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Toronto Photographer Captures the Trials and Triumphs of Huntington Disease

(KITCHENER, ON) Jan. 7, 2015 – Toronto photographer Meghan Andrews has combined two of her passions – photography and raising awareness about Huntington disease – to produce a compelling photo book that documents the journeys of Canadian families affected by Huntington disease.

Huntington’s Disease: Trials and Triumphs highlights the strength, courage and positivity of 15 families coping with various stages of the disease. Huntington disease (HD) is a debilitating brain disorder that is fatal and incurable. The symptoms, which may include uncontrollable jerking movements and relentless cognitive and emotional impairment, usually present between the ages of 30 and 50 and gradually worsen over the 10-25 year course of the disease. Eventually they lead to total incapacitation and death.

Meghan travelled across the country to photograph HD families from coast to coast. The photo book is a project with deep personal meaning for Meghan: she understands all too well the impact that HD can have on a family. Her father had Huntington disease and passed away in 2004. Two years later, Meghan decided to undergo genetic testing and learned that she also carries the gene.

“I thought that by documenting families with Huntington’s I could bring awareness to the disease and illustrate how the disease affects not only the patient, but the family as a whole,” says Meghan. “I found this whole experience to be an incredibly healing one. I constantly find myself thinking that if others can do this with a smile on their face, so can I.”

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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.

Meghan Andrews is available for interview. *Huntington’s Disease: Trials and Triumphs* can be purchased by contacting the Huntington Society of Canada at 1-800-998-7398 or events@huntingtonsociety.ca. Meghan’s photos will also be featured in an exhibit at Toronto’s Gallery50 in November 2015.

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