

SickKids breaking new ground on research

By IAN ROBERTSON, TORONTO SUN

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Ground will be broken Tuesday for a \$400-million research facility at the Toronto Hospital For Sick Children.

A 21-storey building at Bay and Elm Sts. will bring together about 2,000 researchers and staff, who now work in six nearby facilities, Dr. Janet Rossant, chief of research for the hospital's research institute, told the Sun.

"You need people to be in a state-of-the-art building and be able to contact each other," she said. "It's so important for the creative process."

When a surgeon meets a computer scientist, or a pediatrician meets a stem cell biologist — "even in a chance passing in the hallway" — it can result in new approaches, Rossant said.

The federal government's Canadian Foundation for Innovation is providing \$91 million; the rest will come from the hospital and The Hospital for Sick Children Foundation, which is launching a fund-raising drive, she said.

Rossant said 17 storeys will be devoted to research, with lower levels having lecture theatres and education rooms.

"It gives us room to grow by another 20% over the next 10 years," she said.

One of SickKids' latest research projects is a study of genetic changes in humans that are related to cancer.

The Building & Research Tower was designed by the Toronto firm of Diamond and Schmitt, which also designed the Four Seasons Opera Centre.

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