

*For Immediate Release*

## **Donation Supports Gift of Hearing**

**Clinic name reflects generosity as couple's donations pass \$1-million mark**

**LONDON, Ont.** –The Thomas and Dorothy Allison Clinic at London Health Sciences Centre's University Hospital officially opened today with a plaque unveiling and open house. The clinic, which supports the hospital's Otolaryngology/Neurotology Program, has been seeing patients for about two months.

Today's celebration recognized the significant impact that the support from Tom Allison and his late wife Dorothy, has on the lives of patients with hearing disorders. A recent gift of \$455,000 pushed their total support for LHSC's Otolaryngology/Neurotology Program to one million dollars. The program is a key component of the Department of Otolaryngology, which cares for patients with disorders of the ear, nose and throat.

"With the generous support that both Tom and Dorothy have shown over the years, we are able to continue making an enormous difference in the lives of patients not only from Southwestern Ontario, but from all parts of the province and the country," says Dr. Lorne Parnes, Medical Director of LHSC's Otolaryngology/Neurotology Program.

Patients experiencing complicated hearing problems and/or dizziness who are not responding to conventional therapy are often referred to the Otolaryngology/Neurotology Program, which specializes in the treatment of disorders of the ear and skull base. Under the leadership and guidance of Dr. Parnes the program has established an international reputation for high-quality patient care, research and education.

Dr. Parnes pioneered and conducted the world's first invasive inner ear operation for vertigo in normal hearing ears in 1989; now a standard otology operation around the world. LHSC is also one of only five centres in Ontario to offer a Cochlear Implant Program, a program within the Otolaryngology/Neurotology Program, and the only one that provides implants to both children and adults. Approximately 35 patients are fitted with this type of implant each year at LHSC, which in most cases helps to dramatically improve hearing.

Allison himself had severe hearing loss as a result of Meniere's Disease. In 2000 the then 75 year-old Allison received a cochlear implant at LHSC that reconnected him to the world by restoring his ability to hear.

"Dr. Parnes gave me a new life with this miracle," Allison said.

Allison explained that their recent gift, along with an original gift of \$250,000 in 2004 and several smaller donations has allowed them to support and recognize the work of Dr. Lorne Parnes and his team. According to Dr. Parnes, the continued support of Mr.

Allison, through London Health Sciences Foundation, helps provide resources for patient care, strengthens otology/neurotology research and supports the training of young physicians with an interest in otology, especially cochlear implantation.

Dr. Sumit Agrawal who joined the program in August is an example of the development of new physicians for the program. Dr. Agrawal completed his residency in otolaryngology at the University of Western Ontario in 2006 and more recently completed the prestigious two year Stanford Neurotology Fellowship in June 2008. He will be sharing the clinic with Dr. Parnes and will greatly benefit from Mr. Allison's gift, which will help support both his clinical work and his research.

“We are so very grateful for the generosity that Tom and Dorothy Allison have shown,” says London Health Sciences Foundation Chair George Kerhoulas. “It is support like this that makes our hospital an internationally recognized centre for care, education and research.”

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**London Health Sciences Centre** has been in the forefront of medicine in Canada for over 130 years and offers the broadest range of specialized clinical services in Ontario. Building on the traditions of its founding hospitals to provide compassionate care in an academic teaching setting, London Health Sciences Centre is home to Children's Hospital, South Street Hospital, University Hospital, Victoria Hospital, two family medical centres, and Lawson Health Research Institute - a joint research initiative with St Joseph's Health Care, London. As a leader in medical discovery and health research, London Health Sciences Centre has a history of over 30 international and national firsts. We attract top clinicians and researchers from around the world. As a regional referral centre, London Health Sciences Centre cares for the most medically complex patients including critically injured adults and children in Southwestern Ontario and beyond. The hospital's 10,000 staff, physicians, students and volunteers provide care for more than one million patient visits a year. For more information visit [www.lhsc.on.ca](http://www.lhsc.on.ca)

**London Health Sciences Foundation** is a Better Business Bureau accredited charity, linking our community and health care experts—including physicians, allied professionals, researchers, staff and educators—together in pursuit of medical excellence at London Health Sciences Centre. Established to strengthen London Health Sciences Centre's ability to provide the highest quality health care for patients in Southwestern Ontario and beyond, we offer opportunities to support discovery and innovation in research, education and patient care at our hospital. To see how donations create positive moments changing the lives of patients, their families and friends, and to see how you can support patient care and innovation at London Health Sciences Centre, visit [www.lhsf.ca](http://www.lhsf.ca).

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