



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Saint John Regional Hospital Foundation in Productive Discussions with New Brunswick Minister of Health Regarding Purchase of DNA Sequencing Equipment for Saint John Regional Hospital

Saint John, NB – Representatives from the Saint John Regional Hospital Foundation have had several meetings with government in recent weeks, including one yesterday with the Hon. Victor Boudreau, New Brunswick Minister of Health, regarding the purchase of DNA sequencing equipment for the Saint John Regional Hospital.

“We are grateful to the Minister for meeting with us to discuss this important matter,” said Jason Downey, Chair of the Board of Directors for the Saint John Regional Hospital Foundation.

“We have had positive, productive meetings and have presented the Minister with new information regarding the cost savings, business case and clinical rationale for the DNA sequencing program at the Saint John Regional Hospital. Discussions are ongoing, and the Minister was very receptive to our information. We hope our continuing discussions will result in a positive outcome for our patients, donors and hospital,” added Downey.

On Feb. 20, 2014, with approval from Horizon Health Network and former Minister of Health, Ted Flemming, the Saint John Regional Hospital Foundation launched The Give – Personalized Medicine – a public campaign to raise and donate \$900,000 to the Saint John Regional Hospital for the purchase of 13 pieces of personalized medicine and DNA sequencing equipment. With the generous support of the Saint John community, the Foundation surpassed its goal on Feb. 13, 2015.

In a letter dated March 31, 2015 to Mr. Dave Ferguson, Chair of Horizon Health Network, Minister Boudreau directed the Horizon Health Board of Directors to not accept the offer of funding from the Saint John Regional Hospital Foundation for the purchase of DNA sequencing equipment at the Saint John Regional Hospital.

“Our donors have been very supportive as we continue this conversation with government,” Downey continued. “We are grateful for the overwhelming encouragement and support from our community, donors and other foundations throughout the province.”

The Saint John Regional Hospital Foundation resolutely confirms that it treats donor gifts with the utmost respect and has not misled the public in any way, at any time during its fundraising campaign.

As a registered charity in Canada, the Foundation has a moral obligation to steward all contributions to the area to which donors direct them. If the money will not be used for its intended purpose, the Foundation is obligated to advise all donors and, if the donor wishes, must return the donated funds. The Foundation is committed to this pledge and will notify donors immediately if, for any reason, it cannot fulfill its obligation. In the meantime, the Foundation will continue discussions with government in good faith on behalf of its donors and all patients of the Saint John Regional Hospital.

“We have, and will continue, to operate in a professional and respectful manner,” said Jeff McAloon, President and CEO of the Saint John Regional Hospital Foundation. “Out of respect for the process and the Minister, we have purposely chosen not to make our case in the media. Rather, we have opted to have open and honest dialogue directly with government. We do this because we value the respect of our donors and community. Our donors have chosen the Foundation as their charity of choice, and we want them to be proud of how we have managed this situation.”

The Foundation remains confident that support for the personalized medicine program at the Saint John Regional Hospital is necessary, cost-efficient and in the best health care interest of New Brunswickers, as advised by lead clinical care experts in this province.

The Saint John Regional Hospital Foundation remains committed to funding programs and equipment that have been identified as priorities by the Horizon Health Network.

The **Saint John Regional Hospital Foundation** has raised over \$80 million to date in support of excellence and innovation in the areas of equipment, mental health, research, education and patient comfort at the Saint John Regional Hospital, the largest health care centre in the province – providing world-class care for all New Brunswickers.

For more information about the Saint John Regional Hospital Foundation, please visit www.sjrhf.ca

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