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LOUISVILLE ABIOCOR SURGEONS REPORT ON PATIENTS' PROGRESS

Governor Patton enjoys visit with Kentucky heart pioneers

(Louisville, Ky.) – The University of Louisville surgeons who implanted the world's first and second totally implantable replacement hearts at Jewish Hospital reported today that Bob Tools and Tom Christerson are each recovering well from their AbioCor implant surgeries, which took place July 2 and September 13 respectively.

Joining Drs. Laman Gray and Rob Dowling at the news briefing was Governor Paul Patton, who had the opportunity to visit with both patients earlier in the day. "I spoke with Mr. Tools about fishing and his recovery, and even got to listen to his heartbeat," the Governor reported. "Mr. Christerson sells tires to the coal mining industry, which was my business, and we talked about that."

The Governor stated "after meeting and talking to these fine gentlemen, there is no doubt in my mind that patients can enjoy a high quality of life with this device."

Reporting on their clinical conditions, Drs. Gray and Dowling continue to be cautiously optimistic about their patients' progress.

Reporting on Mr. Tools' recovery, now in its 85th day, Dr. Gray said that he is "gaining weight and enjoying excursions outside the hospital." Gray continued, "He is doing very well, and his kidney, liver and lung function remain totally normal."

Dr. Dowling described Mr. Christerson as improving 12 days after surgery, but cautioned that he is still in the very early stages of recovery. "He has been off the ventilator since the first day after surgery," Dowling explained. "He, like Mr. Tools, is very strong willed and has been a great patient."

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Jewish Hospital is among the top 10 cardiac centers in the United States and, along with the University of Louisville, is dedicated to excellence in patient care, research and education. University of Louisville surgeons at Jewish Hospital have performed many heart care "firsts," including Kentucky's first heart transplant, the world's first heart transplant following the use of a Thoratec right ventricular assist device, the world's first endoscopic saphenous vein harvest and the first ventricular remodeling in the region.