

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Donors Fund Clinical Trial For Promising Prostate Cancer Treatment at London Health Sciences Centre

London, Ontario, September 14, 2006 – One small machine may have big potential for effectively treating prostate cancer with few side-effects and minimal invasiveness. It's just a question of confirming that potential through clinical investigation of the new technology known as High Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU). Now, thanks to almost \$300,000 in support from two generous donors, London Health Sciences Centre is able to do just that. Gifts made by Terry and Sheila Fletcher and Keith Samitt were presented today at a ceremony hosted by London Health Sciences Foundation.

A brush with cancer inspired Terry Fletcher to want to help the hospital that helped him. "I owe the success of my surgery to the skill and knowledge of the doctors of London Health Sciences Centre. They need extra financial support to continue improving and lengthening quality of life for so many people," said Fletcher.

HIFU involves a small piece of equipment the size of a portable fridge and a second smaller piece. The treatment consists of a probe generating intense heat focused on the prostate. Patients generally like HIFU, which has been used initially to treat the non-cancerous condition BPH (Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia) because it has fewer potential troubling side effects that often follow treatment for prostate cancer. HIFU is usually an outpatient procedure or may involve a short hospital stay.

Dr. Joseph Chin, Chief, Division of Urology and Medical Director, Surgical Oncology, for London Health Sciences Centre's London Regional Cancer Program is heading up the hospital's clinical investigations. Chin wants to confirm the safety of this technology, its limitations and the ideal patient population for its use. "I am hopeful that HIFU will become a treatment option for patients who have already failed radiotherapy and are now faced with limited options. I also hope we will eventually determine its suitability as a primary therapy," explained Chin.

Some private practitioners in Canada, South America and Europe are currently offering HIFU. However, Chin is anxious for London Health Sciences Centre to take a more non-commercial, controlled and academic look at the technology.

“The treatment fits London Health Sciences Centre’s profile,” said Chin, adding, “Without support from patients and donors such research would be impossible. We have a track record of innovative prostate cancer therapies and an interest and expertise in minimally-invasive and image-guided therapies.”

“Gifts like those of the Fletchers and Mr. Samitt mark another opportunity for London Health Sciences Centre to make a difference to the health and well-being of people living in London and southwestern Ontario,” said Dan Ross, President and Chief Executive Officer of London Health Sciences Foundation. “The generosity of our donors also provides the opportunity for the kind of education and research with which we can move forward in the fight against cancer,” he concluded.

About London Health Sciences Centre

London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC) is one of Canada’s largest acute-care teaching hospitals and is dedicated to excellence in patient care, teaching and research. LHSC has pioneered many national and international medical breakthroughs. Located in London, Ontario, LHSC encompasses three sites, South Street Hospital, University Hospital and Victoria Hospital; two family medical centres; and the London Regional Cancer Program. LHSC is the home of the Children’s Hospital of Western Ontario and CSTAR (Canadian Surgical Technologies & Advanced Robotics). LHSC is affiliated with The University of Western Ontario. Physicians and staff at LHSC number close to 8,000 and together they provide care for more than 600,000 patients each year.

About London Health Sciences Foundation

For more than a decade, London Health Sciences Foundation has inspired investment in excellence at London Health Sciences Centre. London Health Sciences Foundation is a non-profit, charitable organization established in 1996 through the amalgamation of the University and Victoria Hospital Foundations. The Foundation links donors, health care consumers, the community and health care experts — including physicians, allied professionals, researchers, staff and educators — in pursuit of medical excellence at London Health Sciences Centre.

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