

Victoria Hospitals Foundation Launches Spring Campaign for Cancer Care

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For Immediate Release

Victoria – The Victoria Hospitals Foundations announced today that its Spring Campaign will raise funds for advanced equipment focused on the diagnosis and treatment of cancer patients. Several new pieces of equipment for laboratory medicine, diagnostic tests and inpatient surgery are needed to care for people from across Vancouver Island.

Victoria Hospitals Foundation Board Chair Cathy McIntyre launched the campaign at the Royal Jubilee Patient Care Centre. “We are counting on the generosity of the community to help raise more than \$366,000 for several pieces of equipment that will help medical teams deliver the highest standard of care. For people in our community with cancer – and many other critical illnesses – this equipment will increase their chance for survival at every stage of their diagnosis and treatment.”

McIntyre was joined by Dr. Brian Berry, Division Chief for Hematopathology and Laboratory Medicine at Island Health. Dr. Berry spoke about how one of the new pieces of equipment – a new automated Hematology system for the Victoria General Hospital laboratory– is a vast improvement from the current technology. “The pillar of our department is the system we use to analyze blood another bodily fluids. The job of this equipment is to make sure any abnormalities, like cancer, anemia or auto-immune diseases, stand out like a sore thumb. Right now, the system we have is outdated and requires us to manually review cells from blood samples. The new system provides high-resolution digital images, meaning results are more exact and arrive up to 10 times faster. Often we can begin treatment immediately.”

The campaign is also raising funds for high-resolution monitors and an electrosurgical unit for the Endoscopy Department. This equipment provides clearer video images and more precise diagnosis of cancer locations. A digital ultrasound that helps physicians precisely locate tumors and other abnormalities during surgery is also needed.

Carl Peterson, a Victoria architect and leukemia patient, spoke firsthand about the difference having advanced lab equipment in our hospitals has made to his life. When he was first diagnosed 28 years ago, Carl had to endure frequent painful bone marrow extractions in order for doctors to treat his disease. Today, only a simple blood test is required to determine the exact levels of medication he needs. “You get that essential information so much more quickly because doctors can look at thousands of cells instead of just 25. Results are more precise and comprehensive. It removes a lot of anxiety.”

The Spring Campaign for leading-edge cancer care equipment launches this week. Contribute by calling 250-519-1750, mailing to Wilson Block, 1952 Bay Street, Victoria, BC, V8R 1J8, or donating 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. 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.