

Young Patients Thank Firefighters for Supporting Pediatric Care at Victoria General Hospital \$25,000 Cheque Presented to Victoria Hospitals Foundation

October 19, 2016

For Immediate Release

Victoria – Today, firefighters from Saanich, Oak Bay, Victoria and Esquimalt departments presented a cheque for \$25,000 to the Victoria Hospitals Foundation in support of pediatric and neonatal intensive care at Victoria General Hospital. The gift is part of a 10-year, \$250,000 pledge made in 2011 by the Professional Firefighters of Greater Victoria Charitable Foundation.

Young patients from the pediatrics department at Victoria General Hospital thanked the group of firefighters by excitedly presenting them with a giant thank you card.

“Visiting the hospital and seeing the kids and families who rely on us is so touching. It is an honour to be thanked directly by these brave young patients and to have the opportunity to spend time with them,” said Joel Jackson, a firefighter with Saanich Fire Department. “We are absolutely dedicated to helping our local hospital offer the best care to the children in our community. And we know that helping provide our medical teams with advanced equipment makes a big impact on the level of care they can provide.”

Today’s pledge payment will go towards the purchase of two bilirubin analyzers for the maternity and pediatric unit. The equipment is used to monitor for high levels of bilirubin, which causes jaundice in newborns. It is a handheld and entirely non-invasive instrument which allows for a quick test that is not traumatic to the baby.

The firefighter’s gifts to date total \$150,000. Funds raised thus far have supported state-of-the-art equipment that helps save young lives at Victoria General: an infant resuscitation unit for the maternity department, a ventilator and vital signs monitor for the pediatric intensive care unit and a special incubator for the neonatal intensive care unit. Money is raised through a variety of community initiatives throughout the year, including firefighter calendar sales, Rock and Roll for Little Souls, Fashion Inferno, Oak Bay Sausagefest and Esquimalt Ribfest.

Victoria Hospitals Foundation Board Chair John Madden accepted the cheque from the firefighters. “We are so grateful for the long term commitment and passion of the Professional Firefighters of Greater Victoria. Their incredible generosity and community spirit is helping hundreds of sick children and babies receive the diagnoses and treatment they need, close to home. Better tools and equipment mean better healthcare services for our children.”

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 more than \$121 million to benefit our hospitals. For more information, call the Foundation at 250-519-1750 or visit www.victoriahf.ca.