

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ST. JOSEPH'S CARE GROUP RECOGNIZES WORLD COPD DAY

(THUNDER BAY, ON, November 19, 2008) In recognition of World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Day on November 19, 2008, St. Joseph's Care Group (SJCG) held an education session at the Italian Cultural Centre. The session discussed how to identify COPD, strategies for breathing easier and how the COPD Education Clinic can assist people living with the disease.

Featured guest speaker, Dr. Birubi Biman, Respiriologist and Director, Pulmonary Rehabilitation & COPD Education Clinic, St. Joseph's Care Group, emphasized the effective treatments available to help people diagnosed with COPD breathe easier and live more active lives. She says "The early stages of COPD are often unrecognized however it is very easy to determine whether a person is at risk. A simple, painless test called spirometry can help diagnose the disease. When COPD is diagnosed early, treatment can prevent further deterioration of lung function."

COPD is the fourth leading cause of death worldwide, killing nearly 3 million people every year, according to the World Health Organization. Many people have this lung disease and are unaware. COPD has a huge impact on the quality of life of patients and their families.

A special plaque was unveiled at the education session to recognize the official opening of the COPD Education Clinic. The establishment of this clinic continues the work toward SJCG's Vision "*to identify and respond to the unmet needs of our region*". Shelley Prevost, Registered Respiratory Therapist, and Dr. Birubi Biman, identified an unmet need for people living with COPD, and were instrumental in creation of the Clinic. Shelley indicated that "Many people living with COPD do not have a family doctor and the COPD Education Clinic is beneficial by providing them with the knowledge and skills to help manage their illness and may help to avoid preventable health complications and unscheduled physician visits. Knowledge and skills give people the confidence they need to better manage their illness."

The COPD Education Clinic is located at St. Joseph's Hospital and can be accessed by referral from any health care professional or directly through client self-referral.

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For more information contact:

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**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