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Winnipeg Social Worker Wins National Award **Virtual Hospice's Fred Nelson wins Award of Excellence from CHPCA**

OTTAWA – Hundreds of Canada's palliative care leaders gave a standing ovation today to a Winnipeg-based social worker who has distinguished himself locally and nationally by his commitment to improving care for the dying and for their families.

Fred Nelson, MSW, received the Canadian Hospice and Palliative Care Association's Award of Excellence at the opening of the organization's annual conference. The award recognizes the outstanding national contribution of a CHPCA member who exemplifies professional and/or personal commitment and achievement in the field of hospice palliative care within Canada.

"For almost thirty years Fred has been helping people through the most difficult time of life – and that's just his day job at the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority," says Shelly Cory, Executive Director of the Canadian Virtual Hospice, where Nelson also serves as a psychosocial consultant.

"Virtual Hospice is one of countless national and regional initiatives that have benefited from Fred's expertise and caring. We are extremely lucky to have Fred on our team, answering Canadian's questions through our "Ask a Professional" feature, and developing information for patients and families."

"Fred is a most worthy choice to receive the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Award of Excellence," says Dr. Mike Harlos, Medical Director of the WRHA Palliative Care Program, a Virtual Hospice team member and a former award recipient. "Fred has been a dedicated and unwavering champion for Manitobans living with life-limiting illness. The ripple effect from the hours he has spent teaching professional and volunteer caregivers is immeasurable.

The recognition of Nelson's work is the latest in a string of awards for the Winnipeg-based Canadian Virtual Hospice this year:

- www.virtualhospice.ca won the silver award in the website category, at the US-based Health and Sciences Communications Association's Media Festival.
- Chair Dr. Harvey Chochinov received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Canadian Association of Psychosocial Oncology, and an award for outstanding contribution from the International Psychosocial Oncology Association.
- team member Dr. Cornie Woelk was named Physician of the Year by Manitoba College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Canadian Virtual Hospice is a website providing information and support to people with life-limiting illness, to their families and to health care providers. It has been ranked by the Canadian Health Libraries Association as one of the best health websites in Canada. Virtual Hospice is funded by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority.

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