

# Leukemia and Bone Marrow Transplant Background

## Leukemia:

- Leukemia is a cancer of the blood-forming cells. In most forms of leukemia, it is the white blood cells that become malignant. There are several types of leukemia, including acute myelogenous leukemia, acute lymphoblastic leukemia, chronic myelogenous leukemia and chronic lymphocytic leukemia.
- This year, an estimated 3,600 Canadians will be diagnosed with leukemia. About 90 per cent of leukemia patients are adults, although it is the most common form of childhood cancer.
- Leukemia is treated by chemotherapy, but some types require more aggressive therapy and need bone marrow transplants.

## Bone Marrow Transplants:

- Bone Marrow Transplants (BMTs) generally refers to the transplantation of stem cells collected either from bone marrow or the blood stream. BMT is a therapy that replaces diseased or damaged bone marrow cells or chemotherapy-weakened cells with a transfusion of healthy stem cells.
- These stem cells can come either from the patient themselves (autologous transplant) or a healthy, suitably matched donor (allogeneic transplant).

## PMH Fast Facts:

- Princess Margaret Hospital houses Canada's largest inpatient leukemia program and the country's largest blood and marrow transplant program.
- Director of the Bone Marrow Transplant Program at PMH is Dr. Hans Messner.
- This year, the hospital will complete an estimated 280 transplants, of which 100 will be allogeneic and 180 autologous.

## Philip S. Orsino Leukemia Centre:

- Composed of new patient centre on 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of Princess Margaret Hospital and the new cell process facility on the 12<sup>th</sup> Floor.
- New Patient Centre will include expanded waiting room, renovated area to allow more comfortable surroundings. Scheduled to be completed in 2003.
- Philip S. Orsino Facility for Cell Therapy is 2,900 sq. ft. including administration space and labs where cell processing and manipulation will take place.