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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **CONSTRUCTION STARTS ON NEW RESEARCH CENTRE**

VANCOUVER – Premier Gordon Campbell helped launch the official groundbreaking of the new seven-storey, Robert H.N. Ho Research Centre at Vancouver General Hospital, built in part thanks to the generous donation of \$15 million from Mr. Robert Ho.

“Patients with cancer, people with bone health issues, and those with mobility challenges will all benefit from the research that will take place in this facility,” said Premier Campbell. “Hundreds of scientists and clinicians will work in this building, researching and developing new treatments and cures for disease.”

The 69,350 sq. ft. (6,442 sq.m.) facility will be home to three key research programs: the Centre for Hip Health and Mobility; an expansion to the Vancouver Prostate Centre; and OvCaRe (the Ovarian Cancer Research program). The building will be located adjacent to the Jack Bell Research Centre at Laurel Street and West 10th Avenue.

“This gift has its roots in a tradition of giving that has guided my family for three generations,” said Robert Ho. “I am proud to help advance research and care here at VGH, and it is my sincere wish to share our family tradition of giving to inspire others to give as well.”

The building cost is \$40.1 million and the total project cost, including equipment and personnel, is just over \$60 million. Mr. Ho’s gift, of which \$8.2 million is going toward the project, completed the private sector funding match. The total provincial contribution is \$22.5 million through the Ministries of Health Services and Small Business, Technology, and Economic Development. Federal funding awards of \$24.7 million came from the Canada Foundation for Innovation and a further \$4.8 million comes from other sources.

“Today marks an historic milestone in the health innovation and research in British Columbia that stands to benefit all Canadians,” said Dr. Eliot Phillipson, president and CEO of the Canada Foundation for Innovation. “The Robert H.N. Ho Research Centre is a powerful example of what can be achieved when various stakeholders come together as partners.”

A key aspect of the new centre is its focus on translational research in the areas of early detection and prevention of disease.

“In Canada, two bone and joint health conditions – hip osteoarthritis and hip fracture – account for over \$16 billion in annual costs,” said Dr. Heather McKay, director of the Centre for Hip Health and Mobility. “Our goal is to prevent these devastating problems from occurring in the first place, to detect a person’s risk earlier than was previously possible, and treat individuals who are affected with state-of-the-art surgical techniques. We are taking direct aim at mitigating the tremendous cost of bone and joint health problems and striving to improve mobility and quality of life for British Columbians and all Canadians.”

The centre will also help bolster the ability of the University of British Columbia’s Faculty of Medicine and Vancouver Coastal Health to recruit and retain world leading scientists and health professionals

“Securing funding for the expansion of the Vancouver Prostate Centre has enabled us to hire 19 talented trainees and recruit two leading international scientists in the last year alone,” said Dr. Martin Gleave, director of the Vancouver Prostate Centre. “This not only drives innovation leading to new therapies, but also new research grants and contract agreements, which will help power B.C.’s biotech industry into the future. We are deeply grateful to all our funding partners and especially to Mr. Ho for his understanding of the value health research brings to our province.”

Over the course of building, an estimated 250 construction jobs are expected to be created. Completion is anticipated in spring 2011.

The Vancouver Prostate Centre at VGH is Canada’s largest facility focusing exclusively on prostate disease. This world-renowned research and clinical team has directed its efforts on fighting prostate cancer through development of new and/or improved procedures and technologies aimed at prevention, diagnosis, prognosis, treatment and education. The centre is a program of Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute and UBC Faculty of Medicine.

The Centre for Hip Health and Mobility is an innovative area of care and research at Vancouver General Hospital (VGH). This is the first centre in the world to organize experts around the issue of bone and joint health and mobility – with a focus on the hip. It brings together specialists from a range of disciplines – including sports medicine, physiotherapy, orthopaedic surgery, kinesiology, population health, geriatric medicine, health economics, sociology, imaging science, and biomedical engineering. This multidisciplinary team will work together to enhance bone and joint health – across the lifespan. The centre is a program of Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute and UBC Faculty of Medicine.

The Ovarian Cancer Research (OvCaRe) program formed in late 2000 when a group of Vancouver-based physicians and scientists joined with the common vision of enhancing ovarian cancer research in British Columbia and the explicit goal of improving outcomes for ovarian cancer patients. OvCaRe researchers are a multidisciplinary team, spanning basic to clinical science to allow for a true ‘bench-to-bedside’ approach. OvCaRe is a program of BC Cancer Agency, VCH Research Institute, and UBC Faculty of Medicine.

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