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## **Flag-Raising Ceremony at Sudbury City Hall Will Prompt Tears and Awareness**

(SUDBURY, ON) April 24, 2017 — When Sudbury City Hall raises the blue and white Huntington Society of Canada (HSC) flag on April 28<sup>th</sup>, Pat Delyea will be there, along with other members of the Society’s local chapter. And it’s going to be an emotional moment. “I’m going to break down,” she predicts.

That’s understandable: Huntington disease (HD) is a cause very close to her heart. First, her father died from the fatal neurological disease in 1987. Her Brother died of hyperthermia after becoming “disorientated” while hunting in Markstay. Then it struck her sister. As the disease gradually took away Josephine’s ability to walk and speak, she was forced to put her children into foster care. Unfortunately, the ravages of HD didn’t stop there. Four years ago, Pat’s nephew Joshua learned he had inherited the illness that killed his mother, uncle and grandfather.

Before his diagnosis, Joshua enjoyed joking around, grabbing a beer with his friends and having lively discussions. He would win countless spelling bees and bible quizzes. With the manifestation of HD symptoms, Josh has great difficulty keeping up with conversations and it is now a challenge, while word recall becomes increasingly difficult as well. Now 35, Joshua isolates himself in his small apartment, spending most of his time surfing the net. “Joshua wants to talk, but he says ‘I can’t find the words,’” says Pat. “That’s what’s hard: seeing everything most of us take for granted, slowly being taken away from those you love.”

Today, Pat uses her own voice to help people learn about HD and its devastating impact on families. Whether she’s encouraging organizations to book educational workshops with a Huntington Society of Canada social worker or trying to get the Big Nickel and Science North lit up with HD colours, Pat is keen to spread the word however she can. “Awareness is so important so that Canadians will understand what people with HD are going through,” she says.

The flag-raising ceremony takes place at 2:30 pm on April 28<sup>th</sup> in the courtyard of Tom Davies Square. Mayor Brian Bigger will also officially proclaim May as Huntington Disease Awareness Month, joining cities from coast to coast that are bringing attention to this illness.

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**Huntington disease (HD)** is a debilitating brain disorder that is fatal and incurable. About one in every 7,000 Canadians has HD and approximately one in every 5,500 is at risk of developing the disease. Many more are touched by HD whether as a caregiver, a family member, or a friend. HD causes cells in specific parts of the brain to die. As the disease progresses, a person with Huntington's become less able to manage movements, recall events, make decisions and control emotions. The disease leads to incapacitation and, eventually, death.

The **Huntington Society of Canada (HSC)** is a respected leader in the worldwide effort to end Huntington disease. HSC is the only Canadian health charity dedicated to providing help and hope for families dealing with Huntington disease across Canada.

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