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New equipment allows for early detection of health issues

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Nov 29, 2020

Area doctors have a new way to detect heart and other conditions in children before they're even born.

Norton Children's Maternal-Fetal Medicine on the campus of Med Center Health in Bowling Green recently installed state-of-the-art diagnostic and ultrasound equipment called a Fetal Echo Cardiology Machine.



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The equipment is designed to identify complex anomalies in unborn babies through early detection so a plan can be created for the best care during and after birth.

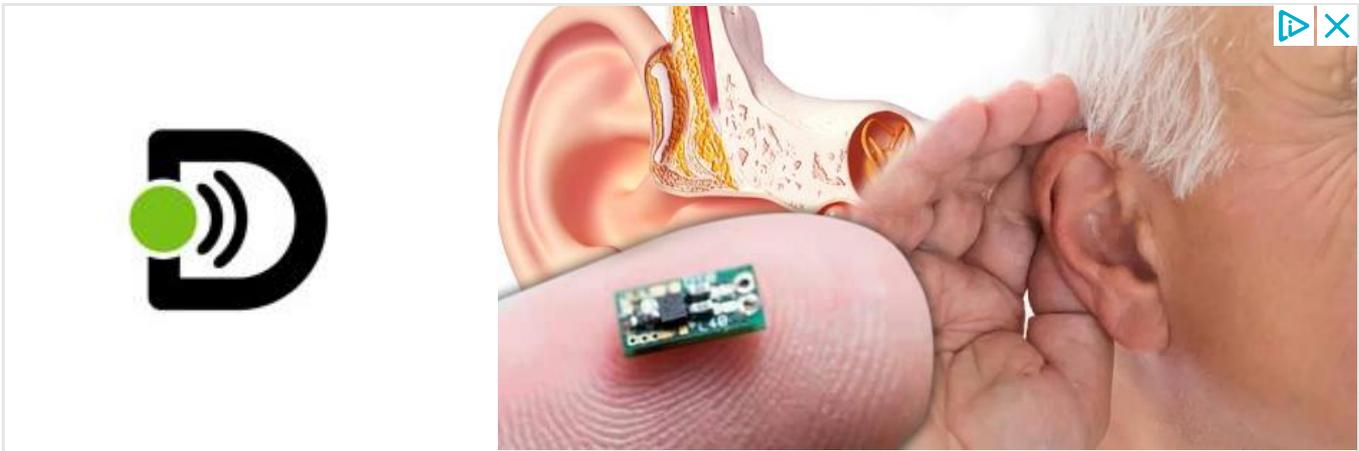
Norton Senior Vice President and Chief of Development Linnie Meyer said the new equipment is “crucial” for the community to have.

“It’s truly a piece of state-of-the-art equipment,” Meyer said. “Basically, it’s bringing an extremely skilled service right to Bowling Green. It saves precious time. It enables us to intervene more quickly in important situations. People in the community won’t have to travel all the way up to Louisville anymore.”

The equipment cost an estimated \$200,000.

Community support to the Norton Children’s Hospital Foundation helped make purchasing the equipment possible.

The Harold, Juanita, David, Dennis & Gary Koon Charitable Foundation provided a \$100,000 gift and Dance Big Red, an annual fundraiser by Western Kentucky University students, provided additional support this past March.



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“This equipment has been built on a strong foundation that is Norton’s Healthcare,” Meyer said. “This innovation doesn’t happen overnight. I want to give a nod to the people who have come before and the generosity of the community to make this happen.”

“We appreciate the Harold, Juanita, David, Dennis & Gary Koon Charitable Foundation and Dance Big Red for supporting Norton Children’s Hospital over the years,” Meyer continued. “This gift will allow us to continue to provide the most comprehensive care to the children and families in Western Kentucky.”

Norton Children’s Maternal-Fetal Medicine Dr. W. Vance Cuthrell said the equipment will help foster expert fetal diagnosis and treatment, which will make a significant difference for a mother and her baby throughout pregnancy.

“Being able to closely monitor the pregnancy and being armed with critical information allows the doctors and families to make the best decisions for care,” Cuthrell said in a news release.



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Norton Healthcare said that each year in the United States, some 40,000 children are born with congenital heart defects, which in Kentucky translates to more than 500 children annually and 45 deaths per year attributed to heart defects.

Early identification with advanced ultrasound technology may help some of these patients receive lifesaving treatment.

“Norton’s is the only free-standing children’s hospital in Kentucky,” Meyer said. “Being able to have this kind of treatment in a community is unparalleled for children’s health in our community.”

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