

Press release

The Acoustic Neuroma Association of Canada Conference and Annual General Meeting Saskatoon, SK ~ May 23 to 26, 2003

Date: May 2, 2003

Gamma Knife Surgeon Speaking at Acoustic Neuroma Association Conference

Saskatoon, SK –

Dr. Anthony M. Kaufmann, the director of the Centre for Cranial Nerve Disorders at the University of Manitoba Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg, MB, will be the featured speaker at the Acoustic Neuroma Association of Canada's (ANAC) 20th Anniversary Conference and Annual General Meeting to be held at the Travelodge Hotel in Saskatoon, SK, May 23 to 26, 2003. Dr. Kaufmann's presentation (Saturday, May 24th, at 10:15 AM) will focus on the use of Canada's first Gamma Knife in the treatment of Acoustic Neuroma and related cranial nerve disorders.

An acoustic neuroma (also sometimes called vestibular schwannoma) is a benign tumor, which manifests itself on the sheath surrounding the eighth cranial nerve, affecting the functions of the inner ear, and eventually pressing on the brain stem. Acoustic neuromas most often present themselves through hearing loss but other symptoms include tinnitus (ringing in the ear), dizziness and loss of equilibrium. About one in one hundred thousand people are diagnosed with acoustic neuroma each year. If undiagnosed the tumor becomes large enough that it can affect brain stem function and could eventually cause death.

Gamma Knife is a non-invasive, state-of-the-art technique that delivers a focused beam of radiation to a precise spot to destroy tumors and treat other conditions. It provides an alternative to microsurgery traditionally used in the treatment of Acoustic Neuroma. The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority's decision to purchase the Electa Leksell Gamma Knife® was announced in March of 2002 and the device will be ready for operation in the fall of 2003. This will be the first Gamma Knife in operation in Canada.

The ANAC Conference also will include a presentation by Dr. Bruce Christensen on the Psychological Aspects of Acoustic Neuroma (Saturday, May 24th at 2:30 PM), as well as the organization's Annual General Meeting, Medical Advisory Board meetings and Volunteer Development Workshops.

The Acoustic Neuroma Association of Canada, a patient-headed, peer support group, is a registered Canadian non-profit organization. ANAC provides support and information to individuals who have experienced acoustic neuroma or other conditions affecting the cranial nerves. It also furnishes information on patient rehabilitation to physicians and health care personnel and promotes early diagnosis and treatment through public education.

The Acoustic Neuroma Association of Canada recently presented funding proposals to the Ministers of Health of all provinces and territories, as well as the federal government, requesting that the organization be provided adequate funds to provide a consistent level of service to acoustic neuroma patients throughout Canada.

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Bio for Dr. Kaufmann attached

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