

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OFFICIAL KICK-OFF TO THE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR INTEGRATED SENIORS' SERVICES (CEISS)

(Thunder Bay, ON. December 4, 2009) St. Joseph's Care Group is pleased to announce the official kick-off to the Centre of Excellence for Integrated Seniors' Services (CEISS) project.

"Once completed, the new CEISS will provide seniors in Thunder Bay and the North West region with the health care services they require in the most appropriate setting," says Tracy Buckler, President & CEO, St. Joseph's Care Group.

The Centre of Excellence for Integrated Seniors' Services will be a model for the rest of the province in the provision of integrated services for better seniors' health care. The CEISS vision was developed following a decision by the City of Thunder Bay to return municipally operated long-term care beds to the province. The project includes 336 long term care beds and 132 supportive housing units.

"Today we begin another significant step forward for health care in Thunder Bay and districts," says Bill Mauro, MPP Thunder Bay-Atikokan. "I am proud that our government has partnered with St. Joseph's Care Group to ensure that quality of care for our seniors remains local and accessible."

"I'm delighted to see this project moving forward. This much-needed, modernized facility demonstrates our government's commitment to long-term care in Northwestern Ontario, and to improving the quality of life for all Northerners," says Michael Gravelle, MPP, Thunder Bay - Superior North.

"Today marks an important milestone for our City," said Mayor Lynn Peterson. "The Centre of Excellence is officially becoming a reality with work starting on a new facility for those who need long-term care and enhanced support initiatives and programs in place to help our seniors stay in their own homes longer."

The Centre of Excellence for Integrated Senior's Services will be built as part of St. Joseph's Care Group's Hogarth Riverview Manor site, and will be completed in 2012. For updated information on the CEISS project, visit the website www.ceisstbay.ca.

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**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