

News Release



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New health information centre addresses one of the most significant Canadian healthcare issues of 21st century

Sun Life Financial Health Information Centre at Bridgepoint Health connects the public with resources about complex chronic disease and wellness

Toronto (June 29, 2009) – Bridgepoint Health and Sun Life Financial have partnered to create a free information centre for the growing number of Canadians who want resources about healthy living and living well with multiple lifelong illnesses, known as complex chronic disease.

Thanks to a \$250,000 gift from Sun Life Financial, Bridgepoint Health has launched the new Sun Life Financial Health Information Centre. This web-based resource centre provides the public with information on healthy living, but is also designed to help people with complex chronic disease and disability to manage their conditions, and live well. The resources will include:

- Techniques for pain management and stress relief
- Health self-assessment tools
- Research on drug interactions
- Information on suppliers of home healthcare equipment
- Links to local support groups
- Sources of income tax information for people with disabilities

“Bridgepoint is delighted that Sun Life Financial is providing such generous support to help us in our mission to change the world for people living with complex chronic disease and disability,” said Marian Walsh, President and CEO, Bridgepoint Health. “People need an accessible source of information to assist them in living well with their multiple, life-long conditions and now they have it.”

“Sun Life is committed to supporting health-related causes through our philanthropic activities,” says Stuart Monteith, Senior Vice-President, Group Benefits, Sun Life Financial Canada. “We’re especially pleased to contribute to this new Health Information Centre at Bridgepoint Health because we believe it will have a profound impact on patients, caregivers and the community by providing access to expert information and customized research.”

Bridgepoint staff who support the web-based Sun Life Financial Health Information Centre will carefully review the resources to ensure they are current, reliable and easy to understand. The collection will be specifically chosen to address the needs of people who are coping with the effects of complex chronic disease, including various symptoms and side effects, medication interactions and special dietary requirements.

The demand for this information is increasing, as more and more Canadians are living with multiple chronic conditions. In Ontario, 70 per cent of people over age 45 have complex chronic disease.

The need for relevant health information was identified in a 2007 report by the Health Council of Canada, which noted that too few Canadians with chronic health conditions get connected with educational resources and community supports that might help them manage their own conditions.

The Sun Life Financial Health Information Centre is part of Bridgepoint's LiveWell! initiative, a strategy to prevent and manage chronic disease by building a culture of wellness for patients, staff, volunteers and the community. It is located at Bridgepoint Health, and will be part of Bridgepoint's new hospital, which will have its ground-breaking late this fall and is scheduled to open in 2013. This new 472-bed, "green" hospital will be specifically designed for patients who need specialized complex care and complex rehabilitation.

Bridgepoint's proactive approach to health promotion and disease prevention is just one of the ways it is transforming itself to address the needs of the growing number of people living with complex chronic disease. Bridgepoint is working with the World Health Organization to lead the development of Health Promoting Hospitals in Ontario.

About Bridgepoint Health

Bridgepoint Health is a publicly funded healthcare organization in Toronto that provides patient care, research and teaching in the specialized field of complex chronic disease prevention and management – the biggest healthcare challenge of the 21st century. Bridgepoint is the only healthcare organization in Canada dedicated to the prevention and management of complex chronic disease.

Affiliated with the University of Toronto, Bridgepoint Health includes:

- Bridgepoint Hospital
- Bridgepoint Family Health Team
- Bridgepoint Collaboratory for Research and Innovation
- Bridgepoint Health Foundation

Media Contacts:

Maureen Buchanan – Communications Specialist

Bridgepoint Health

Phone: 416-461-8252 ext. 2927

bridgepointhealth.ca

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