MEDIA OPPORTUNITY: THE CANADIAN CARDIOVASCULAR CONGRESS – Oct. 21 to 24, Vancouver

News Canadians can use! The latest in research innovations. Solving complex challenges in heart disease.

Embargoed until Thursday, October 19, 2017 at 12:01 a.m. ET (Vancouver, BC)

WHAT: Cardiology experts from Canada and around the world converge in Vancouver to brainstorm strategies to eradicate the impact of heart disease, showcase the latest research breakthroughs – and hear hundreds of speakers highlight innovations in science, prevention, treatment, and recovery. Congress delegates return home to their labs and practices armed with new tools and knowledge that will help prevent heart disease and save lives.

WHY: Heart disease is a leading cause of hospitalization and the second leading cause of death in Canada. Every seven minutes in Canada, someone dies from heart disease or stroke. Over 1.3 million survivors – and their families and caregivers – are living with the devastating after effects of heart disease. Millions of Canadians are at risk.

WHERE: Vancouver Convention Centre in Vancouver, BC

WHEN: Interviews available now through Oct 24, including onsite in Vancouver from Oct. 21 to 24

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Leading heart experts:** Available to talk about the impact of heart disease, why it matters to all Canadians, and give highlights of the research discoveries and innovations being presented at the 2017 Congress.
- **Congress researchers and presenters:** The presenters featured below are available to talk about their presentations and impactful work in the area of heart health.
- **Heart disease survivors:** Available to share their stories about living with heart disease.
- **Vancouver media:** Heart experts will be available in Vancouver for on-site or in-studio interviews from October 21 to 24.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS:

How to end a pandemic – Taking lessons from the fight against HIV/AIDS to heart.
This year’s Canadian Cardiovascular Congress opens on Saturday with a much-anticipated keynote lecture from Vancouver’s own Dr. Julio Montaner, who revolutionized antiretroviral therapy for HIV in the mid-90s, and a decade later pioneered the “Treatment as Prevention®” (TasP®) strategy to end the HIV/AIDS pandemic globally. TasP® calls for widespread HIV testing, immediate access to antiretroviral therapy and reducing the virus to undetectable levels to prevent progression to AIDS, AIDS-related mortality and transmission of HIV. With its proven success in British Columbia and around the world, TasP® is the backbone for the **UNAIDS 90-90-90 Target** – formally embraced by all UN signatory countries as the road map for the global control of HIV/AIDS by 2030.
Dr. Montaner further proposes using a Targeted Disease Elimination (TDE) approach to fight other contagious diseases, including infectious diseases (such as hepatitis C), as well as what he classifies as socially contagious diseases (such as Type 2 diabetes and atherosclerosis), using the Treatment as Prevention (TasP®) model. He will challenge CCC delegates to consider the potential impact Targeted Disease Elimination and TasP® would have on individual health outcomes, public health outcomes, and healthcare sustainability. (Julio Montaner, Vancouver, BC)

**Hands on hearts**
What does a diseased heart look like? Media are invited to join CCC delegates in an opportunity to view and handle actual human hearts, showing the effects of conditions such as cardiomyopathy, atherosclerotic coronary artery disease, prior valve replacement, complex congenital heart disease (including surgically corrected cases), and transplantation. Subspecialty cardiovascular pathologists will be on hand to explain the diseases and their impact on the heart. In the CCC Community Forum, Saturday to Monday, from 10 a.m. (Michael Seidman, Vancouver)

**The e-cigarette debate: Which side of the light are you on?**
Tobacco smoke kills over 37,000 people in Canada each year. Currently 5.2 million Canadians smoke; that’s 16.9% of Canadians aged 12 and over. Some smokers are now using e-cigarettes to satisfy their cravings and addiction. While e-cigarettes are likely less harmful than combustible tobacco, they are not without risks/harm. Some point to the potential of the devices to increase tobacco smoking by expanding the nicotine market among younger people, and renormalizing smoking; serving as a gateway for nicotine addiction and tobacco use. Currently, nicotine sold for use in e-cigarettes is banned in Canada but can be readily available under-the-counter, and there is legislation underway which would make e-cigarettes with nicotine legal for adult use. E-cigarettes are also only beginning to undergo rigorous clinical testing, so there is conflicting evidence comparing their potential as cessation devices to that of current pharmacotherapies and behavioral treatment interventions. Which side of the light should Canada be on? Part of the CCC debate series. (Pro: Simon Bacon, Montreal. Con: Andrew Pipe, Ottawa)

**Protecting cancer patients’ hearts from cardiotoxic treatments**
More cancer patients are surviving and living longer. Some lifesaving cancer therapies, however, can damage patients’ hearts and lead to other serious health concerns. How can healthcare providers work together to best protect the heart health of their cancer patients who undergo potentially cardiotoxic therapies? Experts from three Canadian programs in the emerging field of cardio-oncology share strategies in coordinating the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cardiac complications related to cancer therapy. (Christopher Johnson, Ottawa; Margot Davis, Vancouver; Christine Simmons, Vancouver)

**Women in medicine: Breaking the glass ceiling by leaning in**
Women have a long history in medicine, and there’s more progress ahead! In this inaugural CCC women’s session, cardiology and cardiac surgery mentors share stories with trainees about the experiences of women in medicine, and how they are "breaking the glass ceiling by leaning in." The trainees, who come from a number of disciplines, will also launch their #LookLikeA... campaign to highlight the accomplishments of inspirational Canadian female
role models in cardiovascular medicine. (Heather Ross, Toronto; Jacqueline Saw, Vancouver; Michelle Graham, Edmonton. Trainees: Varinder Randhawa, Toronto; Erin Rayner-Hartley, Vancouver; Laura Banks, Toronto; Katie Allan, Hamilton)

Celebrating outstanding achievements: Nominated by peers, the 2017 Canadian Cardiovascular Society Awards recognize exceptional contributions to the field of cardiology. This year’s recipients include:

- **Canadian Heart Failure Society 2017 Annual Achievement Award: Confronting a growing epidemic.** Heart failure is a growing - and all too silent - epidemic in Canada. It is a significant health issue for hundreds of thousands of Canadians and their families, and its reach is expanding. When Dr. Peter Liu, chief scientific officer and vice president, research at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, started in the field over 25 years ago, a diagnosis of heart failure was like a death sentence. Now, "these patients are living longer, true testaments to the scientific advances we have made together." He's played a significant role in that progress thanks to the support through organizations such as the Canadian Cardiovascular Society and Heart & Stroke. His lab has identified novel biomarker candidates for heart failure, and is evaluating them in new clinical settings to achieve personalized care. A passionate advocate for heart failure care and research, he is also been a key contributor to guidelines to guide health professionals in diagnosing and managing patients with heart failure. "We have traveled far, but there is still so much more journey to cover." (Peter Liu, Ottawa)

- **Canadian Cardiovascular Society 2017 Research Achievement Award: Multiplying impact.** How do you multiply an impact? Recognized for research in device and interventional therapy of cardiac arrhythmia associated with heart failure, Dr. Anthony Tang has a dual perspective as a clinician-scientist. "In clinical practice we serve one individual and offer help and assistance to the person," says Dr. Tang, scientific director and CEO of the Cardiac Arrhythmia Network of Canada (CANet). "In research, we serve and offer advancement of medicine that affects many more individuals all over the world." Among his major research contributions is the treatment-changing RAFT trial, which reduced rates of death and hospitalization for heart failure among patients with mild-to-moderate heart failure. One of his hopes is to see patient-centred and individualized arrhythmia care for all Canadians. (Anthony Tang, London, ON)

**QUOTES: The Canadian Cardiovascular Congress**

"The 2017 Canadian Cardiovascular Congress in Vancouver will be jam-packed with expert speakers, thought-provoking sessions, and opportunities to build connections. More than 2,500 health professionals in attendance will seize the opportunity to explore different perspectives, innovate and co-create, and present and discuss the latest science and new cardiovascular advances.”

Dr. Michelle Graham, scientific chair, Canadian Cardiovascular Congress

"The threat of heart disease is urgent and remains a stubborn leading cause of death and hospitalization. The learnings and connections made at the Congress will build capacity for an even stronger heart health community in Canada, shaping the future of diagnosis, treatment, and care management, which will save life’s precious moments and bring hope
HEART HEALTH FACTS:

- Heart disease is the second leading cause of death in Canada
- An estimated 1.3 million Canadians are living with heart disease
- There are an estimated 70,000 heart attacks in Canada; one every seven minutes
- Up to 40,000 cardiac arrests occur each year in Canada; one every 13 minutes
- Nine in 10 Canadians have at least one risk factor for heart disease and stroke; more than 24 million Canadians

The Canadian Cardiovascular Congress brings together more than 2,500 heart health experts to exchange ideas and present the latest breaking research. It is being held in Vancouver from October 21 to 24. #CCCVAN