



Ottawa Council on  
Smoking or Health

Conseil d'Ottawa sur le  
tabagisme ou la santé

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Health Risks Removed for Thousands of Ottawa Residents on World No Tobacco Day**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Ottawa, May 30, 2014** –The Ottawa Council on Smoking or Health (OCSH) congratulates Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) for implementing its smoke-free policy on this **World No Tobacco Day** (May 31, 2014).

“This is a momentous step forward for public health and for the thousands of residents living in community housing,” says Carol McDonald, president of the OCSH. “Eliminating second-hand smoke in public housing units will provide immediate protection for residents, especially children with asthma and seniors with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and heart disease.”

“We are thrilled!” says Eleanor Duncan, who along with Marina Bernicky and Charlotte Morin, all OCH tenants, advocated for the smoke-free policy since October 2011. “We are proud that OCH Housing has taken this important step. This initiative marks the beginning of the time when our children and grandchildren will not have to live with the serious side effects of second-hand smoke.”

Tobacco use is the leading cause of *preventable* disease, disability and death in Ottawa.<sup>1</sup> There is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke. Even occasional and brief exposure to second-hand smoke can cause immediate lung inflammation and asthma attacks, and immediate damage to blood vessels that can cause heart attacks, strokes or aneurysms.<sup>2</sup>

The Ottawa Council on Smoking or Health is a volunteer organization that aims to create a social environment where non-smoking is the norm; to assist in establishing smoke-free environments; to prevent youth from starting to smoke; to encourage smokers to quit; and to advocate for better smoking cessation resources.

**For more information:**

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**References**

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<sup>1</sup> Champlain Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Network. *Annual Report 2010-2011*. University of Ottawa Heart Institute, Ottawa, 2011, p. 16. [www.ccpnetwork.ca/documents/FINALCCPNAR10-11\\_000.pdf](http://www.ccpnetwork.ca/documents/FINALCCPNAR10-11_000.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health. *Exposure to Tobacco Smoke Causes Immediate Damage, says New Surgeon General's Report*. News Release. December 9, 2010. [www.hhs.gov/news/press/2010pres/12/20101209a.html](http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2010pres/12/20101209a.html)