



Canadian Cancer Society
Société canadienne du cancer



Media Release

Attention: News/Assignment/Health and Lifestyle editors

New survey shows nearly half of Ontario tobacco users have made a New Year's resolution to quit

Canadian Cancer Society launches seventh annual *Driven to Quit Challenge*

Toronto, Ontario, January 3, 2012 – Of current and past tobacco users in Ontario, 47 per cent have made a New Year's resolution to quit in previous years, according to results of a survey¹ conducted in November. In time to kick off 2012, *The Driven to Quit Challenge* launches today, inviting Ontario tobacco users to break their addiction for the chance to win a new car, a dream vacation or cash.

The Challenge, funded annually by the Government of Ontario, is open to Ontarians aged 19 and over who used tobacco at least 10 months in 2011. Those who stay smoke-free for the month of March can win their choice of a new Ford Fusion hybrid or Ford Edge. Other prizes include two \$5,000 CAA travel vouchers and seven prizes of \$2,000 cash.

Nearly two thirds of respondents who make New Year's resolutions, or 62 per cent, believe it is important to have a support system in place when achieving a New Year's resolution. For those pledging to quit smoking this year, *The Driven to Quit Challenge* requires entrants to sign up with a support buddy, who stands to win \$200 cash.

"Fifteen per cent of people in Ontario smoke, and tobacco use accounts for 30 per cent of all cancer cases," says Martin Kabat, CEO, Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Division. "Today, Ontarians have extra motivation to make an attempt to quit smoking. And, the Canadian Cancer Society can provide the support they need to do so."

"Our government is committed to helping break the cycle of tobacco addiction. Every attempt to quit is a vital part of this process, and with the right resources and motivation, Ontarians have a better chance of success. That is why we support initiatives such as *The Driven to Quit Challenge* that encourage smokers to improve their health by quitting," said Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

The survey also revealed some interesting facts with respect to smoking and smoking cessation along gender and education lines:

- Females have been much more likely to make a resolution to quit tobacco, with 56 per cent having made a resolution in the past, compared to 44 per cent of men
- Women (65 per cent) are also slightly more inclined to feel that a support system is important when making resolutions, compared to men (59 per cent)
- 39 per cent of people with a university education are current or past tobacco users, compared with 60 per cent of those with high school or college education

To register and for details about *The Driven to Quit Challenge*, Ontarians can go to www.DrivenToQuit.ca or call the Canadian Cancer Society *Smokers' Helpline* at 1 877 513-5333. Registration is open until February 29, 2012.

About *The Driven to Quit Challenge*

The Driven to Quit Challenge is hosted by the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Division, with funding from the Government of Ontario and generous prize support from McNeil Consumer Healthcare, a wholly owned subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson Inc. *The Driven to Quit Challenge* is presented in collaboration with local public health departments across the province.

About Canadian Cancer Society *Smokers' Helpline*

Smokers' Helpline is a free, confidential service that provides personalized support, advice and information about quitting smoking and tobacco use. Operated by the Canadian Cancer Society and funded by the Government of Ontario, *Smokers' Helpline* has three ways to help Ontarians quit: phone support, online program and text messaging at 1 877 513-5333 and SmokersHelpline.ca.

About the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Division

The Canadian Cancer Society is a national community-based organization of volunteers whose mission is the eradication of cancer and the enhancement of the quality of life of people living with cancer. When you want to know more about cancer, visit www.cancer.ca or call the bilingual *Cancer Information Service*, toll-free, at 1 888 939-3333.

The Driven to Quit Challenge will be officially launched at 11 a.m. Tuesday January 3 at David Pecaut Square in Toronto, Ontario. A street team will blanket the busy square, asking the public to make their New Year's pledge by tossing their packs in a 12 foot acrylic cigarette butt.

¹About the survey

From November 29 to November 30, 2011, an online survey was conducted among 1,002 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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A photo of the launch event is available upon request.

For more information about *The Driven to Quit Challenge* and to speak with a Canadian Cancer Society spokesperson, contact:

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