

Victoria Hospitals Foundation launches Fall Campaign for Medical Imaging Systems

October 27, 2015

For Immediate Release

Victoria – Raising funds for two new Interventional Angiography Systems, one at Victoria General Hospital and one at Royal Jubilee Hospital, is the focus of the Victoria Hospitals Foundation’s Fall Campaign, Board Chair Cathy McIntyre announced today. The equipment allows doctors to see inside blood vessels and internal organs so they can perform life-saving procedures.

“We are calling on our community to help us raise \$1.5 million for these sophisticated systems that will be used to treat a wide variety of conditions, including stroke, renal failure and osteoporosis,” said McIntyre. “This is a special campaign as every gift we receive will be matched by a generous anonymous donor up to a total of \$750,000.”

McIntyre was joined by Dr. Paul Sobkin, Clinical Section Head, Angiography/Interventional Radiology, who spoke to the incredible diversity of procedures the equipment will support.

“These machines will be used for more than 60 different procedures from the routine to the life-saving,” said Sobkin. “With these new systems, we will be able to perform advanced procedures not currently possible and apply our techniques to more patients with increased accuracy and confidence. This equipment will also reduce the amount of radiation exposure to patients and caregivers by up to 60% over the existing equipment.”

Some of the procedures done with these machines include:

- Removing blood clots from arteries and veins
- Establishing vascular access to allow kidney dialysis
- Stabilizing spinal fractures due to osteoporosis
- Stopping internal bleeding following trauma or surgery
- Treating uterine fibroids to avoid hysterectomy

Royal Jubilee and Victoria General hospitals are the only referral centres on Vancouver Island for a variety of interventional radiology treatments. Ten to 12 procedures a day and more than 2,500 a year will be done with these machines.

Dr. Sobkin’s former patient, Steve Palen, shared his story at the announcement. Palen had been living with Hepatitis C, which attacks the liver, for more than four decades, when he was diagnosed with liver cancer in 2007. Using the Interventional Angiography System, Dr. Sobkin performed two treatments multiple times. He first directly injected the tumours with

alcohol and when that method was no longer effective, he found the arteries that supplied the tumours, filled them with chemotherapy and closed them off to deprive them of their blood supply. These treatments kept the cancer under control until Palen received a liver transplant.

“My wife, Liz, and I never spoke about it, but we both thought that I might not make it,” said Palen. “Dr. Sobkin helped me get on the liver transplant list and, using the advanced technology we are lucky to have here on Vancouver Island, he kept my cancer under control.”

The Fall Campaign for two new Interventional Angiography Systems launches this week. Contributions can be made 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.