

May 6, 2015

RVH gets green light for advanced cardiac program as Hearts & Minds campaign launches

Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) officially launched its new \$25 million fundraising campaign – Hearts & Minds – with approval from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to develop an advanced cardiac centre. The surprise green light announcement prompted a thunderous standing ovation from the capacity crowd, as supporters celebrated this long-awaited step toward bringing comprehensive heart care closer to home.

“North Simcoe Muskoka is the only region in the province without an advanced cardiac centre and we have been working closely with the provincial government and the Cardiac Care Network for many years to bring this much-needed service to RVH,” says Janice Skot, president and CEO, RVH. “This means people living in this region will soon have access to the ‘gold standard’ of care which is treatment within a 90 minute window of a heart episode. That’s critically important because when it comes to the heart, time is muscle. There are so many people who have been instrumental in helping make this dream become a reality at RVH. I want to particularly note the hard work of Barrie MPP Ann Hoggarth, the North Simcoe Muskoka Local Health Integration Network, and the vision of the provincial government for recognizing the need for this service in North Simcoe Muskoka.”

Every year in North Simcoe Muskoka more than 3,600 heart patients must travel to centres outside the region for lifesaving cardiac care. The services RVH plans to provide include cardiac diagnostics and interventions such as coronary angiogram and angioplasty, giving patients access to faster treatment, a shorter hospital stay and less travel time. More details about RVH’s plan for a cardiac care program will be announced at a later date.

“Last night’s terrific news could not have come at a better time,” says Arlette Utton, chair, RVH Foundation Board of Directors. “We were surrounded by 300 of RVH’s most loyal supporters, making the Hearts & Minds launch into an even bigger celebration. Our community has played such a key role in supporting RVH throughout the years and we couldn’t be more pleased to bring advanced cardiac care to them.”

The Hearts & Minds fundraising campaign focuses on five priority areas identified by RVH, including:

- advanced cardiac care
- child and youth mental health
- women’s cancer services
- advanced equipment
- teaching and research

The launch of Hearts & Minds was a family affair for friends of RVH. It included family-oriented activities and a feature movie to entertain supporters of all ages at the Uptown Theater. At the event, David McCullough, chair of the Hearts & Minds Cabinet, also shared the news that the Foundation has surpassed the half-way point, having already raised more than \$12.7 million of its \$25 million goal.

The Hearts & Minds campaign cabinet committee includes Joe Beleskey, David Blenkarn, Wayne Dusome, Scott Elliott, Dr. Matt Follwell, Jim Furlano, Michael Gleason, Carol Holden, David McCullough, Doug Moody, Dale Pickard, Brian Roy, Janice Skot, Bernie Still, Arlette Utton and Janice Williams.

For more information about Hearts & Minds, please visit <http://foundation.rvh.on.ca>

Cutline – Action: David McCullough (left), chair of Hearts & Minds, and Arlette Utton, chair, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) Foundation Board of Directors, declared ‘action’ at the Hearts & Minds campaign kick off on May 5 at Barrie’s Uptown Theater. The family-oriented, movie event marked the official beginning of a \$25 million campaign focused on supporting five priority areas for RVH - advanced cardiac care, child and youth mental health, women’s cancer services, equipment, and teaching and research.

Cutline - 300 friends of Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) gathered at Barrie’s Uptown Theatre to officially launch Hearts & Minds – a fundraising campaign with a goal of raising \$25 million for advanced cardiac care, child and youth mental health, women’s cancer services, equipment, and teaching and research – and celebrate the news that RVH has received approval to develop an advanced cardiac program. Celebrating the announcement and Hearts & Minds (from left) – Arlette Utton, chair, RVH Foundation Board of Directors; Janice Skot, president and CEO, RVH; David McCullough, chair, Hearts & Minds campaign; Kirsten Parker, chair, RVH Board of Directors; and Michael Gleason, RVH Board of Directors.

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About RVH:

RVH is a regional health centre in Barrie, Ontario, located 80 kilometres north of Toronto. As the largest hospital in the region of Simcoe Muskoka, RVH's team of over 350 physicians, 2,500 employees and 850 volunteers provides exceptional care and specialty services to almost half a million residents, including cancer care, stroke services, orthopaedics, intensive care, mental health and interventional radiology. RVH is focused on delivering high-quality, safe care that puts patients and their families first. For more information visit www.rvh.on.ca