



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 4, 2011

### Free clinics launched to *Take the Pressure Down* in Saanich and Victoria

VICTORIA BC—The Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon and a local non-profit agency, Beacon Community Services, today launched an exciting new health promotion program in the Saanich and Victoria areas. Targeted at people over 40, *Take the Pressure Down* is an expansion of a heart and stroke prevention program which has been successfully running on the Saanich Peninsula since February 2010.

A community-based program, *Take the Pressure Down* partners local family physicians, public health representatives, volunteers, and community organizations to promote heart health and actively participate in the prevention of cardiovascular disease and stroke. The goal is to implement a peer health educator program of cardiovascular health awareness -- including blood pressure monitoring -- in communities throughout the Capital Regional District.

Everyone over 40 years old is encouraged to participate in *Take the Pressure Down*, free of charge. The program offers enhanced multiple blood pressure monitoring and provides interested participants with information and educational materials about health promotion activities, modifiable risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke, and community resources to help lower risk. **High blood pressure affects about 22 percent of Canadian adults** and is associated with a range of serious health problems, including cardiovascular disease, stroke and kidney disease.

Through *Take the Pressure Down*, trained volunteers will help participants measure their blood pressure (BP) using a portable, automated device. Participants will also receive a personal BP record they can share with their family physician.

The free BP monitoring clinics are held in a variety of convenient locations, including shopping malls. For a schedule of *Take the Pressure Down* blood pressure clinics available in the Greater Victoria area over the next three months, visit [www.takethepressuredown.ca](http://www.takethepressuredown.ca).

Come and celebrate Heart Month by attending one of the clinics and taking good care of your heart!

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

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