

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Alberta Home to the First Provincial Research Tumor Bank

New Leading-edge research facility will support growth in cancer research

Edmonton, September 19, 2005 – Edmonton and Calgary are now home to Alberta’s first provincial research tumor bank from which cancer researchers can access much needed specimens and data to continue combating breast and other cancers.

“Traditionally, access to tumors and related data from human cancer patients has been a challenge in cancer research. The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation – Alberta/NWT Chapter Alberta Research Tumor Bank will build on the work of the Alberta Cancer Board to bring forward an important new resource for cancer researchers and lead to discoveries that will benefit all Albertans and Canadians,” commented Dr. Carol Cass, Alberta Cancer Board Vice-President and Director of the Cross Cancer Institute in Edmonton. Dr. Cass is also a Canada Research Chair in Oncology at the University of Alberta, and the newly appointed Executive Director of the Alberta Research Tumor Bank.

The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation – Prairies/NWT Chapter and the Alberta Cancer Board are launching the creation of the Canadian Breast Cancer – Alberta/NWT Chapter Alberta Research Tumor Bank (ARTB). This provincial tumor bank initiative, a first in Canada, will provide a comprehensive collection of cancer specimens with related clinical information that will enable researchers to address unanswered questions concerning the prognosis and treatment of breast cancer and other cancers.

The ARTB is located in the Alberta Cancer Board’s tertiary treatment facilities at the Cross Cancer Institute in Edmonton and the Tom Baker Cancer Centre in Calgary, and also at the University of Calgary. It is a multi-user resource that will be available to a wide range of cancer researchers in Alberta and elsewhere and will use and develop leading-edge tumor banking practices and promote growth in cancer research.

“The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation believes in supporting and advocating for innovative breast cancer research,” said Harold Kingston, Board Chair of the Prairies/NWT Chapter. “We are ecstatic that the Prairies/NWT Chapter was able to play an important role in the creation of the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation – Alberta/NWT Chapter Alberta Research Tumor Bank. We have all worked very hard leading up to this launch and being a part of such an important milestone.”

The ARTB was created by merging the Alberta Cancer Board’s existing tumor bank initiatives in both Edmonton and Calgary and by developing the new program with the financial support of the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation – Prairies/NWT Chapter. The partnership between the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation and the Alberta Cancer Board has led to a collective initiative that will contribute to the eradication of breast cancer and other cancers by giving researchers in Alberta access to resources for vital cancer research. Beginning with the PolyomX Program funded by the Alberta Cancer Foundation at the Cross Cancer Institute and the Research Tissue Repository funded by Calgary Laboratory Services, the partnership between the CBCF-Prairies/NWT Chapter and the Alberta Cancer Board is based on the principle that a cure will only be found if bold research is funded and undertaken.

The Prairies/NWT Chapter has committed to fund the ARTB for the next three years with a total contribution of \$2,001,500. “The Prairies/NWT Chapter is proud to be part of leading-edge research that will provide breast cancer researchers in Alberta and across the world with access to data that will grow our understanding of the disease and will lead to advancements in diagnostics and treatment,” said Harold Kingston, Board Chair of the Prairies/NWT Chapter. “This is our Chapter’s largest investment to date. This important and well-considered decision gives us another opportunity to help advance breast cancer research for our province and for the world.”

The ARTB will be led by a team of professionals including Drs. Carol Cass, Sambasivarao Damaraju, Doug Demetrick, John Mackey, Richard Berendt and Michael Sawyer. This team has extensive experience in cancer research, tumor banking and organizational development and administration.

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About the Alberta Cancer Board

The Alberta Cancer Board operates cancer care facilities and programs throughout Alberta. Its services range from cancer prevention and screening to diagnosis, treatment, research and education. The Board also coordinates, in cooperation with other agencies, the planning and delivery of provincial cancer initiatives. The Alberta Cancer Board operates 18 cancer treatment facilities across the province, including the Tom Baker Cancer Centre in Calgary, and the Cross Cancer Institute in Edmonton. The Alberta Cancer Board is a unique organization in Canada because of its ability to integrate research efforts with clinical practice, ensuring that Albertans benefit from the latest scientific advances in cancer treatment.

About the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation

Established in 1986, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation (CBCF) is the leading national volunteer-based organization in Canada dedicated to creating a future without breast cancer. CBCF works collaboratively to fund, support and advocate for: relevant and innovative research; meaningful education and awareness programs; early diagnosis and effective treatment; and a positive quality of life for those living with breast cancer. Our fundraising – through our annual Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation CIBC Run for the Cure, special events, corporate sponsorship and donations – has enabled the Foundation to allocate millions of dollars in grants for breast cancer projects and services since our inception.

Addressing the needs of Canadians from coast to coast, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation has chapters in British Columbia/Yukon Territory, Prairies/NWT, Ontario and the Atlantic Region, as well as several other community-based branch offices. The CBCF National Office is located in Toronto.

About the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation–Prairies/NWT Chapter

The funding commitment was originally made from the Alberta/NWT Chapter. Since the creation of The Alberta Research Tumor Bank, the Chapter has undergone a positive transformation. They have combined efforts with their neighbours. The AB/NWT Chapter and the Manitoba Chapter have come together and have added Saskatchewan to form the Prairies/NWT Chapter.

This new expansion will work towards fulfilling the breast health needs of communities across the region and ensuring that there is effective and efficient representation across the Chapter. The Chapter is now an expanded family of those who care about the breast cancer cause. The Chapter welcomes Winnipeg, Brandon, and Regina as a new addition to the Chapter. Together, this new team will continue to enhance CBCF's efforts to support breast cancer research and education programs.

The Chapter's mission is to work collaboratively to fund, support and advocate for relevant and innovative breast cancer research, early diagnosis and effective treatment, and a positive quality of life for those living with breast cancer.

With increased efforts and combined funding, they will have greater opportunity to allocate more grant money to research and community projects. This new partnership has been an easy and flawless transition. With an established, successful, and skilled team already in place, their efforts to help grow the CBCF presence in Saskatchewan and Manitoba will be easier to achieve.