



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RAISE A FLAG TO SUPPORT A VETERAN

TORONTO, ON (October 12, 2011) - Sunnybrook announced today the launch of *Operation Raise a Flag*, a new campaign to encourage people to honour and support veterans.

Through this initiative, people will be able to purchase a small Canadian flag that will be imprinted with their personalized message of thanks and remembrance. In the early hours of November 11, the front lawn of the Hospital's Veterans' Centre, which is the largest in the country, will be covered in a sea of red and white flags that will offer tributes to Canada's war heroes.

"With this campaign, we hope to reach thousands of Canadians of all ages, from young children to older adults," said Barry McLellan, President and CEO at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. "Canadians owe a great deal to our war Veterans who are the foundation of this great country that we all share.

The average age of our Second World War and Korean War veterans is 90 and this campaign will be an incredible way to give them a lasting memory."

Proceeds from the campaign will go to the Veterans Comfort Fund at the Sunnybrook Veterans Centre. This fund provides Veteran residents with things such as innovative equipment and computers, community outings, continued learning opportunities and musical instruments all in an effort to enable Veterans to attain the best possible life experience while at Sunnybrook.

The fund also supports the *Veterans Grant a Wish* initiative, which also helps to improve the quality of life for veterans. "Many of the wishes granted through the program are incredibly humble," said Dorothy Ferguson, Operations Director for the Sunnybrook Veterans Centre. "It's amazing really given the sacrifice they have made for our country that most of the wishes usually involve things we may take for granted such as going to Swiss Chalet for dinner with family or attending a Maple Leafs game."

Rick Mercer, Canada's foremost comedian, television writer and Gemini Award winner, has lent his support to the campaign by urging Canadians to get involved in *Operation Raise a Flag*. Mercer's video message can be found on the homepage of www.raiseaflag.ca.

Flags are available in two sizes for a modest \$20 or \$50 donation. Anyone wishing to take part in Operation Raise a Flag can visit www.raiseaflag.ca. The goal is to sell 5,000 flags.

About Sunnybrook Veterans Centre

Working in close partnership with Veterans Affairs Canada, the Sunnybrook Veterans Centre is the largest Veterans care facility in Canada and a recognized leader in the care of Veterans who are no longer able to live at home independently. No other facility provides such a high level of specialized, compassionate, resident-centred care through a dedicated interprofessional team.

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