

PRESS RELEASE

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World's second artificial heart patient marks six months

Tom Christerson's condition continues to improve

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – University of Louisville surgeons Laman Gray, M.D., and Rob Dowling, M.D. reported today that Tom Christerson continues to improve as he reaches his six-month milestone with the AbioCor? Implantable Replacement Heart, manufactured by ABIOMED of Danvers, Mass. On September 13, Drs. Gray and Dowling implanted the device in Mr. Christerson during a landmark surgery at Jewish Hospital in Louisville, KY.

Drs. Gray and Dowling introduced Mr. Christerson to the public in a press conference held yesterday at the Jewish Hospital Heart and Lung Institute.

The physicians noted that Mr. Christerson, 70, continues to spend a great deal of his time out of his hospital room, taking short trips and visiting with friends. He recently attended a University of Louisville basketball game, where he was honored as a Hometown Hero, and read to a group of kindergartners and first graders at Wilt Elementary School during Celebrate Reading Week.

Mr. Christerson continues to work with a physical therapist from Frazier Rehab Institute each day. These activities include muscle strengthening, walking, balancing and sitting/standing maneuvers. This regimen is designed to improve general conditioning, muscle strength and endurance.

“We’re very pleased with the progress Tom is making,” Dr. Gray said. “Physically, he’s making significant gains.”

“Tom has a very positive attitude. He’s working hard and staying focused on his goal of leaving the hospital, and looking forward to celebrating his birthday Saturday,” said Dr. Dowling.

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