



**Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
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**Northern
Cancer Fund**



**Northern
Cardiac Fund**



**Health Sciences
Discovery Fund**

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Foundation grant enables minimally invasive diagnoses for breast cancer patients

Thunder Bay – The new Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation announces yet another grant for equipment that uses a less-invasive method to detect cancer.

A Northern Cancer Fund grant for \$46,766 will purchase a Neo2000 Gamma Detection Device, a state-of-the art system surgeons can use when performing sentinel node biopsies on breast cancer patients.

Dr. Ken Gehman, Medical Director of Surgical Oncology at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, says surgeons routinely remove lymph nodes during tumour removal to determine if the cancer has reached the lymphatic system. Often, more lymph nodes are removed than are necessary for biopsy, due to the nature of the procedure. The Gamma Detection Device uses a special dye and a device similar to a Geiger counter to guide surgeons to the sentinel node, which is the area of the lymphatic system that is most likely to show signs of cancer cell movement first.

“When breast cancer is diagnosed, an axillary lymph node dissection is done to check for the metastasis (spread) of cancer. Ten to twenty lymph nodes are usually removed. This procedure is done to determine the extent of the cancer or to ‘stage’ the cancer,” Dr. Gehman says. “Evidence increasingly supports the use of sentinel lymph node biopsy in early stage breast cancer. Sentinel lymph node biopsy requires the removal of only one to three lymph nodes.”

“Continuous advances in medical technology provide less invasive options and improved treatment for breast cancer patients,” says Ken Bittle, Chair of the Health Sciences Foundation Board of Directors. “Donations from the community enable the purchase of the leading-edge equipment like the Neo2000 Gamma Detection Device to aid in the fight against cancer. We are grateful that our Donors value excellence in cancer care for the people of Northwestern Ontario.”

The Northern Cancer Fund of the Health Sciences Foundation raises funds that are 100% dedicated to support excellence in cancer care in Northwestern Ontario.

Donors to the Health Sciences Foundation are able to designate their gifts to the Northern Cancer Fund or can choose to support any area of care within the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre.

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