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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **THE HONOURABLE JIM WATSON JOINS VON CANADA FOR SECOND ANNUAL WALK-RUN-ROLL FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

**For immediate release**

**OTTAWA, May 12, 2007** - To mark the beginning of VON Week, VON Canada staff, volunteers and community supporters launched VON's second annual *Walk-Run-Roll for Healthy Communities* from Confederation Park in Ottawa this morning.

In attendance, along with The Honourable Jim Watson, Ontario Minister of Health Promotion was MP, Mr. Paul Dewar and CBC's Lucy van Oldenbarneveld, host of CBC News At Six and members of the CBC Gotta Run Team. Also in attendance were national sponsors Mike Martin of Telus and Anju Malhotra from ScotiaBank.

"Our goals for this event are to not only raise funds for the many charitable programs that support Canadians, like Meals on Wheels or palliative volunteer visiting, but to encourage Canadians to get active and make healthy lifestyle choices," says Dr. Judith Shamian, President and CEO, VON Canada. "As home and community healthcare providers, VON is concerned with the increasing incidents of chronic disease. Currently, one in three Canadians is impacted by chronic disease. These diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease, can be preventable through a healthy lifestyle."

The VON Walk-Run-Roll for Healthy Communities is a walk with a unique twist – a Summer Fitness Challenge. There are 38 events planned across the country this summer. Funds raised through this event will support local charitable programs, such as Meals on Wheels, Volunteer Visiting, School Breakfast programs and more than 50 different services designed to meet the health and social needs of Canadians.

National sponsors for the *VON Walk-Run-Roll for Healthy Communities* include Play Advertising, TELUS, Scotiabank, Air Canada, Amedius and VIA Rail.

“PLAY shares VON Canada’s commitment to healthy communities and has been involved in this important event and cause from its inception,” says Brian Torsney, President of PLAY Advertising, whose firm helped develop VON Canada’s new branding last year. “We are very proud to be associated with VON, one of Canada’s most cherished and respected health care organizations.”

VON is dedicated to being a leader in the delivery of innovative comprehensive health and social services and to influencing the development of health and social policy in Canada. We are a national health organization and registered charity offering a wide range of community health care solutions that meet the needs of Canadians from coast to coast. VON is committed to continuous quality improvement and is accredited by the Canadian Council of Health Services Accreditation.

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