

Victoria Hospitals Foundation launches Spring Campaign for Gamma-CT Scanner for Royal Jubilee Hospital

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For Immediate Release

Victoria, BC — The Victoria Hospitals Foundation has launched its Spring Campaign to complete funding for a \$1.4M Gamma-CT camera for Royal Jubilee Hospital, Alan Lowe, Vice Chair of the Victoria Hospitals Foundation, and Dr. Kevin Forkheim, a radiologist with the Vancouver Island Health Authority, announced today.

“This spring we’re calling on the community to help raise \$375,000 for a Gamma-CT Scanner for patients at Royal Jubilee Hospital. This leading edge equipment combines two imaging technologies in one exam, which means patients receive a complete diagnosis sooner, and medical imaging waitlists are reduced for everyone,” explained Lowe.

The Gamma-CT Scanner takes two scans at precisely the same time, combining a nuclear medicine scan with a CT scan. This creates one high-resolution image that captures everything doctors need for a diagnosis in just one appointment, allowing patients to get treatment more quickly. Royal Jubilee Hospital has the only Medical Imaging Department on the Island with a Gamma-CT Scanner.

Dr. Forkheim explained how this technology helps to diagnose patients with serious bone pain, difficult infections, Alzheimer’s disease or cancer.

“To pinpoint a tumour or find the exact location of an infection or serious bone pain, a patient could previously go through two or more medical scans,” said Forkheim. “But now, the high-definition images taken with the Gamma-CT Scanner provide a real time picture of how disease is impacting a person’s body. This means we can offer treatments or surgeries that are as precise as possible. Many people will benefit significantly from this sophisticated equipment — it allows us to become better medical detectives.”

Using the Gamma-CT:

- Cancer patients can be quickly diagnosed so doctors will know potential treatments or the exact site for surgery
- For patients suffering from chronic back pain or other bone pain the scanner can target the specific location that is causing pain so doctors can determine the best treatment
- For Alzheimer’s Disease patients the Gamma-CT Scanner provides a detailed brain scan that helps doctors decide the best course of action
- For patients with a difficult infection, the scanner helps localize the infection and determine the extent of disease

Carrie Birch is one patient who has benefitted from the Gamma-CT Scanner. Carrie was nearing the five-year mark of being breast cancer free when she was diagnosed with thyroid cancer. After undergoing treatment, she was scheduled for an immediate exam with the Gamma-CT Scanner to see if there was any cancer still left and determine its precise location.

“Just days after my Gamma-CT Scan my doctor told me I was finally cancer free. And though I am so grateful, I’m certain that if the results were different, I’d be comforted by knowing my doctor would have all of the information necessary to best treat my disease.”

The campaign for the Gamma-CT Scanner launches this week throughout Greater Victoria. Donations can be made by returning the direct mail letter residents will receive at home, by contacting the Victoria Hospitals Foundation at 250-519-1750 or online at www.victoriahf.ca.

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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. Every year we fund approximately 40 per cent of capital equipment purchases for these hospitals. Last year we raised \$8.4 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 \$90 million to benefit our hospitals. For more information, call the Foundation at 250-519-1750 or visit www.victoriahf.ca.