

## LANCE ARMSTRONG AND 40 CYCLISTS RAISE MORE THAN \$1.2 MILLION FOR SUNNYBROOK'S ODETTE CANCER CENTRE AND GRAND RIVER REGIONAL CANCER CENTRE

**June 15, 2008 – TORONTO** Lance Armstrong, cancer survivor and cycling champion, spent Saturday afternoon cycling the country roads surrounding Cambridge with 40 cyclists. Together they raised more than \$1.2 million for the once-in-a-lifetime ride alongside Armstrong. *Ride with Lance* ([www.ridewithlance.ca](http://www.ridewithlance.ca)) was a two-day event benefitting both Sunnybrook's Odette Cancer Centre and the Grand River Regional Cancer Centre in Cambridge, Ontario.

"It was an amazing ride today," said Armstrong. "Not only did all the cyclists do a great job on the bikes but more importantly they raised money and awareness for this disease. It was a pleasure to return to Ontario, and knowing that we raised over a million dollars for cancer care and research at Sunnybrook and Grand River is rewarding for all of us."

Participants set off at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday morning, and were joined on the ride by surprise guest cyclist, Phil Liggett, "The Voice of Cycling." The 117 km ride traversed a route that was designed by renowned Canadian cyclist and Olympic medalist, Steve Bauer. Jim Balsillie, Co-CEO of Research In Motion, played a significant role in bringing Armstrong to Ontario, who was last here in February 2007 at a Sunnybrook Odette Cancer Centre fundraiser.

"It was a perfect day out on the road," said Balsillie. "This is the first time two regional cancer centres have teamed up for such an event. Sunnybrook's Odette Cancer Centre and the Grand River Regional Cancer Centre are two of the preeminent cancer care and research institutions in North America. It was a natural fit to have the world's preeminent cyclist on board to benefit these organizations. We are thrilled with funds that have been raised today."

To participate, the riders committed to raising \$25,000 each; however, many far surpassed that ambitious goal. The leading fundraiser, Perry Dellelce, co-chair of the event with Rob Wildeboer, raised \$70,000 and was awarded a special one-of-a-kind yellow jersey. Before the Ride began, Perry presented the yellow jersey to fellow rider Deb Gemmell, a Kitchener-Waterloo-area woman currently in her own battle with cancer, for her to wear on the ride.

In addition to the funds that participants raised to take part, an additional \$80,000 was raised during the post-ride dinner through an auction of the bikes used by Armstrong and Liggett that day.

Money raised through the *Ride with Lance* will fund essential patient care and research initiatives at both Centres. At Sunnybrook's Odette Cancer Centre, funding will go toward the renovation and expansion of the chemotherapy suites. New space is needed as the Centre currently accommodates over 17,000 patient visits annually in a space designed for 5,000. The funds will also support world-leading clinical trials that will change the face of cancer care. At Grand River, proceeds will support the purchase of a new linear accelerator unit, used for radiation treatments for cancer patients and offering precision that was previously unavailable.

"We are thrilled to once again have Lance Armstrong offering his support to the Odette Cancer Centre," said Dr. Linda Rabeneck, Regional VP, Cancer Care Ontario and VP, Regional Cancer Services, Sunnybrook. "For both our organization and Grand River, this event was a clear endorsement of the important role we play in leading research and offering treatment for this disease. The money raised today will help us advance cancer care for countless people."

“This unique event will not only help us raise cancer awareness in Ontario communities, it will support the purchase of patient care equipment that will allow Grand River Hospital to provide vital care for cancer patients, close to the comfort of their homes,” say Susan Robertson, Acting Vice President, Regional Cancer Services, Grand River Regional Cancer Centre. “We are delighted to have partnered with Lance and Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre on this initiative.”

### **Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre**

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre is transforming health care through the dedication of its more than 10,000 staff members who provide compassionate and innovative patient focused care. An internationally recognized leader in research and education and an affiliation with the University of Toronto distinguishes Sunnybrook as one of Canada’s premier health sciences centres. Sunnybrook specializes in caring for newborns, treating and preventing cancer, heart problems, orthopaedic and arthritic conditions and traumatic injuries.

The Odette Cancer Centre at Sunnybrook is North America’s sixth largest cancer centre providing care to over 10,000 new patients every year. The Odette Cancer Centre offers a full range of outpatient and inpatient treatment and supportive care programs, is a Cancer Care Ontario partner and is fully affiliated with the University of Toronto.

### **Grand River Hospital**

Grand River Hospital is a comprehensive community hospital dedicated to providing “Exceptional CARE with Compassion” to the more than 500,000 residents in Waterloo Region, one of Canada’s fastest growing communities. The multi-site hospital boasts a variety of multidisciplinary health care teams dedicated to delivering on a tradition of meeting the health care needs of its community through many acute care and rehabilitative programs and services.

The Grand River Regional Cancer Centre is the largest provider of systemic treatment and cancer surgery, as well as the sole provider of radiation treatment in the region. The first to integrate an Internet-based patient portal - My CARE Source - into its compliment of patient support tools, the GRRCC is a proud leader in the provision of supportive care services that benefit patients and their families. Support services also include pain and symptom management, social work, nutritional counselling, spiritual care, physiotherapy and occupational therapy.