

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Working Together to Assist People with Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease and Stroke "Keep Moving" with Exercise

(Thunder Bay, ON. June 16, 2009) On Tuesday, June 16, 2009, St. Joseph's Care Group (SJCG) along with community partners hosted an Open House at the Canada Games Complex to celebrate the development of the "Keep Moving" Programs designed for people with Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease and Stroke.

St. Joseph's Care Group, the City of Thunder Bay and local support groups identified the need for community-based exercise programs geared specifically to people with chronic disease. With the support of these groups, several Thunder Bay physiotherapists researched and developed the following specialized exercise programs, *Keep Moving with Stroke*, *Keep Moving with MS*, and *Keep Moving with Parkinson Disease*. These programs are currently being delivered at the Canada Games Complex and Thunder Bay 55 Plus Centre by trained fitness instructors.

Dr. John Hargadon, Psychiatrist, SJCG is an advocate of continuing exercise after completion of the rehabilitation program. He said "In my 25 years of experience dealing with individuals living with the long-term effects of numerous neurological conditions, those who pursue regular exercise once they've been discharged from the hospital, experience a significant benefit with respect to maintenance of the independence gained during rehabilitation and overall improvement in their quality of life. "

Participants enjoy the comfort of exercising with others who have the same medical condition without feeling as though they aren't able to keep up. The opportunity for socializing and gaining support from one another allows the participants to reap more than just physical benefits.

Penny Anguish, Vice President, Complex Care & Physical Rehabilitation and Chief Nursing Officer, SJCG, believes the development of these programs in partnership was an achievement for the whole community. She said "By partnering with community organizations, we foster an environment that works together to achieve a more integrated health care system that is better able to serve people with chronic health conditions."

St. Joseph's Care Group is committed to providing programs and services in complex care & rehabilitation, long-term care and, mental health & addictions to meet the needs of the people in the Districts of Thunder Bay and Kenora-Rainy River.

- 30 -

For more information contact:

Kirsti Reinikka, Physiotherapist
St. Joseph's Care Group
Phone: 766-7456



**St. Joseph's Hospital • St. Joseph's Heritage • Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital • Hogarth Riverview Manor • Balmoral Centre
St. Joseph's Health Centre • Behavioural Sciences Centre • Diabetes Health Thunder Bay • Sister Margaret Smith Centre**

St. Joseph's Care Group is accredited with Accreditation Canada and provides services in complex care, rehabilitation, mental health and addictions, long-term care and supportive housing. Community programs are provided at Frank Murphy Community Centre.

St. Joseph's Care Group has approximately 1700 employees and over 400 volunteers. With an annual operating budget of \$125M, SJCG is the fifth largest employer in Thunder Bay. To learn more about SJCG, visit the web site at www.sjcg.net