

## **Province, QEII Foundation pledge \$14 million to reduce wait-times and improve care for Nova Scotia cancer patients.**

(Halifax)- Cancer patients in Nova Scotia will get better care and experience shorter wait times thanks to the province's \$10 million contribution to the Radiation Therapy project and a commitment from the QEII Foundation to raise \$4 million for equipment at the Nova Scotia Cancer Centre.

The provincial money will help pay for the expansion of the Nova Scotia Cancer Centre, the construction of new radiation therapy bunkers and the purchase of new equipment.

"This is a significant investment in the future of cancer care in Nova Scotia," said Health Minister Maureen MacDonald. "The new equipment and expanded bunker will reduce wait times and improve patient care for years to come."

The QEII Foundation is a non-profit, charitable organization established to strengthen health care at the QEII Health Sciences Centre. The Foundation annually invests in projects that include the acquisition of leading-edge patient care technology, ground-breaking medical research and community-based disease prevention programs.

Bruce Marchand, vice-chair of the QEII Foundation's volunteer Board of Trustees, pledged the foundation's support for the radiation therapy project and announced a targeted effort to raise the \$4 million committed by the Foundation for new equipment and upgrades.

"Cancer is something that affects Nova Scotia families every day, and while we have among the very best in clinicians and treatment options here at the QEII Health Sciences Centre, we know we can do better. We need advancements like the improvements that are about to happen to cancer treatment, and that's why the QEII Foundation is standing behind the project and asking Nova Scotians to give generously."

The Radiation Therapy Project was announced in March 2007 when Nova Scotia received \$24 million from the federal government. Since then, a review of the project with staff at the Nova Scotia Cancer Centre has determined that more money would be needed to provide adequate space and equipment. Nova Scotia is preparing to provide the necessary care to serve an aging population, a growing incidence of cancer, and an increasing trend of radiation therapy as a form of cancer treatment.

Nova Scotia Cancer Centre radiation oncologist Dr. Tetteh Ago says the investment by the province and the commitment from the foundation bodes well for the future of cancer care in Nova Scotia.

"This will enable us to provide the best radiation treatment available in the world," said Dr. Ago. "It will also ensure that wait times for Nova Scotians requiring radiation treatment will be amongst the shortest in Canada."

The Radiation Therapy project is a \$39 million initiative that will significantly improve the amount and quality of radiation therapy Nova Scotians receive in the province's two cancer centres. It is funded by the Department of Health, Health Canada, Capital District Health Authority, the QEII Foundation, the Cape Breton District Health Authority and the Cape Breton Regional Hospital Foundation.

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