



**BC Renal
Agency**

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Donation to South Okanagan Health Fair recognizes local physician's dedication to patients

Penticton, BC – Dr. Gerry Karr has dedicated his professional career to caring for patients and improving the health care system – as a Penticton-based kidney care specialist, a medical director for the Interior Health renal (kidney) program and as volunteer chair for BC Nephrology Days, an annual conference for kidney care professionals sponsored by the BC Provincial Renal Agency. On October 3rd, as he closed the conference and stepped down as chair, Dr. Karr was thanked for his leadership and vision with a \$2,500 donation to his charity of choice – the South Okanagan Health Fair, which he also chairs.

“Preventing chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and kidney disease is the single greatest health care challenge of our time,” says Dr. Karr. “I see my work with BC Nephrology Days and with the South Okanagan Health Fair as two sides of the same coin. One provides important information to health professionals who care for people diagnosed with chronic disease, while the other raises public awareness about lifestyle choices that can promote health and prevent illness.”

At this stage in his career, Dr. Karr is passionate about health promotion and disease prevention, which is why he co-founded and chairs the South Okanagan Health Fair. Held annually in Penticton, the fair is also attended by people from communities throughout the South Okanagan. “It’s absolutely critical that we raise awareness and excite people about the role they play in their own health.” This also applies to people who have been diagnosed with a chronic condition, says Dr. Karr. “When an individual faces an illness today, they are treated as an important member of their health care team. That’s a real shift from the past – not only for patients, but for care providers.”

Dr. Adeera Levin, Executive Director of the BC Renal Agency, praises Dr. Karr for his leadership and vision. “Gerry has dedicated countless hours to his role as chair for Nephrology Days. He has maintained an unwavering focus on what’s best for patients and for patient care. He will be missed.”

The next South Okanagan Health Fair is scheduled for February 2009. The event, which features exhibits and presentations from a broad range of health organizations, promotes healthy living to the residents of Penticton and nearby communities. For more information, visit www.southokanaganhealthfair.com.

Sponsored by the BC Renal Agency, Nephrology Days brings together experts and health care practitioners from across the province and country to discuss issues and the latest developments related to kidney disease, as well as chronic disease management. For more information, visit www.bcrenalagency.ca.