

## **Dr. Peter Centre Pays Tribute during National Nursing Week**

**Vancouver, BC** – This week nurses across the country are being celebrated as part of National Nursing Week, May 7 to 13. A week honouring the contribution of nursing as a vital component to our health system and communities. As the only health care facility of its kind in Canada, The Dr. Peter Centre is paying tribute to its highly specialized nursing team and their dedicated care for people living with HIV/AIDS.

“Nursing is the first part of engagement for someone coming into the Dr. Peter Centre,” states Rosalind Baltzer-Turje, Registered Nurse and Director of Operations at the Dr. Peter Centre. “By developing therapeutic, trusting relationships with participants, our nurses are able to accomplish the ultimate goal of promoting health and healthy behaviour.”

Baltzer-Turje goes on to say, “We have an incredibly talented and caring team of nurses. These are highly skilled people working with a distinct, inner-city population. I admire their creativity in dealing with Centre participants. Their ability to lower the barriers while constantly looking for ways to reduce risk so people living with HIV/AIDS can live a full life.”

Dr. Peter Centre’s nursing team is comprised of Registered Nurses, Registered Psychiatric Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses. In addition to essential services and medications, service delivery is based on a model of care that encourages Centre participants to be the ‘experts in their own care’, using educational strategies to support them in making their own informed choices. The nursing team’s passion for working with people living with the disease extends beyond the Centre with many practicing at the HIV unit at St. Paul’s Hospital.

“There’s no question that in the last ten years, new antiretroviral drug treatments have been extending the lives of people living with HIV/AIDS, but there’s still no cure,” says Maxine Davis, Executive Director at Dr. Peter Center. “Within the complex care required to treat HIV/AIDS, our nurses also face the clinical challenges of the severe physical, psychological, and social impact of the disease. And it’s that level of distinctly specialized care that not only saves lives, it plays an essential role in improving the health and care of this growing population.”

PHOTO AVAILABLE

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Page 1 of 2

Following the wishes of the late Dr. Peter-Jepson-Young, the Dr. Peter Centre Foundation was founded in 1992. Fifteen years later, over 12,000 British Columbians are HIV/AIDS positive and each year, there are approximately 400 new cases. Province wide, it's one of the four leading causes of death in the 25-44 age group.

The Dr. Peter Centre provides palliative and respite care in its 24-hour residence and supports 23,000 annual visits to its day health program. Together with the BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS, the Dr. Peter Centre has contributed to reducing the reliance on beds and acute-care services at St. Paul Hospital.

In addition to nursing care, counselors, nutritionists, recreational therapists and over 100 volunteers provide traditional and complementary health services.

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*Dr. Peter Centre is the only HIV/AIDS day health program and 24-hour care residence in Canada. It offers care and support to improve the overall health and quality of life of people most in need. The Centre's innovative programs rely on both donor and government funding to serve the growing need for HIV/AIDS care in our communities.*

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Page 2 of 2