
Canada's First Kidney Research Centre Opens in Ottawa

Ottawa – Dr. Kevin Burns, Chief of Nephrology at the Ottawa Hospital, announced today the establishment of the Kidney Research Centre – University of Ottawa at the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute. The good news was delivered at today's kick-off of the Kidney Foundation of Canada's March fund-raising campaign. The Centre is the first institution of its kind in Canada devoted exclusively to both basic and patient-oriented research into the causes and treatments of acute and chronic kidney diseases.

Terry Rafter, President of the Kidney Foundation for Eastern Ontario, who was on hand for the announcement, is very enthusiastic about the new Centre. He said, 'This is a very important step forward to help progressive kidney failure sufferers, their families and caregivers in Eastern Ontario, as well as in the rest of Canada.' On behalf of the Kidney Foundation, Mr. Rafter presented a cheque for CAD 20,000 to Dr. Burns to start the Centre.

Dr. Burns, the Centre's Director, says that within the first 5 years, the Centre's goal is to establish a core of eight kidney scientists, and expand the program to link clinical, patient-oriented research initiatives to studies conducted in the basic laboratories. 'The Ottawa Hospital and the University of Ottawa have earned world-wide recognition for excellence in renal patient care and research. This Centre will build on that reputation and further establish Ottawa as a hotspot for kidney research, and help us attract world-class investigators in the field,' said Dr. Burns. He added, 'ultimately, it is our patients that will benefit most from this research expertise as we bring our findings from bench to bedside.'

The incidence of progressive kidney disease is on the rise, at least partly due to the ageing population and the lack of focussed research efforts aimed at these conditions. The potential burden of this problem is enormous, both in terms of its societal impact and relating to the consumption of the health care dollar. The Kidney Research Centre hopes to address these issues by devoting itself to excellence and innovation in kidney disease research. Its team of doctors, nurses and allied health professionals will focus on kidney disease progression, and develop novel therapeutic strategies to combat kidney failure.