

April 29, 2011

RE: International Day of the Midwife 2011: Women walking to reduce global maternal mortality

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On May 5th, 2011, over 400 midwives across Canada will be walking with thousands of mothers and supporters to mark the International Day of the Midwife. Walks are being organized by the Canadian Association of Midwives (CAM) and local midwifery associations and practices to participate in the International Confederation of Midwives' (ICM) *Road to Durban* Campaign. This campaign is calling on midwives, mothers and supporters around the world to walk five kilometers in their villages, towns and cities to raise awareness around global inequalities in maternal and newborn health and to highlight local issues in midwifery service provision. In Canada, events are taking place in every province and territory, from British Columbia to Newfoundland to Nunavut.

Over 340 000 women die each year, with millions more suffering infection and disability as a result of childbirth. Canadian midwives and their supporters will be walking to urge the Canadian government to fulfill their commitment to meeting Millennium Development Goals #4 and #5 (improve maternal health and reduce child mortality) by improving access to essential midwifery care worldwide.

In Canada, midwifery has yet to be regulated and funded in all provinces and territories. "As the national organization representing midwives and the profession of midwifery in Canada", said Ms. Anne Wilson, CAM President, "our mission is to provide leadership and advocacy for midwifery as a regulated, publicly funded and vital part of the primary maternity care system in all provinces and territories." Even in provinces and territories where midwifery is regulated and funded, there is a need to increase access to midwifery care.

Across the country, midwives and supporters will be walking to highlight both global and local issues in maternity care. Walks in the Yukon, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland/Labrador will highlight the pressing need to legislate and fund midwifery in these provinces and territories. In British Columbia and elsewhere, midwives will be walking to highlight the urgent need to increase midwifery services locally and globally. In Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba midwives will walk to focus attention on increasing access to birth centres.

National Capital walk: Ottawa, Ontario - May 5th, 2011
Start: 9:00am Minto Park, 10:30am to 12:00pm Parliament Hill.

In addition, walks and events are happening at these 28 locations:

Calgary, Alberta	Winnipeg, Manitoba
Edmonton, Alberta	St-John's, Newfoundland and Labrador
Courtenay, British Columbia	Sussex, New Brunswick
Cranbrook, British Columbia	Fort Smith, Northwest Territories
Kamloops, British Columbia	Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Penticton, British Columbia	Antigonish, Nova Scotia
Victoria, British Columbia	Rankin Inlet, Nunavut

Bracebridge, Ontario
Cambridge, Ontario
Cobourg, Ontario
Guelph, Ontario
Hamilton/Burlington, Ontario
Kingston, Ontario
Kitchener/Waterloo, Ontario

London, Ontario
Scarborough, Ontario
Toronto, Ontario
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island
Quebec City, Quebec
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Whitehorse, Yukon

Supporters of midwifery, consumers, health care providers and the public across Canada are invited to join us in celebration of the International Day of the Midwife.

For more information:

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