ca).