

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Guelph Helps Local Volunteer Raise Awareness for Huntington Disease (HD)  
at City Hall by #LightItUp4HD  
*May is Huntington Disease Awareness Month***

(Kitchener, ON) April 27, 2016 – Guelph Volunteer, Jamie, is taking a stand. Along with his Worship Mayor Cam Guthrie, Jamie will raise the Huntington Society of Canada’s Flag and light up City Hall on May 2, 2016 in blue and purple. All in an effort to raise awareness for this devastating, cruel disease. May is HD Awareness Month and Walters is courageously and enthusiastically spreading the word, educating Guelph citizens about the disease and how they can help the thousands of Canadians impacted by this devastating disease.

Started in 2015 by Jamie, #LightItUp4HD’s first illumination in Canada was the CN Tower. The purpose to raise the visibility of Juvenile Huntington disease (JHD) and Huntington disease (HD) in purple and blue lights respectively. When the sun set on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015 thousands of Canadians saw the CN Tower lit up, and it quickly turned into a national phenomenon. Thanks to Walter's enthusiasm, volunteers from across Canada have joined the project and are expanding “LightItUp4HD” by lighting up buildings, monuments and statues during the month of May 2016.

This year Jamie’s added a new twist. He asked Mayor Guthrie to proclaim May as Huntington Disease Awareness Month in Guelph and requested that City Hall be lit up in the blue and purple colours in support of individuals and families who are affected by HD. So on May 2, 2016 at 11 a.m., Mayor Guthrie will raise the flag and proclaim May as Huntington Disease Awareness month.

“For so many years, HD has been kept secret in families, due to stigma and discrimination. This “LightItUp4HD” campaign is a wonderful opportunity for those impacted by Huntington disease to raise awareness, make connections, get support from their communities, and move forward with pride and dignity,” says Bev Heim-Myers, Chief Executive Officer of the Huntington Society of Canada. “It is a true global collaboration as countries as far away as Spain are participating.”

Volunteers have reached out to the Society’s sister organizations from around the world and asked them to participate. Scotland, Ireland, Spain and the United States, are just some of the countries working with us to #LightItUp4HD during the month of May 2016. To see a complete list of sites visit, [www.lightitup4hd.com](http://www.lightitup4hd.com).

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Jamie wants to educate Canadians about the disease by lighting up national monuments. “The more people understand the disease, the more they can accept those who are impacted and extend support,” says Jamie. The month of May is designated as Huntington Disease Awareness Month, and in conjunction with the #LightItUp4HD campaign, the Society will launch their new Public Service Announcement (PSA) about Huntington disease on May 1, 2016. To see the Society’s new PSA campaign visit [www.huntingtonsociety.ca/psa-campaign](http://www.huntingtonsociety.ca/psa-campaign).

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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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