



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

News Release

RBC donates \$2 million to paediatric mental health at SickKids

TORONTO, ONTARIO, Thursday, June 21, 2007 – The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) will be furthering much-needed training, research and outreach into paediatric mental health thanks to a \$2 million commitment today from RBC. Today's official announcement is part of a week-long employee celebration of RBC "Putting Communities FIRST," that this evening will see hundreds of committed RBC employees walking five kilometres to SickKids in support of the hospital.

This \$2 million gift from the RBC Foundation will allow SickKids to share critical knowledge with remote communities and focus on advanced training opportunities in clinical research through fellowships while providing seed funding for new research opportunities.

"Our ultimate goal is to find the causes of behavioural and emotional problems affecting children and adolescents in order to sharpen our treatment interventions. Our hope is that greater knowledge will reduce stigma and help improve long-term outcomes for children and youth," said Abel Ickowicz, Psychiatrist-in-Chief at SickKids. "Research and innovation is critical to open up the dialogue with all of our communities to share critical information and improve access to care for all children and their families."

Mental health issues are the leading health problems that Canadian children currently face after infancy. One in six Canadians is affected by behavioural or emotional problems severe enough to impact their quality of life and the lives of their family. Without effective prevention or treatment, these problems often lead to distress into adulthood.

"This gift recognizes the importance of investing in children's mental health today, so that we can make the adult health system more sustainable in the future," Dr. Ickowicz added.

The announcement will be made on the hospital lawn at 555 University Avenue around 6:15 p.m. today at the conclusion of the 20th Annual RBC SickKids Walkathon.

"RBC is proud to be putting communities first," said Jennifer Tory, RBC Regional President, Greater Toronto Region. "We've partnered with SickKids for the past 20 years because we know it is vitally important for the future well being of our children. SickKids is known for its research discoveries, and we are excited about the possibilities of this gift and its impact on the communities where our employees live and work."

This gift will impact three key areas in paediatric mental health:

1. **RBC Mental Health Knowledge Exchange Program** - The creation of an education network based on existing tele-psychiatry infrastructure in Ontario. Its purpose is to support knowledge exchange through professional development and public education forums. By increasing knowledge among front-line caregivers and parents, our communities will have increased capacity to care for children with mental health problems. A national conference/symposium will also encourage best practices in tele-health education.
2. **RBC Fellows Fund in Mental Health Research** – The creation of a fund to support four fellowships in mental health research per year to advance the training opportunities in this field.
3. **RBC Seed Fund for Mental Health Research** – The creation of a seed fund to be allocated through the scientific review process established by the SickKids Psychiatry Department. A minimum of two projects will be funded each year.

About RBC

RBC believes in building prosperity by contributing to the communities in which we live and work. We are now one of Canada's largest corporate donors, and we support a broad range of community initiatives, through donations, sponsorships and employee volunteer activities. In 2006 RBC contributed more than \$83 million to community causes worldwide. As a founding member of Imagine Canada, RBC is committed to donating at least one per cent of our average annual net income before taxes.

About SickKids Foundation

SickKids Foundation was established in 1972 and is celebrating its 35-year anniversary. Its mission is to inspire its communities to invest in health and scientific advances to improve the lives of children and their families in Canada and around the world. Its vision is “Healthier children. A better world.”

In addition to its support of The Hospital for Sick Children, the Foundation has a mandate to support children’s health on a national basis. SickKids Foundation invests \$4 million annually across Canada in paediatric research, focusing on issues important to children’s health which have not been addressed elsewhere.

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