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Canadian Cancer Groups Unite

First Ever Advocacy Network to Benefit Canadians Living with Cancer

To provide a voice for cancer patients and their families, the leading national cancer patient survivor advocacy organizations have joined together for the first time to form the Canadian Cancer Advocacy Network (CCAN), it was announced today at a media conference in Ottawa. This new group will ensure that patients' interests are at the top of the national cancer agenda. CCAN will encourage governments to ensure constructive and positive policy change for cancer issues.

“Working together will create a stronger voice for cancer patients, which is an unprecedented accomplishment,” says Bob Rae, Honourary Chair, CCAN and former premier of Ontario. “The different levels of government must respond to the needs of people with cancer by ending the fragmentation of healthcare across Canada.”

Liz Whamond, Chair of CCAN and a cancer survivor, says that this new network “will urge governments to come together to establish guidelines and policies that will effectively respond to the needs of the people with cancer. Our objective is to push for better national policies that will ensure consistent, high-quality cancer care for all Canadians.”

Rae adds that due to the aging and growing Canadian population, the number of new cases of cancer will double in the next 20 years putting a huge strain on the healthcare system. “The time to act is now before the full impact of aging on cancer incidence is upon us.”

The five priority areas for CCAN are:

- a new inter-provincial mechanism to develop evidence-based standards for diagnosis, treatment and care;
- better psychosocial and supportive, rehabilitative and palliative care – no matter where Canadians live;
- a national comprehensive strategy for human resources in the cancer care field;
- rebalanced research priorities;
- greater emphasis on prevention of cancer.

CCAN consists of the following national volunteer driven organizations:

- Action Cancer Montérégie et le Comité des patients du Centre intégré de lutte contre le cancer en Montérégie de l'hôpital Charles-Lemoyne;
- Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada
- Canadian Breast Cancer Network
- Canadian Cancer Society
- Canadian Liver Foundation
- Canadian Lung Association
- Canadian Prostate Cancer Network
- Candlelighter's Childhood Cancer Foundation Canada
- Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada
- Leukemia Research Fund of Canada
- National Ovarian Cancer Association
- Neutropenia Support Association Inc.
- The Joint Cancer Care Ontario - Aboriginal Cancer Committee

Survivor/patient/advocate organizations created CCAN so that they could help ensure a national strategy for cancer control and have a legitimate voice in policy issues in this country. The members of CCAN believe that it has the potential to bring about the sustained, co-ordinated, comprehensive and collaborative national approach to cancer control that is needed to meet the challenges we face.

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