



**Thunder Bay Regional  
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Cancer Fund



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Media Release – For Immediate Release

## **Lions Clubs Unveil New Multi-Colour Laser System for Ophthalmology Care at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre**

Thunder Bay, ON – Inside the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre stands the Lions Vision Care Centre; a space easily missed should vision care not be required. However, patients can rest assured that when their eyes need treatment, the necessary equipment will be there.

Today, another piece of critical equipment was unveiled – a Lumenis Vision One Multi-Colour Laser System – thanks to the generosity and ongoing commitment to vision care from local and regional Lions Clubs, including those in Manitoba and Northeastern Minnesota, along with the Lions Clubs International Foundation. Together the Lions committed a gift of \$104,450, and together, with other generous donors, were able to purchase this Laser.

“I’m both delighted and excited to unveil this Laser on behalf of the Lions who contributed to this critical piece of equipment,” commented Angela Sharbot, Advisory Board Chair, Lions Vision Care Centre. “Since we began fundraising for this Centre back in 1998, the Lions have contributed over \$400,000 to equip it. As Lions, we were challenged by Helen Keller to be the ‘Knights of the Blind’ and our ongoing fundraising and support for the Lions Vision Care Centre is one way we are serving our community in that capacity.”

Dr. Chris Francis, Ophthalmologist at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre described the Laser’s functionality. “We use the Laser for a variety of conditions from retinal tears, to diabetic retinopathy, to treatment of glaucoma. The benefit to this particular Laser is that it burns in a very short period of time, which cuts down on the actual Laser time for our patients, making the procedure more tolerable. Additionally, it decreases the number of visits for out-of-town patients, which, as you can imagine, is of great benefit to them.”

In 2013-2014, approximately 980 patients needed use of a Laser for vision care. “If we didn’t have this equipment, our patients would need to travel to either Winnipeg or Toronto,” remarked Dawn MacDonald, Manager, Ambulatory Care at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre. “For those with serious eye conditions, travel is not always easy or appropriate, so having the Laser in the Lions Vision Care Centre is quite critical and our team and our patients are very thankful for the ongoing support of the Lions and donors to the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation for the funds to purchase equipment like this Laser.”





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### **The Lions Vision Care Centre Advisory Board**

To ensure long-term fundraising for the Lions Vision Care Centre, the Lions Vision Care Centre Advisory Board was re-established in November 2013. They meet two times a year to review ongoing capital requests and ensure that funds are raised on an ongoing basis to provide the Centre with the latest equipment necessary to provide world-class ophthalmology services to patient in Northwestern Ontario.