



**Contact:**  
Sonya Kruger  
Communications Specialist  
Northern Cancer Control Strategy  
Tel: 250.649.4873  
[skruger@bccancer.bc.ca](mailto:skruger@bccancer.bc.ca)

## MEDIA RELEASE

February 3, 2010

For immediate release

### New BC Cancer Agency Cancer Prevention Coordinators to focus on cancer prevention education in the community

The BC Cancer Agency's new Cancer Prevention Coordinators (CPCs) in the North are helping to spread the word that more than half of all cancers are preventable.

The new coordinators are located in Vanderhoof, Terrace, Smithers, Hazelton, Dawson Creek, Mackenzie and Prince Rupert. The new CPCs are joining an already strong regional Prevention Programs team which has members in Fort St. John, Quesnel, and Haida Gwaii. Agency coordinators work to address specific community needs related to cancer and to support and enhance community-based prevention initiatives.

"We are fully committed to enhancing cancer care services in our northern communities," said Health Services Minister Kevin Falcon. "Prevention and health promotion are key elements of the cancer care continuum. These new positions complement the work that is already being done through the Northern Cancer Control Strategy to enhance services across the region."

The Cancer Prevention Coordinators will support northern communities in their efforts to prevent cancer by focusing on five primary risk factors as part of their educational outreach:

- Tobacco use
- Healthy body weight
- Healthy diet and nutrition
- Healthy physical activity levels
- Sun exposure

In addition to primary prevention, the coordinators will also assist in awareness and promotion of cancer screening, chiefly for breast (mammography) and cervical cancers, with the goal of increasing the number of women screened.

"Our goal is to help people stay healthy and hopefully cancer free," said Sonia Lamont, Provincial Manager for Prevention Programs at the BC Cancer Agency, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority.

"We believe it is much better to prevent a cancer than to treat it after it has developed," added Dr. David McLean, Head of BC Cancer Agency Prevention Programs.

The BC Cancer Foundation, the fundraising arm of the BC Cancer Agency, has provided some of the funds to establish a team of Cancer Prevention Coordinators across other parts of the province, recognizing the importance of cancer prevention at the community level.

The CPCs' work in the North focuses in part on the prevention goals of the Northern Cancer Control Strategy, a joint initiative of the agency, PHSA, and Northern Health. The strategy is focused on improving cancer services in the region through prevention initiatives, diagnosis, treatment, and patient supports. As part of the strategy, construction on the new BC Cancer Agency Centre for the North will start this year in Prince George, and enhancements to various local community cancer clinics remain ongoing.

By 2012 in northern BC, 1,200 new cancer cases will be diagnosed annually, and 11,000 people will be living with a history of cancer. Survival rates for some cancers are lower in

the North than in other parts of the province. In addition, cervical cancer screening and mammography participation rates are also lower compared to the rest of B.C.

To find your local Cancer Prevention Coordinator, please contact the northern BC Cancer Agency Prevention Programs office at 250-649-4853 or visit <http://www.bccancer.bc.ca/PPI/Prevention/default.htm>.

-30-

*The BC Cancer Agency, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, is committed to reducing the incidence of cancer, reducing the mortality from cancer, and improving the quality of life of those living with cancer. It provides a comprehensive cancer control program for the people of British Columbia by working with community partners to deliver a range of oncology services, including prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment, research, education, supportive care, rehabilitation and palliative care. The BC Cancer Foundation raises funds to support research and enhancements to patient care at the BC Cancer Agency. [www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca)*