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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport

### **INNOVATIVE MOBILE RESEARCH LAB ARRIVES IN VICTORIA**

VICTORIA – The Centre for Hip Health and Mobility’s mobile research lab, the first of its kind in Canada, makes its debut in Victoria today, announced Minister of State for the Olympics and ActNow BC Mary McNeil.

Launched in Vancouver at Vancouver General Hospital in August this year, the mobile research lab will travel across the province, reaching previously unstudied populations of seniors and youth. The information collected will identify trends in bone health and mobility across the lifespan.

“I am very pleased to welcome the Centre for Hip Health and Mobility’s mobile lab to Victoria,” said McNeil. “This remarkable unit can reach people who may not otherwise have convenient access to this kind of technology because of where they live. It will enable researchers to travel to communities where a high proportion of those most vulnerable to fracture reside, and data made available by the lab will ultimately assist in providing improved care and solutions for patients.”

The mobile research lab houses state-of-the-art equipment for medical imaging of bone, and risk screening for falls, and is capable of evaluating bone mass and strength in 3-D, measuring total body bone, fat, and muscle mass and predicting the future risk of falls with 75 per cent accuracy.

Last month, the Centre for Hip Health and Mobility began the lab’s first pilot study at UBC Okanagan. Researchers also aim to characterize recovery in seniors following a hip fracture. Participants’ mobility, falls risk, bone health, physical activity patterns and other key health determinants of fracture risk will be assessed. Measurements conducted in the mobile lab and information gained from this pilot study will inform patient care pathways as well as future research projects on hip fracture recovery.

“Five years ago, I fell and broke my arm very badly and I decided to participate in a study with the Centre for Hip Health and Mobility where I learned about the correlation between exercises and balance and mobility,” said Barbara Wallace, aged 73. “It was the most affirming health experience of my life, and I am really pleased that the new mobile lab will allow more residents of B.C. to access the same kind of information and opportunity that I was fortunate enough to receive.”

The mobile lab is visiting Victoria this week in support of a summit hosted by the Centre of Excellence on Mobility, Fall Prevention and Injury in Aging Nov. 5-6, which coincides with the third annual Seniors' Fall Prevention Week Nov. 2-8.

“Our focus is people like Barbara who deserve the high quality of life that mobility provides,” said Dr. Heather McKay, director of the Centre for Hip Health and Mobility. “Fall related hip fractures are devastating events for seniors and cost the province over \$75 million annually in direct hospital expenses, on average. If we focus more on prevention, we can avoid these injurious events and enhance mobility for all British Columbians.”

Established in 2004, the Centre for Hip Health and Mobility (CHHM) is based at Vancouver General Hospital. The centre is a partnership between the University of British Columbia's Faculty of Medicine and Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) through the VCH Research Institute.

CHHM is unique in its commitment to enhance mobility through bone and joint health as a means to enhance the quality of life for all Canadians. One key focus of this internationally-recognized research and teaching centre is the cluster of clinicians and scientists with particular expertise in hip health.

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