



MEDIA RELEASE

NLC and fasdNL Celebrate International FASD Awareness Day

St. Johns, NL - September 9, 2014 - NLC held a special ceremony this morning at Howley Estates Liquor Store to present a cheque of \$10,000 to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Newfoundland & Labrador (fasdNL).

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is an umbrella term that describes the range of effects that can occur in an individual who was prenatally exposed to alcohol. FASD is grossly under-reported worldwide due to the stigmatizing nature of the condition (especially for birth mothers) and the lack of awareness about FASD.

In addition to being under-reported, the vast majority of people with FASD are not visibly different. Instead, problems arise when children are in school because this is where people affected by FASD have significant difficulty meeting societal expectations due to brain damage from prenatal alcohol exposure - leading to increased risk for mental health issues, addictions, and difficulties maintaining employment. The work of *fasdNL* is focused on increasing FASD awareness and understanding as well as promoting and advocating for best practices in FASD prevention and supports.

“We, as the *fasdNL Network*, are excited about our new partnership with NLC. *FasdNL Network* was established just one year ago. We hope our partnership continues to grow as we keep working at FASD prevention and awareness as well as improving supports for people living with FASD - across Newfoundland and Labrador”, says Melody Morton Ninomiya, *fasdNL Network* Executive Board Member. “The effects of FASD are profound and hard for people to openly talk about for fear of stigma, shame, and blame. It is a permanent condition that affects anywhere from 2-5% of our population which for Newfoundland and Labrador, would be 10,000-25,000 people”.

One of NLC's Social Responsibility initiatives this year is to enhance awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder within our province. Throughout NLC's retail network, a new program was launched whereby customers under the age of 25 could alert a cashier if they were not asked for identification prior to the completion of a sales transaction. If the customer presented the appropriate I.D. then the cashier would enter a code to donate \$1 to fasdNL on behalf of NLC.

"NLC committed to donating \$10,000 out of the gates," said NLC President & CEO Steve Winter. "We used our Check 25 program to help drive the importance of keeping alcohol out of the hands of minors. In the process, we offered to donate \$1 to fasdNL for each time our cashiers failed to ask for I.D. from customers under the age of 25. With only 61 such instances out of 1 Million sales transactions over a 3 month period, our donation from the Check 25 program is a mere \$61," offered Winter. "However, the good news is two-fold," Winter explained, "our staff are successfully adhering to our I.D. policy, and regardless of the low donation amount from this specific program, NLC will still be honouring its full commitment of \$10,000 to this very worthwhile cause."

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