

First Canadian run for mental health raises \$230,000 for Sunnybrook

May 27, 2007

Sunnybrook today hosted the first-ever Canadian Run/Walk community fundraiser to benefit mental health, with proceeds to fund essential new research and clinical initiatives in neurosciences.

"This year, we are proud to announce the Manulife Run for Research has raised a total of \$230,000 (going into the event) to support groundbreaking research and programs in the neurosciences at Sunnybrook," says Nimi Nanji-Simard, Chair of the 2007 Manulife Run for Research. "Equally important, we are pleased to know we have also helped to raise awareness of mental illness and made a difference to people whose lives have been affected by these illnesses. By de-stigmatizing these illnesses in our society, we are helping people get the help they need when it matters most."

The funds raised this year will fund programs dedicated to improving mental health such as a unique new initiative to care and treat for patients who suffer from both depression and anxiety. Until recently, there have been virtually no academic centres in Canada that focus on the combination of anxiety and depression in individuals. Research demonstrates that those with both have more serious illness than people with either condition alone.

Approximately 2,500 participants, including Sunnybrook patients, families, staff, researchers, community members, friends and their pets, walked or ran a 5 km fun-run this year titled Peace of Mind, when it matters most, in light of this year's focus on mental illness.

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre is a neuroscience resource for Ontario with 85 per cent of its references coming from outside the Greater Toronto Area. Sunnybrook's unparalleled clinicians take on the most challenging cases that other provincial hospitals are unable to treat.

Over its 25-year history, the Run has raised over \$3 million dollars to benefit important programs that span the spectrum of care at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre.

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