

April 3, 2014

Cardiac patients benefit from new non-invasive technology

City among first in Canada to use ground-breaking NICaS monitor for diagnosis

EDMONTON – Cardiologists at the CK Hui Heart Centre can now gather the comprehensive data they need to assess cardiac health by using technology that’s quick and painless for patients.

The Non-Invasive Cardiac System, or NICaS, is the latest piece of cutting-edge technology to be employed by the cardiology team at the heart centre, located within Royal Alexandra Hospital.

The system relies on a set of electrodes attached to the patient’s wrists or ankles and a laptop computer. It delivers a reading of a patient’s cardiac functions, including output, volume of blood with each heartbeat, and peripheral resistance.

In as little as 90 seconds, NICaS can give cardiologists the information they need to diagnose, make decisions on treatment and chart patient progress.

Previously, to properly monitor and assess a patient’s cardiopulmonary system, it was necessary to insert a catheter through the neck or groin and guide it near the heart, a procedure which needs to be performed in a controlled, sterile environment to minimize the risk of infection.

“The NICaS system gives us real-time data of what’s happening to a patient’s heart,” says Michael Powell, Patient Care Manager at the CK Hui Heart Centre. “If we need to monitor a patient’s progress after a cardiac procedure or manage a new medication, NICaS gives us a quick and effective way to get the information we need with no discomfort to our patients.”

While NICaS doesn’t completely replace the need for catheter-based data gathering, it significantly decreases the need for this procedure. NICaS will be employed for a variety of patient care uses at the CK Hui Heart Centre, including medication management, fluid management, cardiac resynchronization therapy, among others.

For more than 50 years, the Royal Alexandra Hospital’s cardiology department has prided itself in embracing new methods and new technology to better serve its patients. The CK Hui Heart Centre — one of the first cardiac centres in Canada to use the NICaS system clinically — continues to seek out new opportunities and has become a leader in innovative and patient-focused cardiac care in Western Canada.

The purchase of the NICaS system is made possible through the Dr. Talibi Innovation Fund, administered by the Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation. The Fund is the brainchild of Dr. Tal Talibi, a pioneering cardiologist at the Royal Alexandra Hospital. Dr. Talibi continues to be recognized nationally as a leader in cardiac care and acts a mentor to the next generation of heart specialists at the CK Hui Heart Centre. The Dr. Talibi Innovation Fund provides financial support to the cardiology team when they identify opportunities to improve patient care through new research, clinical trials or technology.

“We’re very grateful to the Dr. Talibi Innovation Fund and the Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation for supporting us,” says Dr. Randall Williams, Chief of Cardiology at the CK Hui Heart Centre.

“As always, our focus is on better patient care through medical innovation. We always want to take advantage of opportunities to improve patient care and rehabilitation, as well as improving the work done by nurses, educators and other front-line staff. Cutting-edge technology like NICaS allows us to do exactly that.”

The Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation, as a respected fundraising leader, inspires community support for the Royal Alexandra Hospital and its medical centres, including the Lois Hole Hospital for Women, the CK Hui Heart Centre, the Regional Eye Centre and the Orthopedic Surgery Centre. The Foundation empowers compassionate and innovative patient care through leading-edge education, research, technology and facility enhancements.

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than four million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

- 30 -

For media inquiries, contact:

Michael Chevalier

Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation

780-735-6931

mchevalier@royalalex.org

Twitter: @RAHFoundation

Gregory Kennedy

AHS Communications

780-342-8172

Gregory.Kennedy@albertahealthservices.ca

Twitter: @AHS_innovates