

Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan Announces Completion of CT Simulator Community Campaign

Saskatoon, SK. –Just over two years after launching a \$3M community campaign to raise funds for two new 4D CT simulators for the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, the Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan is announcing the project's completion. One of the 4D CT simulators has been installed at the Allan Blair Cancer Centre and the other at the Saskatoon Cancer Centre. The Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan opened just three years ago, making the success of the campaign, launched a few short months after the opening of the Foundation, even more impressive.

“We are incredibly proud of how quickly we have been able to deliver on this campaign. It’s because of the generosity of our donors, that we now have a new 4D CT Simulator at each of the Allan Blair and Saskatoon Cancer Centres,” said Nora Yeates, CEO, Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan.

The CT simulator plays a critical role for every patient requiring radiation therapy as part of their cancer treatment. It provides a patient’s medical team with the images they need to determine the best radiation treatment plan. Nearly half of all cancer patients undergo radiation at some point in their treatment.

“The Saskatchewan Cancer Agency strives to provide world-class care to each patient who comes to us for treatment. This level of care often depends on our ability to keep pace with technology. We are grateful for the tremendous efforts of the Cancer Foundation and donors for bringing leading-edge technology like 4D CT simulation into our cancer centres,” said Dr. Jon Tonita, President and CEO of the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency.

The fundraising campaign to support the replacement of the CT simulators at the Allan Blair Cancer Centre and the Saskatoon Cancer Centre, was initiated in September 2019. Due to urgent need, the CT simulator at the Allan Blair Cancer Centre was purchased and installed in 2019, and the Foundation raised the required funds retroactively. The CT simulator at the Saskatoon Cancer Centre was installed and operational by the end of 2021.

Shelley Gregg has long been involved in fundraising for cancer care in Saskatchewan. She is a founder of Choc’laCure, a gala event that has raised nearly \$3 million for the Saskatoon Cancer Centre including \$487,000 for the Cancer Foundation’s 4D CT Simulator project in Saskatoon. She is also a founding board member of the Cancer Foundation and a cancer survivor, who was diagnosed with non hodgkin's lymphoma as a young teen.

Gregg says the Foundation plays a critical role in the quality of care delivered to Saskatchewan patients. She says funding the purchase of quality equipment helps to recruit and retain world class oncologists and leading researchers, which in turn improves cancer care in the province.

“The money that’s raised for specialized equipment helps to draw in the researchers, which helps to draw in the specialists. The mix of equipment, researchers and specialists here, then helps to retain those care givers...and that’s so important,” she said.

The Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan is thanking the numerous donors ranging from individuals to groups to corporate donors, who played a critical role in raising the \$3M required for the installation of the simulators in the Allan Blair Cancer Centre and the Saskatoon Cancer Centre.

“There are many stories of individuals, groups, and corporations that have donated to this campaign to update equipment in support of cancer care for Saskatchewan residents. Our donors help to ensure that Saskatchewan has equipment it needs to delivery high quality cancer care to patients in the province”, said Yeates.

One of the most significant donors to the CT Simulator Community Campaign was Conexus Credit Union, which donated \$500,000, the largest corporate gift in the campaign.

“The 4D CT simulator is a critical piece of equipment that contributes to more accurate radiation treatment for cancer patients. We are proud to support this fundraising campaign and are so happy to see the machine up and running,” said Nicole Westerlund, VP of Member and Community Engagement at Conexus Credit Union. “Investing in basic human needs, such as critical health care services, is foundational to our purpose of improving the well-being of our members and communities. Thank you to the Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan for all the meaningful work you do, and for making a difference in the lives of cancer patients across the province.”

Yeates says every donation has made a difference, and most donations come with a story.

Jody Woytiuk who farms with his wife Jackie near Shell Lake was diagnosed with stage 3 stomach cancer in August 2020. Following surgery, and chemotherapy through the Saskatoon Cancer Centre, Jody and Jackie’s daughter, Olivia who was head of the local 4-H Club, suggested that the funds raised through the club’s charity steer auction be donated to the Cancer Foundation. Amazingly, the auction raised \$50,000 for the Foundation’s CT Simulator campaign. Those funds were then matched by Malcom Jenkins who owns the Prince Albert Canadian Tire store. When Olivia was invited on the John Gormley show to talk about the charity auction, an executive with JGL Group heard the interview and matched the funds again, resulting in a total donation of \$150,000 to the Foundation’s campaign.

“We wanted to give back and provide hope for other people in our province. It’s really hard to find success stories when you are first diagnosed. When you can hear the stories from the Cancer Foundation about the work they are doing, it just really helps you battle it mentally as well as physically. It’s really important to have that local support so you don’t just feel like a number,” said Jackie Woytiuk.

As a unique fundraising partner of the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, the Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan is solely dedicated to raising funds for cancer care delivered by the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. Every dollar raised by the Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan stays in Saskatchewan support the work of the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency.

All donations to the Foundation go to enhancing cancer patient care and treatment for every resident undergoing treatment in the Saskatchewan.

The Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan helps to raise funds to support the Cancer Agency’s operation of:

- Allan Blair Cancer Centre (Regina),
- Saskatoon Cancer Centre,
- Patient Lodges,
- Community Oncology Program, in cooperation with health care partners, providing chemotherapy in 16 rural locations,
- screening and prevention programs for breast, cervical and colorectal,
- research,
- and more.

In addition, the Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan facilitates events hosted in support of the Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan. To apply to host an event in support of the Cancer Foundation of Saskatchewan visit cancerfoundationsask.ca

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