



26th April 2007

**PHOTO OPPORTUNITY – THURSDAY 3RD MAY AT 2.30
P.M. IN THE MDEC BUILDING, ALTNAGELVIN AREA
HOSPITAL**

MEDIA RELEASE

NEW PRESIDENT FOR ‘THE FRIENDS OF ALTNAGELVIN’

The Chairman of The Friends of Altnagelvin, Mrs Karen Love, has announced that Mr Kanwar Panesar OBE., FRCS., has accepted the role of President of ‘The Friends’. Mr Panesar worked as a Consultant Surgeon in Altnagelvin for almost 30 years, retiring in early April 2006. He has been involved in the past on charitable and fundraising work with the Round Table and Foyle and Londonderry College.

Speaking about his acceptance of the role of President, Mrs Love said:

“Mr Panesar has taken a keen interest in charitable and fundraising work and I am sure his experience will be an important boost for The Friends. We look forward to continuing our work with him for the benefit of Altnagelvin’s patients, their families and visitors.”

In response, Mr. Panesar said:

“I am delighted to join the Friends of Altnagelvin committee and look forward to following on from the good work and achievements of outgoing president Mr George Emerson, and founding president, the late Mr Harry Bennett. The achievements of The Friends are immense, with over £210,000 being raised by various means over the group’s 25-year existence. I hope that together, and with the support of staff and the community, we can build on this to bring greater comfort to our patients and their families. ”

Mr Panesar will attend his first meeting as President on Thursday 3rd May 2007, where he will address committee members and discuss his views on the future direction of the ‘Friends of Altnagelvin’ and how the group can maximise their work for the benefit of patients’.

ENDS

Provided by Communications Office, Tel. 028 71 611429

Notes to Editors:

Mr. Panesar, retired consultant surgeon at Altnagelvin Hospital, received an OBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours list in 2004. Mr. Panesar was nominated for his services to medicine.

Mr. Panesar was also Chairman of the Northern Ireland Consultants’ Committee of the British Medical Association. He lives locally and is married with 2 sons.

The Friends’ of Altnagelvin was established over twenty-five years ago by Harry Bennett, with the aim of raising funds to provide additional comforts for patients, over and above those provided by the NHS. Membership consists of former staff, patients and relatives, and people who simply have an interest in the hospital or in this type of voluntary work.