



For Immediate Release

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Bell Aliant Pioneers confronting Mental Health with a \$250,000 donation for Videoconferencing Technology

St. John's –Through a joint partnership with the Health Care Foundation and the Janeway Children's Hospital Foundation, the Bell Aliant Pioneers donated \$250,000 today to fund the implementation of videoconferencing technology across the province in an effort to eliminate geographical barriers and increase access to care for people living with mental health issues.

"Providing videoconferencing services to various locations around the province will give people the opportunity to get the help they need in a cost efficient and timely manner," said Allan Miller, incoming president, Bell Aliant Pioneers. "This will no doubt have a significant impact for the one in five people living with mental illness in this province."

This first-of-its-kind partnership with the two foundations will target communities in Newfoundland and Labrador that are underserved in mental health and addictions programs. There are currently 81 psychiatrists in the province, with the majority of them operating outside the greater Avalon region.

"This gift will help change the face of mental health in our province by creating a solution for greater access for patients of all ages," said Paul Snow, CEO and president of the Health Care Foundation. "Not only will the program reduce wait times, but it will significantly reduce costs for the families as they can seek treatment in their own communities from the appropriate health care professional. We are thankful for this donation as it will make treatment more accessible."

"We are all at risk when it comes to our mental health," said Janeway Children's Hospital Foundation Executive Director, Lynn Sparkes. "From children to youth to seniors, we must ensure that we not only meet the mental health care needs of today and tomorrow, but for generations to come. This generous donation will help us reach these goals."

"We congratulate the Bell Aliant Pioneers for selecting the Health Care Foundation and the Janeway Children's Hospital Foundation for their donation to this project. This gift supports Bell Aliant's overall focus to improve access to mental health care in the communities we serve and we are pleased to see geographical barriers eliminated so more people living with mental illness can get the treatment they need," said Geoff Davis, Regional Vice President, Sales, Newfoundland and Labrador of Bell Aliant.

The Bell Aliant Pioneers have contributed to other initiatives including the Health Care Foundation's Eleganza event and Janeway Telethon.

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