Eastern Health Awards Tender for Artwork Project in Honour of Breast Cancer Patients

September 6, 2012: St. John’s - Eastern Health announced today that it has awarded the tender for the development of a monument in honour of breast cancer patients and their families who were impacted by errors in estrogen and progesterone receptor (ER/PR) testing in 2005. The tender was awarded to James C. Smith of Madoc, Ont., an artist who specializes in monumental sculpture work. It is anticipated that the artwork will be completed and unveiled later this fall.

As part of the class action lawsuit settlement for breast cancer patients, Eastern Health agreed to establish a monument to recognize individuals who have been affected by ER/PR testing errors. The monument will be located between the Health Sciences Centre’s Emergency Department entrance and the entrance of the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Centre.

“I am pleased to announce that Eastern Health has awarded the tender to sculpt a monument that will truly recognize the strength, courage, resilience and virtue of individuals and their families who were impacted by the events surrounding ER/PR testing errors,” said Vickie Kaminski, President and CEO of Eastern Health. “This monument will also serve as a reminder that as an organization, we have learned from that experience and are moving forward to provide safe, high quality care to the people we serve.”

Mr. Smith was chosen to develop the monument by a review panel, which consisted of representatives from the Patient Advisory Council, the local arts community and a number of Eastern Health representatives, including a fine arts instructor at the Waterford Hospital, a member of the Cancer Care Program, a member of Laboratory Medicine Services and representatives from Infrastructure Support and Purchasing.

All candidates considered for the tender were evaluated based on their expertise, experience, references, past work, quality of work, developmental timelines and proposal, including a synopsis and sketches of the proposed sculpture concept. The assessment also determined whether the applicant effectively conveyed a theme of hope, health and healing in his/her design.

“Mr. Smith’s innovative approach captured the essence of what the artwork is intended to achieve,” said Katherine Chubbs, Vice-President responsible for the Cancer Care Program. “We are confident that this monument will be a visually appealing, candid and heart-moving piece of art that promotes a theme of hope, health and healing - a theme that can be recognized by all individuals and families who are undergoing a cancer diagnosis of any kind.”
Mr. Smith has specialized in stone sculpture since 1984. He studied at the Ontario College of Art and Design and York University, followed by a career at Campbell Monument Company. Mr. Smith has received recognition and awards across North America for his public art and monumental sculpture work. He has created numerous sculptures, some of which include: Colonel By and the Rideau Canal in Ottawa, Ont.; Jewish Veterans Memorial in Toronto, Ont.; Port Jefferson Harbour Sculpture in Niagara Falls, Ont.; and Spirit Way Wolves in Thompson, Man.

“I am very pleased with the time and effort that went into deciding the artwork that will be a true representation of hope, health and healing for all cancer patients and their families, while at the same time, recognizes those who have lost loved ones to this terrible disease,” said Marie Hickey, a representative of the Patient Care Advisory Council and cancer survivor. “This sculpture will represent the spirit of the Cameron Inquiry and at the same time recognize the hard work and dedication of the employees of Eastern Health.”

About Eastern Health

Eastern Health is the largest, integrated health authority in Newfoundland and Labrador employing approximately 13,000 dedicated employees and serving a population of more than 290,000 people. The authority has an annual budget of over $1.2 billion and offers the full continuum of health and community services including public health, long-term care, community services, hospital care and unique provincial programs and services. Its geographic boundaries extend from St. John’s west to Port Blandford including all communities on the Avalon, Burin and Bonavista Peninsulas.

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