

MEDIA RELEASE

KGH Foundation Announces \$7 Million Campaign to Bring Advanced Heart Rhythm Services to Kelowna General

KELOWNA, BC, February 12, 2019 – Today, the KGH Foundation officially announced the *Right Here at KGH* campaign to raise \$7 million to bring advanced heart rhythm services/ electrophysiology to Kelowna General Hospital to keep interior patients closer to home and complete Interior Health’s Cardiac Sciences program.

Every year, hundreds of patients from across the interior of British Columbia suffer urgent, life-threatening complications arising from conditions associated with abnormal heart rhythms or cardiac arrhythmia. In all cases, they must wait for a bed to become available at a hospital in the Lower Mainland or Vancouver Island. The burden of arrhythmia is significant; the hardship of having to travel for care only adds to what is already a very difficult time for patients and families.”

Working closely with Interior Health’s Cardiac Sciences team and, with the support of the community, the KGH Foundations hopes to fund a state-of-the art, electrophysiology (EP) lab at KGH, the regional hub for IH’s Cardiac Sciences program.

A public information session and official campaign launch was held this evening at the Clinical Academic Campus on the KGH site. The one-hour program provided insight into the history of the cardiac sciences program, it’s current status and what will be possible once the program is complete with the addition of the final piece, electrophysiology (EP).

“The KGH Foundation makes it possible for these advanced services to be available right here in the interior because of the support that is provided by the community,” said Doug Rankmore, CEO of the KGH Foundation. “Working together we are able to provide funding to allow services like cardiac electrophysiology to be offered sooner than may have otherwise been the case. This is part of what makes KGH an advanced healthcare facility and Kelowna a very special place to live.”

“In many ways, our cardiac program rivals any of the best hospitals in the country,” explained Dr. Guy Fradet, Medical Director of IH’s Cardiac Science Program. “The Interior Heart & Surgical Centre at KGH is state of the art. But our program is not complete. With our service area now holding up to 1 million residents in the interior, we need to bring EP services here, to Kelowna. It is time for our region to have its own, fully complete heart program.”

Dr. Kathryn Brown, Medical Director of IH Cardiac Diagnostics and Director of KGH Echo Labs, spoke enthusiastically about the partnership. “As cardiac physicians and surgeons, we are

absolutely working arm-in-arm with the KGH Foundation to bring EP to KGH. We've already seen first-hand how donors can have direct impact on the quality and accessibility of patient care we can deliver.

The goal is to have the lab operational by the summer of 2020.

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.

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