



Canadian Centre
on Substance Abuse

Centre canadien de lutte contre
l'alcoolisme et les toxicomanies

CELEBRATING *20* YEARS · CÉLÉBRONS *20* ANS · CELEBRATING *20* YEARS · CÉLÉBRONS *20* ANS

Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse Award of Distinction recognizes Newfoundland and Labrador's handling of the OxyContin crisis

June 16, 2008, Ottawa – The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) will take the opportunity during its June 16 Board meeting in St. John's to present the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador with the CCSA Award of Distinction in recognition of the province's comprehensive response to the OxyContin health care crisis through the creation of its OxyContin Task Force in December, 2003.

By establishing a task force that brought together the ministries of justice, education and health with collaborative response teams involving police, social services and health care workers, the province created a community-based model for substance abuse prevention, intervention, treatment and harm reduction that can be applied to other Canadian jurisdictions confronting similar drug crises.

"The government demonstrated decisive and concrete leadership while at the same time setting a new 'best practice' standard that others in the substance abuse field can employ to quickly assess and take action on emerging drug issues," said CCSA Board Acting Chair David Nicholson.

Members of the OxyContin Task Force will share findings from their May, 2004, Final Report with the CCSA Board of Directors in a private meeting to be held on Wednesday, June 18. Task Force Chair Beverley Clarke, who currently serves on CCSA's Board, will lead the presentation. Clarke is also the Chief Operating Officer for Community, Children and Women's Health, Mental Health/Addictions Services, Eastern Health.

"Although the final report was completed in 2004, the lessons learned by the Task Force are still applicable today, especially as the Newfoundland and Labrador government launches its new drug strategy," said Nicholson.

The Honourable Patty Pottle, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Terry French, Parliamentary Secretary to the Honourable Ross Wiseman, Minister of Health and Community Services, will accept the CCSA award on behalf of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador during a formal dinner to be held on Monday, June 16 in the Court Garden, Fairmount Newfoundland, beginning at 7 p.m.

CCSA Recognition Awards are also being presented to retiring CCSA Board Chair Barry V. King, O.O.M., who served a total of 10 years on the CCSA Board, the last seven as Chair; and to retiring

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Board member Len Blumenthal (in absentia) who served as a member-at-large from November, 2000, to May, 2008.

The CCSA Recognition and Distinction Awards are presented to retiring Board members and other individuals or organizations for their contributions to the substance abuse field. The unique design, by Ottawa artist Rand MacIvor and sculptor Bruce Garner, symbolizes the triumph of the individual over adversity with the help of family, friends and the community. The Award was originally introduced in 1992 as the centrepiece of CCSA's national Award of Distinction program. It was presented annually at Rideau Hall, beginning a tradition of Vice-Regal patronage of the Centre that exists to this day.

The CCSA Board of Directors meetings take place Monday, June 16 to Wednesday, June 18, 2008, in St. John's, N.L. On Tuesday, June 17, CCSA Board members will visit Choices for Youth, which provides an affordable housing program, a shelter for young men aged 16 to 29 years, and an outreach and youth engagement program. Sheldon Pollette, Executive Director of Choices, will lead the tour.

CCSA's volunteer Board of Directors comprises 15 members. The Chair and five members are appointed by the Governor in Council, and nine additional members-at-large are recruited from a number of sectors, including the business community, labour groups, and professional and voluntary organizations.

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About CCSA

With a legislated mandate to reduce alcohol- and other drug-related harms, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse provides leadership on national priorities, fosters knowledge-translation within the field, and creates sustainable partnerships that maximize collective efforts. CCSA receives funding support from Health Canada.

For further information, please contact

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