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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health Services  
Providence Health Care  
St. Paul's Hospital Foundation

### **NEW EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT OPENS AT ST. PAUL'S HOSPITAL**

VANCOUVER – St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver now has one of the most efficient and technologically advanced emergency departments in the country with the completion of a \$14.7-million multi-phase emergency department redesign and renovation project, announced Health Services Minister Kevin Falcon.

“St. Paul's Hospital has one of the busiest emergency departments in the province, and provides care to a wide range of patients, including some of the most vulnerable and marginalized,” said Falcon. “This redesign incorporates leading-edge, innovative technologies and best practices to reduce wait times and increase access for those patients, while providing emergency staff with a more efficient and effective work environment.”

The redesigned and refurbished emergency department will reduce wait times and hospital admissions, while improving around-the-clock patient care and staff morale. The expansion includes a new high-tech trauma unit that is double the size of the old one and that will act as a mini intensive care unit (ICU) to treat the most urgent, life-threatening conditions.

“Right now at St. Paul's Hospital, staff and physicians are treating over 62,000 emergency patients a year, over a third more than five years ago,” said Dr. Eric Grafstein, head of emergency services for Providence Health Care. “Reducing wait times allows us to see even more patients. For example, if we free up an additional 30 minutes per patient, that would allow us to see another 10,000 patients a year in emergency, leading to improved access and care throughout the system.”

Other features of the St. Paul's Hospital emergency department include:

- Two redesigned acute treatment areas with enhanced layouts to ensure the best care for patients, as well as advanced patient information systems.
- A new triage and admitting area.
- A fast-track area, where patients with urgent but less serious conditions are treated quickly and released.
- A new four-bed rapid assessment zone for patients with serious but stable illnesses.
- A 24-hour diagnostic treatment unit that allows staff to aggressively diagnose and treat conditions such as asthma, chest pain, stroke, heart failure and overdoses, avoiding unnecessary hospital admissions in the process.
- Real-time electronic tracking boards that reveal where patients are, who is treating them, what tests they are undergoing and if their treatment time is meeting department guidelines.

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- Completely electronic patient records using state-of-the-art bedside computers for easy and timely access to patient information.
- An electronic patient discharge system, which sends a comprehensive health record to each patient's physician by the next business day.

“Innovation in the emergency department – from bedside technology to life-saving research – is revolutionizing the way we provide emergency care,” said Dianne Doyle, president and CEO of Providence Health Care. “We’ve made design and care improvements that have already resulted in a 20-per cent reduction in overall emergency wait times at St. Paul’s and several of which have been adopted by other hospitals in the region and the province.”

The Province, through Vancouver Coastal Health, funded \$10 million of the \$14.7-million project and the St. Paul’s Hospital Foundation made a multi-year commitment to raise the other \$4.7 million from private donors.

“Our donors can feel very proud to be playing such a critical role in realizing the spirit of innovation at St. Paul’s,” said Stephen Shapiro, president and CEO of the St. Paul’s Hospital Foundation. “Our supporters locally, as well as nationally and globally, have made significant contributions to emergency care and research. On behalf of the many people who will benefit directly from our donors’ generosity, we thank them for recognizing the leadership of St. Paul’s in this field and stepping forward with their generous support for this very vital project.”

Completion of the St. Paul’s Hospital redesigned emergency department was done in a phased way over the past three years, to accommodate the need for the hospital to continue serving the needs of the community.

“Over the years, on multiple occasions, I have been treated promptly, courteously and with a high level of care in the St. Paul’s emergency department,” said Andrew Saxton Sr., a former emergency department patient and donor to the foundation. “I was thrilled to see the new emergency department and that the extraordinarily well-qualified and competent staff and physicians now have a work environment that matches their skills and expertise.”

Over the next three years, British Columbia’s health system will benefit from investments in health-care infrastructure, such as the St. Paul’s Hospital emergency department redesign, as part of a \$2.6-billion health sector capital plan.

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