

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 shorter wait times thanks to the province's \$10.1-million contribution to the radiation therapy project.

The QEII Foundation has also committed to raise \$4 million for equipment for the Nova Scotia Cancer Centre at the QEII Health Sciences Centre.

The provincial investment will help expand the cancer centre, build new radiation therapy bunkers and buy 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 help to reduce wait times and improve patient care for years to come. Partnerships like this one with the QEII Foundation will help the government to live within its means and continue to provide needed services."

The QEII Foundation is a non-profit, charitable organization established to strengthen health care at the QEII Health Sciences Centre. The foundation invests in projects to acquire 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 campaign to raise \$4 million for new equipment and upgrades.

"Cancer is something that affects Nova Scotia families every day," said Mr. Marchand. "We need advancements like this 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 with cancer centre staff determined that additional funding would be needed to provide adequate space and equipment. Cancer experts anticipate an increased demand for radiation therapy and Nova Scotia is preparing to meet that.

Dr. Tetteh Ago, chief of radiation oncology for Capital Health, said the investment bodes well for the future of cancer care in Nova Scotia.

"This will enable us to provide world-class radiation treatment," said Dr. Ago. "It will help us meet our goal of making wait times for Nova Scotians requiring radiation treatment among the shortest in Canada."

The radiation therapy project is a \$39.5-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, which contributed \$1 million to an expansion taking place at the Cape Breton Cancer Centre.

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