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Canadian Virtual Hospice Wins Silver at International Media Festival *Website honoured at Health & Science Communications Association Awards*

Winnipeg, MB – The Canadian Virtual Hospice website was recognized as “exceptional” by an international panel of judges at an awards ceremony in Boston, Massachusetts. The site, which provides information on palliative and end of life care, received a silver award in the website category from the Health & Science Communications Association (HeSCA).

The awards recognize excellence in health and sciences media production. HeSCA’s Media Festival is internationally recognized as the pre-eminent media awards program in health sciences, where the "best of the best" entries in web, print, film, video, still media and interactive media compete for distinguished honors.

“This is the Olympics of health care communication so obviously we are very pleased,” said Shelly Cory, Executive Director of Canadian Virtual Hospice, which is based in Winnipeg, Manitoba. “It’s a testament to the talents and commitment of our team to provide quality information and support to Canadians in an innovative, creative way.”

“When you see giants in the health field like Memorial Sloane Kettering in New York and MD Anderson in Texas competing in the festival, this award is very gratifying,” said Dr. Harvey Max Chochinov, Chair of Virtual Hospice. “However, most gratifying is the feedback we receive every day from Canadians saying that we’ve made a real difference in their lives - that we’ve made a difficult time a little easier.”

Canadian Virtual Hospice is an interactive website providing information and support to Canadians about life-limiting illness, loss and grief. Its *Ask a Professional* feature made it an e-health pioneer by linking Canadians directly with health experts online. The site receives visitors from over 150 countries. Funding for Virtual Hospice is provided by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority.

HeSCA’s Media Festival is an international forum for health and science media, showcasing individuals and organizations worldwide. Entries are judged by recognized leaders in biocommunication. The criteria used in evaluating media are technical quality, production values and techniques, educational design, technological innovation, creativity, and craftsmanship of the media product.

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