

28 January 2010

Journalism Awards for Excellence in Women's Health Reporting

Ottawa – The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC), in collaboration with the Canadian Foundation for Women's Health (CFWH), is calling for submissions for the 2010 SOGC/CFWH *Journalism Awards for Excellence in Women's Health Reporting*. This award, consisting of a \$1,000 cash prize per print and broadcast category, recognizes journalists, reporters, and producers who have excelled in communicating information on sexual and reproductive health issues to the public.

To be eligible, publications or broadcasts must have appeared in a Canadian consumer newspaper, magazine or broadcast report in Canada between 1 January and 31 December 2009.

Reaching the Canadian public at large with relevant and critical health information is a daunting task, particularly for non-profit organizations. This is why the SOGC and CFWH often call upon the media to help convey messages about key developments, issues or opportunities pertaining to women's health, particularly in the area of obstetrics and gynaecology.

This is why it is so important to recognize those who demonstrate initiative by preparing articles that help advance women's health in a positive and impactful way. The SOGC acknowledges that public awareness, attitudes and behaviours are greatly influenced by the information Canadians receive in the newspapers or magazines they read, the radio stations they listen to, and the television programs they watch. The role of mass media is instrumental in modern health care. "Accurate, responsible, and insightful reporting helps bring key issues to the forefront and helps women make informed decisions about their health care and lifestyle." said Dr. Michel Fortier, President of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada.

Submitted articles and reports will be judged by a panel of reproductive health experts and communication professionals. Evaluation is based on the overall merit of the entry, with an emphasis on the following evaluation criteria:

- **Originality:** The article/report was proactive rather than reactive (in response to an announcement or someone else's story)
- **Creativity:** The information is presented in a unique, skillful and imaginative way, with a distinctive approach or angle.
- **Substance of the story:** The depth and quality of the research, consultation process, analysis, and presentation of the information in the article/report.

- **Interpretation of medical information:** The ability of the journalist to present complex information and issues in layman's terms, without compromising the scientific or professional integrity of the subject matter, and in a way that retains the interest of readers/viewers.
- **Quality of writing and presentation:** Proper grammatical use, interesting layout of the information, and readability.
- **Clarity of the message:** The purpose of the article/report is clear (e.g. increased awareness, change in perception or attitudes, call-to-action) and the significance of the subject matter for the reader/viewer is apparent
- **Education benefit to women:** Women who read/view the article/report would acquire important information to help them develop informed opinions and/or decisions.
- **Relevance:** The information is pertinent, timely, accurate, and helps address a current issue or opportunity facing or affecting women's health today.
- **Effectiveness:** The article/report has the potential to catalyze national, regional, local and/or individual health priorities.

The winners will be notified by 3 May 2010. Recipients will be honoured at a ceremony to be held during the SOGC's Annual Clinical Meeting in Montreal, Quebec, in June 2010.

Please visit www.sogc.org (Media Centre) to access the submission form. **The submission deadline is 5 March 2010.**

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About the CFWH

The Canadian Foundation for Women's Health is Canada's national not-for-profit fundraising foundation for women's reproductive health. With the support of individuals, medical organizations and companies, the CFWH has been funding research that is improving "health between the hips" for Canadian women at every stage of their lives for over ten years. Along with the increased funding for research on women's health, the Foundation also fosters support for international women's health programs.

About the SOGC:

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) is one of Canada's oldest national specialty organizations. Established in 1944, the Society's mission is to promote excellence in the practice of obstetrics and gynaecology and to advance the health of women through leadership, advocacy, collaboration, outreach and education. The SOGC represents obstetricians/gynaecologists, family physicians, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals working in the field of sexual reproductive health. For more information, visit www.sogc.org

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