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MEDIA RELEASE

St Vincent's Implants World's Smallest Heart Support Device

St Vincent's has recently implanted a miniature artificial device that will potentially revolutionise the treatment of patients with advanced heart failure. 21 year old Breagha Patterson from Goulburn and 34 year old Che Oleszkiewicz from the NSW Central Coast became the world's third and fourth patients to receive the HeartWare MVAD Pump. St Vincent's is participating in an international trial of the MVAD with the first two patients being implanted recently in Europe.

Both patients were experiencing end-stage heart failure. In both cases there were no donor hearts available so the St Vincent's Transplant Team implanted the new device as a last resort.

"Currently, nearly one half of our patients undergoing a heart transplant at St Vincent's have already been implanted with mechanical devices, like the MVAD, as a bridge to transplant. Having such a small device that can be more easily implanted will potentially make a major difference in the management of some of our end-stage heart failure patients," said Professor Chris Hayward, St Vincent's Cardiologist.

The MVAD is a heart pump that provides circulatory support for patients with advanced heart failure. Providing improved blood-flow paths, the MVAD significantly improves hemodynamic function. In addition, the MVAD incorporates a pulsatility algorithm that allows the cardiologist to customise the device for each patient, providing four pulse settings designed to enhance aortic valve function and reduce chronic bleeding events.

The MVAD Pump is less than half the size of the previous smallest commercialised full-support device and is designed to be implanted through a less invasive thoracotomy technique. Displacing 22 cc of volume, the MVAD Pump weighs only 78 grams and because it requires a comparatively small thoracic space, it is more conducive to minimally invasive implant techniques to reduce surgical trauma, potentially making it a more attractive option to patients at an earlier stage of the disease progression.

"We are very encouraged by the results of Breagha and Che's surgery. I am confident that the new device could lead to better patient outcomes and an improved quality of life for our patients," said Dr Paul Jansz, Principal Investigator and St Vincent's Heart Lung Transplant Surgeon.

What: Media Conference featuring patients Breagha Patterson and Che Oleszkiewicz, Dr Paul Jansz and Prof Chris Hayward

When: 1pm, Thursday 17 September, 2015

Where: Media to assemble at the front entrance of St Vincent's Hospital

For more information contact David Faktor 02 83822866