

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WORKING TOGETHER TO PREVENT STROKE IN SANDY LAKE

(Thunder Bay, ON. February 24, 2009) St. Joseph's Care Group (SJCG) together with Sandy Lake First Nation Health Authority are pleased to announce the launch of the Sandy Lake Stroke Prevention Project. The project was developed and implemented with a \$125,000 research grant from the Ministry of Health Promotion. The goal of the project is to educate the community about stroke and associated risk factors.

Sandy Lake is a remote, fly-in First Nation community of 2,200 people, approximately 1,400 Km northwest of Thunder Bay. The project includes a media awareness campaign and a 7 week self-management and group exercise program. Participants of the 7-week program will be assisted to make healthy lifestyle changes that decrease the risk of stroke, such as, increasing physical activity, quitting smoking, managing blood pressure and making healthier food choices.

Tracy Buckler, President & CEO, SJCG says "This project has been developed jointly by St. Joseph's Care Group and the Sandy Lake Team to ensure relevance to the people in this community. The project was designed to be sustainable and ongoing after the research phase is complete."

The project has full support from the Chief Adam Fiddler and the Sandy Lake Band Councilors and has been developed in partnership with the Sandy Lake First Nation Health Authority, Sandy Lake Diabetes Prevention Program, Nursing Station staff.

Joan Rae, Assistant Health Director, Sandy Lake First Nation Health Authority, says "This program will benefit Sandy Lake residents to become more aware of stroke and prevent stroke in our community. We know we are a high risk population and how important it is to live an active and healthy lifestyle. We want the people of Sandy Lake to know that only they can make the difference!"

The 7-week program will be delivered 5 times to groups of 10 people, with the first class starting March 1, 2009.

- 30 -

For more information contact:

Denise Taylor, Physiotherapist
St. Joseph's Care Group
Phone: 807-343-2431 ext 2651



**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