

# Together we can

## Cardiac Care Program



The statistics are alarming. Every seven minutes in Canada, someone dies from heart disease or stroke. There are an estimated 70,000 heart attacks each year in Canada and about 40,000 Canadians experience cardiac arrest. Cardiovascular disease accounts for the death of more Canadians than any other disease.

Fortunately, residents in the Kingston region have access to a cutting-edge Cardiac Care Program, encompassing a broad range of services in the fields of cardiology and cardiac surgery. The Program offers a full slate of diagnostic and therapeutic services. Inpatient care at Kingston General Hospital (KGH) includes a coronary care unit, cardiovascular recovery intensive care unit and specialized step-down units. The Program also offers general and specialized outpatient clinics, interventional cardiology, cardiac electrophysiology, echocardiography and cardiac rehabilitation at Hotel Dieu Hospital.

KGH is one of the first Ontario hospitals to provide primary percutaneous coronary intervention 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This means patients from the region having a heart attack are rushed directly to the hospital's cardiac catheterization lab – bypassing the emergency department – for immediate treatment to open up blocked arteries.

The Cardiac Care Program is also one of only a few programs in the country with an advanced arrhythmia centre, carrying out complex procedures that offer patients with an irregular heartbeat a potential cure using advanced technology. This state-of-the-art, specialized facility treats rhythm disorders caused by electrical problems in the heart, using procedures such as catheter ablation – an innovative treatment that effectively cures many common heart rhythm disorders.

Government doesn't pay for all of our hospitals' equipment,

research and education needs. That's why local support for our hospitals is critical if we want our community to have the very best health care services.

### Equipment

New technologies are becoming a key component to better diagnose and treat heart disease. From wireless technology to 3-D scanners, cardiac care is a rapidly changing field that boasts new technological developments every six months. This is why gifts to support cardiac care equipment are a critical component to providing the best cardiac care to patients in our region.

### Education

Specialized cardiac nurses, doctors and technologists need to keep abreast of the exciting, new treatment options in cardiac care. For example, new developments in wireless technology allow doctors to test a patient's pacemaker while



they are sitting in the office – no longer requiring patients to submit to invasive procedures. In the future, this new technology may allow clinical staff to monitor patients from home.

Of course, new, life-saving technology is worthless if clinical staff don't know how to use it. Governments do not provide funding for staff education, so clinical staff must rely on small pockets of funds the hospitals divert to specialized training or pay for it themselves. An education fund would help ensure that staff have adequate resources to facilitate continuing education in this highly specialized, complex and constantly changing field.

## Research

Research plays an increasingly important role in the delivery of high quality health care. Today, emphasis is being placed on rapidly translating laboratory-based discoveries into the development of real therapies to treat real patients. For example, KGH researchers were a leading force in changing international criteria used to recommend implantable cardioverter defibrillators (ICDs), a device used to treat dangerously fast heart rates, which has helped save thousands of lives.

The Cardiac Care Program is involved in a range of research initiatives, including atrial fibrillation, implantable cardioverter defibrillator technology, efficient care delivery models and cardiac resynchronization therapy. The Program participates in a number of multi-centre clinical trials and has

also conducted research that has led to the development of access to care benchmarks. For example, Dr. Chris Simpson, Medical Program Director and Chief of Cardiology, was Co-Chair of the Canadian Cardiovascular Society Committee that has established wait time benchmarks for all cardiac visits, procedures, and tests. Dr. Simpson is also studying the safety of cardiac patients as motor vehicle drivers.

## Opportunities for giving

- Unrestricted gifts to help the Program  
*No minimum*
- Patient care equipment (list available)  
\$1,000 - \$175,000
- Send a nurse to a conference or training session  
\$500 - \$3,000
- Support on-site training session for clinical staff  
\$2,000 - \$5,000
- Invest in local hospital research  
*No minimum*

