

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ABIOCOR SURGEONS GIVE UPDATE ON STATUS OF PATIENTS, PROGRAM

Talk part of opening day of Research!Louisville

(Louisville, Ky.) – The University of Louisville surgeons who implanted the world's first and second AbioCor totally implantable replacement hearts on July 2 and September 13 reported on the program's status to a group assembled for Research!Louisville, October 29.

Drs. Laman Gray and Rob Dowling presented data collected during three years of research with the AbioCor and said that it helped them prepare for the first clinical implants and for post-surgical care. "When we got into the OR, we did the surgery exactly how we did in the lab," Dowling explained.

Bob Tools, 59, Franklin, Ky.

"Bob is really enjoying his time outside the hospital," Gray said during the presentation.

Dowling agreed, and added, "He is doing better than we ever anticipated – so it's sometimes easy to forget that he's still sick." Dowling continued, "He needs to gain about 30 pounds and improve in several nutrition factors before we can seriously discuss a discharge date."

At this point, the doctors reported, the team is working on a discharge plan for Mr. Tools, even though no discharge date has been set. "He's doing exceptionally well," Gray continued, "but his nutrition is still a major concern."

Tom Christerson, 70, Central City, Ky.

"Mr. Christerson was returned the ventilator last week," Gray reported. "He has significant pre-existing lung disease, and that has been a problem."

"Much of the problem with his breathing has to do with his general state of muscle weakness," Dowling added. "It takes quite a bit of strength and energy to breathe deeply enough for a person his size."

The Research!Louisville luncheon event was presented by the Jewish Hospital Foundation.

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Jewish Hospital is among the top ten cardiac centers in the United States and, along with the University of Louisville, is dedicated to excellence in clinical 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 bi-ventricular assist device, the world's first endoscopic saphenous vein harvest and the first ventricular remodeling in the region.

