



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

W. Garfield Weston Foundation grants \$4 million to University Health Network to establish world-first “Hearts and Minds” clinic

TORONTO, July 19, 2012 – The W. Garfield Weston Foundation has made a landmark donation of \$4 million to establish the first multidisciplinary clinic in the world devoted to adults with 22q11.2 Deletion Syndrome (22q11.2DS).

22q11.2 DS is a genetic syndrome that may result in psychiatric, cardiac, endocrine and neurologic abnormalities. The complex and variable clinical manifestations of 22q11.2DS make the provision of comprehensive care for patients with this disorder challenging.

“I am a parent of a young woman who has this complex genetic disease, diagnosed by Dr. Jeff Daskalakis and Dr. Anne Bassett in 1998. Since then it has been very difficult to negotiate the health care system as so many different medical aspects are involved in the treatment. It is stressful and time-consuming for both the patient and the caregiver,” said Camilla Dalglish. “There has been a great need for a dedicated clinic to integrate services for adult patients. As a parent, caregiver and member of The W. Garfield Weston Foundation, I am delighted that the University Health Network has agreed to open such a clinic. I am sure that families like ours will welcome this integrated approach.”

Dr. Sidney Kennedy, Psychiatrist-in-Chief of University Health Network and Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto, says the gift will allow UHN caregivers to provide a comprehensive, multidisciplinary clinical service that will make life better for adults with genomic disorders.

“We are tremendously grateful to the Weston Foundation for identifying and funding this unique service for adult patients with 22q11.2DS,” said Dr. Kennedy. “UHN can offer expert integrated clinical care and research initiatives for the range of clinical challenges that this disease presents, particularly in psychiatric, cardiac and neurological specialties.”

The Dalglish Hearts & Minds Clinic, located at Toronto General Hospital, will be directed by Dr. Anne Bassett, Canada Research Chair in Schizophrenia Genetics and Genomic Disorders and Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto. It will be co-directed by Dr. Alan Fung, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto. Both Drs. Bassett and Fung are experienced in the provision of multidisciplinary care to adults with genetic disorders and their families.