



MUHC breastfeeding resources get pumped up

The Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation donates \$350,000 to support breastfeeding programs at the MUHC

MONTREAL, September 29, 2009 – As the birth rate in Quebec continues to rise steadily for the sixth year in a row, Mr. Claude Chagnon has some good news for Montrealers and it could not have come at a better time. As President and Chief Operating Officer of the Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation, Mr. Claude Chagnon announces a \$350,000 donation to support breastfeeding at the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC).

Already on the path to becoming a designated World Health Organization (WHO) *Baby-friendly* hospital, this donation will allow the MUHC's Women's Health Mission to further support all breastfeeding mothers under their care. "Thanks to this financial support, we have been able to upgrade our technology and purchase state-of-the-art breast pumps to serve our most vulnerable patient populations," explains Luisa Ciofani, Clinical Nurse Specialist in Obstetrics and International Board Certified Lactation Consultant. "We have also been able to increase the number of lactation consultants working with our new mothers."

At the MUHC, 87% of new mothers try breastfeeding. Among them, 50% continue to breastfeed exclusively. As a result of the donation, the MUHC will be able to make a greater investment in training personnel in the hopes of further increasing rates of exclusivity. "Breastfeeding is the natural extension of pregnancy, but it is also a learned skill for mother and baby. As a result, many women need support from the health care system – at a hospital or within their own community," explains Luisa Ciofani. With better training, new mothers who visit the MUHC can expect consistent information and a standard level of expertise from all of the staff they come in contact with during their stay.

While the focus of the initiative is on the Women's Health Mission and pediatrics, there will be positive repercussions across the MUHC. "This funding will greatly help us achieve a level of expertise across all settings, including the NICU and the ER," says Luisa Ciofani. "For example, if a new mother is admitted to the ER, our health care professionals will know how to support her so that she can continue to breastfeed during her treatment."

As a Centre of Excellence for breastfeeding, the MUHC acknowledges the importance of continued research in the field. Sonia Semenic, Nurse Scientist for the MUHC's Women's Health Mission, has received a grant from the *Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la société et la culture (FQRSC)* to study the implementation of Quebec's policies to protect, support and promote breastfeeding. As part of this study, the MUHC's Royal Victoria Hospital will participate in an evaluation of barriers and facilitators to the implementation of the World Health Organization's *Baby-Friendly Initiative*.

The **McGill University Health Centre (MUHC)** is a comprehensive academic health institution with an international reputation for excellence in clinical programs, research and teaching. Its partner hospitals are the Montreal Children's Hospital, the Montreal General Hospital, the Royal Victoria Hospital, the Montreal Neurological Hospital, the Montreal Chest Institute and the Lachine Hospital. The goal of the MUHC is to provide patient care based on the most advanced knowledge in the health care field and to contribute to the development of new knowledge.
www.muhc.ca

The **Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation** wishes to contribute to the development and improvement of health by the prevention of poverty and disease, by acting primarily with children and their parents. In this perspective, the Foundation believes that early intervention and support for children enables them to develop in an optimal fashion, both physically and on the psychological, cognitive and social well-being.

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