

Because we CARE

By Maryanne Matthews

Progress begins with ideas. A new partnership allows more ideas to advance patient care to become reality.

Family CARE (Care Advancements Recommended by Employees) Grants were created as a way to provide Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre employees with an opportunity to steer patient care initiatives. This year, because of a partnership with the Volunteer Association of the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre the funds available doubled to \$60,000.

Employees were encouraged to recommend projects that enhance patient care. The Volunteer Association and the Health Sciences Foundation provided the funds for initiatives of up to \$2,500 each that could not be funded by other sources.

Dolores Mechtab, President of the volunteer Association, said her group was very proud to be part of the Family CARE Grant

process. "It was a very valuable and eye-opening experience. I'm absolutely pleased that we were able to contribute to advancing patient care in this way."

"Every dollar raised by the Volunteer Association and the Foundation is a tribute to the efforts of Health Sciences Centre staff," says Tracie Smith, Director of Communications, Health Sciences Foundation. "Family CARE Grants were created to honour the role they play in excellence in patient care."

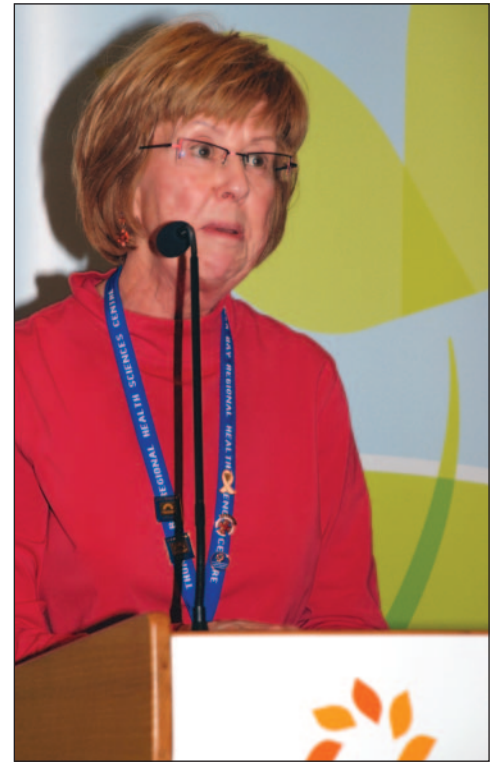
72 applications were received totalling over \$140,000 in requests. Funding was provided to 49 projects. This year's Family CARE Grants will fund initiatives such as:

- Recliner chairs for the Renal program
- Telemedicine laptop
- Digital scale for the Stroke Program
- A Welcome Wall to help encourage and inspire chemotherapy patients
- Furniture for the Adult Mental Health family room
- Patient and visitor chairs

- Wheelchairs
- Cardiac Crash Cart for the Emergency Department
- TV for the Emergency Department family room
- ICU and NICU reclining chairs
- Breast Pump for the Paediatric Department
- Pocket Talkers to assist patients with hearing impairments

"Family CARE Grants are a testament to how seemingly small initiatives can make a big difference in the quality of patient care," explains Smith. "They provide an opportunity for Health Sciences Centre employees to contribute to improved patient care in inexpensive but significant ways. These relatively simple improvements make a huge impact on patient satisfaction."

You can also make a difference by making a donation to the Health Sciences Centre. To support the CARE Grants program, please visit www.healthsciencesfoundation.ca or call 345-4673. You can also find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/healthsciencesfoundation.



Dolores Mechtab, President of the Volunteer Association to the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, congratulates Family CARE Grant recipients. \$60,000 was distributed to fund patient care advancement ideas recommended by Health Sciences Centre employees.

Volunteer finds experience enjoyable and rewarding

By Maryanne Matthews

On any given day the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation is a busy, bustling place. With so much going on, volunteers are often called on to lend a helping hand. Jeremy Bonhomme is one of those dedicated volunteers. Whether it's in the office, selling tickets throughout the community, or at an event – Jeremy can always be counted on to help.

Jeremy got his start with the Foundation when he was the successful applicant of Confederation College Marketing student placement in January 2011. His placement may have ended in April but his commitment to the Foundation certainly did not. Jeremy has become one of the Foundation's most reliable and enthusiastic volunteers.

"I really enjoyed my time as a placement student with the Foundation," Jeremy says. "I saw how hard everyone works and I saw first-hand how all that hard work pays off in the form of improved healthcare for the people of Northwestern Ontario. When my placement ended, I knew I wanted to continue doing my part and help out in any way that I can."

Kerri Reid, Special Events Officer with the Health Sciences Foundation, appreciates the hard work of volunteers like Jeremy. "We heavily rely on our volunteers throughout the year, especially during the summer when we are so busy with golf tournaments and events," she says. "Jeremy is always



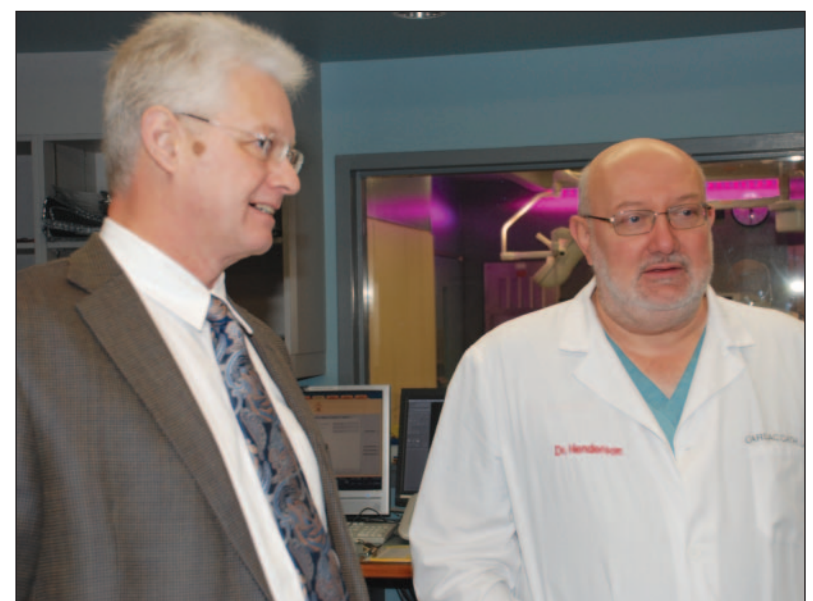
Jeremy Bonhomme helps sell merchandise at a Health Sciences Foundation 'Yard Sale'.

willing to help out whenever he can, and I know we can count on him to do a good job. I'm grateful that we have such enthusiastic, responsible young volunteers like him to help. We couldn't do it without them."

Jeremy knows volunteering is a great way to give back to the community, but that's not the only reason he does it. Jeremy, who is from Rainy River, found that getting involved in the Foundation was a great way to meet new people. "I didn't know anyone in Thunder Bay prior to moving here for school," he says. "Volunteering at Foundation events has been not only fun, but a

great networking opportunity for me. Plus, I'm getting a lot of great experiences and learning skills that will make a great addition to my resume upon graduation." Jeremy is currently enrolled at Lakehead University and is working towards his business degree.

Would you like to volunteer with the Foundation? For more information about how you can get involved, visit our website at www.healthsciencesfoundation.ca or call the Foundation office at 435-4673. You can also find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/healthsciencesfoundation.



Tbaytel President & CEO Don Campbell and Dr. Mark Henderson celebrate 2,000 angioplasties performed at the Health Sciences Centre. Tbaytel contributed \$200,000 to support expanded cardiac care for the people of Northwestern Ontario.

2,000 patients receive angioplasty

Since the first angioplasty procedure in Northwestern Ontario was performed in October, 2007, 2,000 patients have received the life-saving service, close to home.

The milestone was recently celebrated with one of the many donors who made it possible. Some people thought angioplasty would never be available in Northwestern Ontario. Others made sure it was. The labs are outfitted with state-of-the-art cardiac equipment, thanks to \$5 million in donations, including a \$200,000 contribution from Tbaytel.

Tbaytel President & CEO Don Campbell recently toured the new lab with Health Sciences Centre President & CEO Andree Robichaud, Interventional Cardiologist Dr. Mark Henderson and Glenn Craig, Health Sciences Foundation President & CEO. While impressed by the new lab, which includes an additional four patient beds, Campbell was especially

pleased to learn of the economic impact of expanded cardiac care in Northwestern Ontario.

"This project has a positive impact on our community beyond the much improved patient experience," Campbell noted. "New jobs have been created and new families have relocated to Thunder Bay. I'm proud that Tbaytel continues to be part of such significant progress."

Since September, the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre has been operating two cardiac catheterization labs, where cardiac diagnostic and treatment procedures take place. The opening of the second lab required additional staff, including a third interventional cardiologist.

The new lab increases capacities for cardiac diagnostic procedures such as angiograms as well as treatment procedures like angioplasty. As a result, wait times for cardiac care are reduced.

Cardiac Stress Test Nothing To Stress Over

By Graham Strong

It's understandable why the term "cardiac stress test" makes people anxious. The word "test" itself hints at that pass-or-fail kind of thing like a high school exam. Getting hooked up to electrodes and machines and computers can also make us nervous. Add to that the fear of knowing you might be having a heart attack, and the test itself can become quite scary.

"People do get stressed about a stress test," said Michele Miller, Manager of Cardio/Respiratory & Diagnostic Support Services. However, she said, there is little to fear from the test itself. "It's actually really quite easy."

There are two types of cardiac stress tests done at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre. In the "regular" test, the patient gets 10 leads put on their chest that are hooked up to an "acquisition module" about the size of a walkman. This module then connects to the stress test machine and treadmill, where the patient exercises starting at a mild incline and slow pace.

Generally the aim is to get the heart pumping at 85% the maximum recommended rate based on factors like age and gender. Both the incline and the

pace are increased every three minutes until the patient can no longer keep up or the team has all the information needed. Patients are then monitored for a further five minutes during the body's "cool down" period.

A physician and a Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) or Registered Cardiology Technologist (RCT) are present throughout the test. In the vast majority of cases the test itself is safe, but the team is prepared for those very few cases when the patient has a heart attack or other cardiac event during the test. Miller said it's actually the best place for them if they do.

"There is a very small risk of something happening," Miller said. "But if something does happen there is a crash cart right there, they're in a hospital, they call a code, and a Cardiac Arrest Team comes running to their rescue."

Miller said that the bigger risk is jumping off the treadmill and falling.

"It does happen – we warn patients not to get off until it stops," Miller said.

The test only takes about 15 minutes from start to finish.

The nuclear stress test on the other hand is a little more involved. Patients get injected with what is

called a radioactive isotope (kind of like a "dye") that can help image the heart. The dose itself is extremely small – you are exposed to more radiation during a flight to Toronto.

In fact it is so small a dose that it is injected twice during the test, once before exercise and once after. Each time the patient has to lie still on the imaging table for 45 minutes to take the test. The exercise itself tends to be different (some patients taking a nuclear stress test are not physically capable of the level of exercise needed) and may even be induced with a stimulant drug.

Nuclear tests are also used for patients who have certain differences in their normal heartbeat that might not show ECG changes on a regular stress test.

Both tests are different from high-resolution angiograms, for example, that are done in the Catheterization Lab to pinpoint the exact locations of blockages to assist with angioplasty.

Most importantly, both tests are extremely safe.

"If people realized how unstressful the stress test is, it wouldn't be so bad," Miller said.



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