



June 21, 2007

SOGC Annual Clinical Meeting, Ottawa, June 21 to 26, 2007

SOGC Celebrates Partnership with Local Aboriginal Health Centre

OTTAWA – Canada’s obstetricians and gynaecologists signaled their commitment to improving the maternal and reproductive health of Aboriginal women in Canada today by joining Ottawa’s Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health in celebrating National Aboriginal Day.

The celebrations are part of the Centre’s annual *Igniting the Spirit* fundraising gala. The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) is the main sponsor for the event and took the opportunity to highlight the profession’s close relationship to the policy and practice issues that matter to Aboriginal women and their families.

“SOGC is proud to co-sponsor this event. Our members have a longstanding interest in the services and programs available to Aboriginal women, children and youth. So much so, that we’ve taken the extra steps as a profession to enhance our efforts to improve their health status and the care they receive,” said Dr. André B. Lalonde, SOGC’s Executive Vice President. “Our partnership with the Wabano Centre is an exciting opportunity to support the work of this outstanding facility while exchanging information and ideas that can help raise the standards of care for Aboriginal women and their families. Tonight’s event is important to Wabano and we are proud to be a part of it.”

Allison Fisher, Wabano Centre’s Executive Director, adds “Our collaboration with the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada will have a positive impact on our local Aboriginal community – like the Society’s support of tonight’s event to raise funds for programs targeted at urban Aboriginal children and youth – as well as on health strategies of benefit to all Aboriginal people. We look forward to building on this mutually beneficial partnership.”

SOGC recognizes the importance of supporting and collaborating with Aboriginal health providers across Canada to share knowledge, advance culturally safe health and healing, and explore new opportunities for the provision of innovative Aboriginal health care. In its *Strategic Directions 2006 – 2011*, SOGC designated Aboriginal health as one of its main pillars over the next five years.

To date, SOGC has collaborated with national Aboriginal organizations, leading Aboriginal health groups, governments and other partners toward the development of:

- An Aboriginal Birthing Strategy for Canada. The Strategy would encompass the same core elements as the National Birthing Strategy, but incorporate additional components to ensure the unique requirements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people are met.
- An Aboriginal Contraception Awareness Program that specifically addresses the requirements and challenges of an Aboriginal audience.
- Fetal fibronectin testing for First Nations and Inuit women in rural and remote communities who are experiencing preterm labour symptoms.
- A new Memorandum of Understanding with the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO).

For more information on SOGC's projects, resource materials and their commitment to raising the standards of health care for Aboriginal women and their families, please contact Marilee A. Nowgesic, Director of Aboriginal Health Initiatives at 613-730-4192, extension 332.

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About The SOGC:

The 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 in the field of sexual reproductive health.

About Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health:

Established in the National Capital Region in 1998, the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health is an urban health centre that serves over 6,000 Aboriginal people. At Wabano, we believe that sharing our history, traditional knowledge and values with the broader community will inspire them to join us in the circle of caring and sharing.