
News Release

**Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer
Care Foundation**

**From: Lynette Hillier
Executive Director**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 21, 2016

Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Care Foundation and Eastern Health Unveil Aboriginal Artwork Collection in Celebration of National Aboriginal Day

St. John's, NL: The Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Care Foundation, in partnership with Eastern Health, unveiled a collection of Aboriginal Artwork for the Cancer Care Program in celebration of today being National Aboriginal Day.

In 2016, National Aboriginal Day is celebrating 20 years of strong vibrant cultures and traditions. This is a day for all Canadians to recognize and celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The Canadian Constitution recognizes these three groups as Aboriginal peoples, also known as Indigenous Peoples. Although these groups share many similarities, they each have their own distinct heritage, language, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.

In cooperation with Indigenous organizations, the Government of Canada chose June 21, the summer solstice, for National Aboriginal Day. For generations, many Indigenous Peoples and communities have celebrated their culture and heritage on or near this day due to the significance of the summer solstice as the longest day of the year.

“We are proud to be a partner with Eastern Health’s project, *Journey in the Big Land*: aimed at enhancing the cancer care journey for First Nations, Inuit and Metis (FNIM) patients residing in Labrador through this donation of an Aboriginal Artwork Collection that will hang in the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Centre”, says Gary Smith, Chairman of the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Care Foundation “Today, we celebrate the impact that partnerships – both public and private – can have on enhancing culturally safe spaces for all of our cancer patients and their families.”

The Provincial Cancer Care Program received funding in 2014 from the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer to improve the cancer journey for FNIM patients from Labrador. The project entitled *Journey in the Big Land*, is a three-year initiative focusing on three main areas: enhancing Transitions in Care between hospital and the community setting; enhancements to the Tele-oncology model to reduce patient travel; and enhancing cultural safety through health professional training programs, information packages in the languages of Labrador FNIM groups and placement of Labrador imagery at the Dr. H Bliss Murphy Cancer Centre.

“The *Journey in the Big Land* initiative addresses the unique challenges faced by many Aboriginal people when confronted with a cancer diagnosis,” said Katherine Chubbs, Vice President responsible for Aboriginal Health and Cancer Care at Eastern Health. “This initiative seeks to enhance the comfort level of Aboriginal patients as they navigate through their cancer journey. The addition of Aboriginal artwork at the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Centre will contribute to our efforts to provide a more familiar environment when patients travel to our facilities in St. John’s.”

For more information about the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Care Foundation or how it supports cancer care with Eastern Health, please visit www.cancercarefoundation.nl.ca.

About the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Care Foundation

The Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Care Foundation raises funds in support of the Dr. H. Bliss Murphy Cancer Centre and regional cancer centres across Newfoundland and to enhance treatment and supportive care programs for cancer patients, fund local cancer research initiatives and provide continuing education opportunities for cancer care professionals.

About Eastern Health

Eastern Health is the largest, integrated health authority in Newfoundland and Labrador employing approximately 13,000 dedicated employees, over 700 medical staff, and is supported by more than 1,500 volunteers, including members of numerous auxiliaries and fundraising foundations. With an annual budget of approximately \$1.4 billion, the authority offers the full continuum of health and community services including public health, long-term care, community services, hospital care and unique provincial programs and services. Serving a population of over 307,000, Eastern Health operates seven acute care facilities, six community health centres, 12 long-term care facilities and community-based offices in 30 communities. Its geographic boundaries extend from St. John’s west to Port Blandford including all communities on the Avalon, Burin and Bonavista Peninsulas.

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