



Media Release

For Immediate Release:

Hospital Foundations Raising Funds for New Mammography Equipment

Hospital Foundations in Owen Sound, Southampton, Markdale, Wiarton, Lion's Head and Meaford will be working together to raise funds for new digital mammography equipment at the Owen Sound Regional Hospital.

Early detection is the key to surviving cancer. Mammograms (breast screening) help save lives by finding breast cancer when it is in its early stages.

Existing mammography equipment at the Hospital is now over 17 years old and is reaching the end of its useful life. As a result of recent problems with one of Hospital's two mammography machines, some types of exams can no longer be performed on the equipment. The Hospital has taken measures to ensure that patient care is not compromised including extending operating hours and using more ultrasound testing. Two new digital mammography units will be put in place as quickly as possible.

"The mammography service is critical to women right across the region," noted Maureen Solecki, GBHS President and CEO.

The upgrade to digital equipment has many benefits to patients and doctors. Digital mammography tests are complete in less than half the time – images appear within seconds of being taken. Images created allow doctors to more easily spot potential problems. Digital storage of images means no more x-ray film to store, and no misplaced tests.

Patients experience some discomfort during the test. Digital mammography tests take less time, so the period of discomfort is reduced.

Through the Ontario Breast Screening Program, and the Hospital's mammography service, about 9,000 mammograms are completed each year for patients from Owen Sound and throughout Grey - Bruce.

The Program offers mammograms without a referral from a doctor for women ages 50 and older. The Hospital's mammography service is available to women whose doctors refer them for testing, including those under age 50 and follow-ups for cancer survivors.

Between 1989 and 2005, breast cancer mortality rates in Ontario women age 50-69 decreased by 35% due to improved cancer treatments and increased participation in mammography screening.

Help us find cancer while it is in its early stages. The smaller the cancer, the better the chance of treating it successfully. Early detection means cancer is less likely to spread and there are more treatment options.

The cost to update the two mammography units and make the necessary renovations to accommodate the equipment is about \$1.5 million. It's hoped the fundraising goal will be achieved by November.

The Owen Sound Regional Hospital Foundation's spring campaign, golf tournament and the Bayshore Race will all raise funds for the equipment. For more information visit the Foundation website at oshfoundation.ca.

You may also donate to the campaign through the Bruce Peninsula Health Services Foundation, Meaford Hospital Foundation, Saugeen Memorial Hospital Foundation or Centre Grey Health Services Foundation.

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