



Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association

Association canadienne de soins palliatifs

October 8th Marks National Hospice Palliative Care Day for Children In Canada

For Immediate Release

Ottawa, October 6, 2020 — The Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA) and the Canadian Network of Palliative Care for Children (CNPCC) are proud to mark October 8th as the second annual National Hospice Palliative Care Day for Children in Canada. This year, the focus is on raising awareness for the Children of Today by highlighting the gaps in the system—lack of accessibility, lack of data collection and research, and lack of awareness and accountability—and demanding change for the care they deserve.

Pediatric hospice palliative care offers a tailored, holistic approach to allow children who face life-threatening conditions address their needs when it comes to the body, mind, and spirit. These integral approaches to end-of-life care improve children's quality of life and lowers symptom burden. Not only does pediatric hospice palliative care account for patients facing end-of-life, but it also takes into consideration the lasting effects on the parents and siblings of the children in care.

"Families who receive pediatric hospice palliative care truly appreciate the comprehensive, holistic model of care," states Chris Vadeboncoeur, pediatric hospice palliative care physician and co-chair of CNPCC, "The child receives support including attention to symptom control, therapy to understand what they are going through and peer support. The family receives support from the time of diagnosis, throughout their child's journey and into the bereavement period."

"Unfortunately, children of today are dying at higher rates in the hospital than at home or in a hospice setting," says Laurel Gillespie, CEO of CHPCA, "While there are less children in palliative care relative to adults, it is still equally important to raise awareness and funds for the barriers children and their family face when accessing quality pediatric hospice palliative care."

CHPCA has created downloadable posters that outline many of the inequities Children of Today face when accessing pediatric hospice palliative care. In addition, there is a templated letter to send to MPs or MPPs in order to raise awareness. Social media users are invited to engage with CHPCA's Facebook (CanadianHospicePalliativeCare) and Twitter (@CanadianHPCAssn) and to use the hashtags #ChildrenOfToday and #HPCForChildren to draw the attention to the importance of quality hospice palliative care for all ages, including children and their families.

Hospice Palliative Care Day for Children is coordinated by the CHPCA. For more information and downloadable resources for National Children's Hospice Palliative Care Day, please visit chpca.ca/HPCforChildren

- 30 -

For media inquiries:
Katrielle Ethier
Communications Officer
kethier@chpca.ca