

KGH Respiratory Patients Breathe Easier Thanks to New Bedside Ultrasound

KELOWNA, BC – Never has respiratory health been so top of mind, due to the less than favourable air quality from hundreds of wildfires burning in BC. But respiratory patients at Kelowna General Hospital can now breathe a sigh of relief thanks to a new bedside diagnostic tool, thanks in part to a \$25,000 donation from the TB Vets Foundation.

In September 2017, TB Vets provided a \$25,000 gift in matching funds to secure the acquisition of a new, dedicated portable ultrasound for the Respiratory Therapy Department at KGH. The “SonoSite Ultrasound” will be used by respirologists and thoracic surgeons to assess and treat pulmonary (lung) fluid collections and abscesses. It will also be used to landmark where chest tubes need to be inserted and to track and evaluate when to remove them.

Bob Somerville, RRT, Clinical Supervisor from the Respiratory Therapy Department had this to say about the new equipment: “Ultrasound imaging allows respirologists and respiratory therapists to identify and make accurate diagnosis at patients’ bedside. Its portability and functionally provides information quickly allowing for improved patient care. This advanced diagnostic tool will promote safe and efficient care in the Respiratory Therapy Department for years to come.”

Kelowna General has witnessed a dramatic increase in respirology and thoracic surgery case volumes, particularly over the past five years. In 2016, over 2,500 respirology and thoracic surgery patients were treated at KGH, many of whom received procedures which required a thoracic ultrasound. Based on current volumes, the anticipated number of procedures requiring a thoracic ultrasound will be over 1,800 per year, which is an average of five procedures per day.

Since 1946, TB Vets has played a vital role in advancing respiratory care in British Columbia. From gifts to support the respiratory needs of Kelowna General Hospital’s tiniest patients in the neonatal intensive care unit, to educational programs for local children suffering with asthma, TB Vets has given nearly \$300,000 to support respiratory initiatives at KGH in the past twenty years.

“TB Vets is proud to contribute to the Kelowna General Hospital Foundation,” says Executive Director Kandys Merola, “and through the generosity of our donors, together we make a significant impact towards the health and wellness of individuals and families affected by respiratory challenges through BC.”

The KGH Foundation is an independent, volunteer-driven charitable organization committed to enhancing the delivery of healthcare to the patients of Kelowna General Hospital and its associated facilities.



From left to right:

- Peter Merola, Vice Chair, Board of Directors, TB Vets Foundation
- Kandys Merola, Executive Director, TB Vets Foundation
- Bob Somerville, Clinical Supervisor Respiratory Therapy, KGH
- Donna Jansons, Allied Health Director, COK/ Early Childhood, Development, Hospitals and Communities Integrated Services (HCIS), Interior Health Authority
- Dennis Dekleva, Interim Professional Practice Leader Respiratory Therapy, KGH.

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