



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Thanks to New Smoke-Free Housing Policies, Hundreds of Area Residents Breathing Easier

**Tuesday, October 19, 2010, Peterborough**

Four more local social housing providers announced today that they have formalized smoke-free policies to protect their residents from the health hazards of second-hand smoke.

The new policies were recently approved by the respective Boards of Directors for Keene Non-Profit Housing, St. Barnabus Housing, Kinsmen Garden Court of Peterborough, and the YWCA of Peterborough, Victoria and Haliburton.

“We commend the leadership of these social housing providers for implementing these health protection measures as second-hand smoke causes not only cancer, but is also responsible for the development of asthma in children and will make existing chronic conditions like diabetes worse,” stated Dr. Pellizzari, Medical Officer of Health for the Peterborough County-City Health Unit. “People who need to use social housing have virtually no options to move if smoke from their neighbours’ apartment is drifting into their home, making smoke-free policies like these even more important.”

Dr. Pellizzari emphasized that the creation of smoke-free policies in social housing does not mean people are denied access to the housing they need. It simply means that people who smoke must do so outside of the building, similar to existing workplace and public space policies. In fact, these types of policies have been in effect in local housing for years such as St. John’s Retirement Home, Crossroads, Cameron House, the Youth Emergency Shelter and Brock Mission.

“In the initial stages of exploring a smoke-free policy, we spent a great deal of time listening to and addressing tenants’ concerns about discrimination and the possibility of conflict between smoking and non-smoking tenants,” explained Catharine Lamoureux, Manager of Housing with the YWCA. “After renting our first smoke-free unit at Centennial Crescent, there has been nothing but positive feedback from within the community and perspective tenants. Current tenants who smoke have asked for cessation materials and non smoking tenants have asked for a new smoke-free lease.”

The Health Unit supported the development of these policies by educating boards of directors and residents about their rights and responsibilities in terms of smoke-free spaces and

NEWS RELEASE

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provided examples of smoke-free policies. In addition, the Health Unit offers a variety of cessation programs to support residents who want to kick the habit. Anyone who would like to register for individual or group cessation counselling programs can do so by calling (705) 743-1000, ext. 330.

Research continues to demonstrate the positive health impact of smoke-free policies. The most recent study from Scotland showed that a reduction in children's levels of asthma attacks can be traced to the implementation of smoke-free policies. (see <http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa1002861?query=TOC>). The implementation of a smoke-free policy within Centennial Crescent is noteworthy since it is the first local provider of social housing for families to take this step.

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