

MEMO expands breast screening in Cuba

Thunder Bay's MEMO volunteers are manufacturing a mobile breast screening clinic to save lives of women in Cuba.

If you were a woman in Cuba with breast cancer, you would have almost no chance of early diagnosis by mammography even though it would reduce the chances of you dying by 40 per cent.

That is unless you live in the Municipality of Placetas, in Villa Clara Province.

MEMO Cuba, a grassroots humanitarian group based in Thunder Bay, is building another mobile mammography clinic locally.

In 2009 the first mobile breast screening clinic in Cuba was manufactured in Thunder Bay and shipped to Placetas.

Each year this outreach to Cuban women aged 50-65 is saving the lives of 40 women from a horrible death by breast cancer.

The cost of this new mobile clinic will be C\$18,000. This includes \$5,000 for the materials to build the mobile clinic, \$7,000 for the second-hand mammography machine acquired on EBay, and \$6,000 for shipping. A commercial mobile breast screening clinic in Canada costs at least \$350,000.

Our part of the cost of mammography film and developing chemicals to maintain the clinic annually is about \$10,000.

The Cuban Ministry of Health provides all medical staff and other support needed to operate such an outreach.

MEMO has proven itself to be efficient as 98 per cent of money donated goes to providing service in Cuba. We have no paid staff.

The Villa Clara provincial Minister of Health said: "Since MEMO has been sending teams of Canadian medical experts and hospital equipment, health care in our province has taken a 180-degree turn for the better."

We are asking Thunder Bay residents to be part of saving Cuban women's lives

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from breast cancer by making tax deductible donations to MEMO at www.MEMOCuba.org or by calling 346-8170 for more information.

— Submitted by Dr. Jerome Harvey,
MEMO president



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A woman consults with a Cuban surgeon who explains that surgical removal of a small cancer diagnosed early by mammography will be curative.