



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Saint Elizabeth Health Care advocates caring across cultures

TORONTO, ON – Whether we are faced with our own mortality or that of a parent, child, sibling or spouse, Canadians must inevitably deal with death and dying. And when we do, we want our specific cultural traditions and religious beliefs to be acknowledged and respected by care providers during end-of-life care.

Saint Elizabeth Health Care is helping to ensure consumers can access culturally-sensitive care with the publication of a second edition to its popular booklet, *Caring Across Cultures: Multicultural Considerations in Palliative Care* (2002).

According to the 1996 census, 44 per cent of Canadians reported at least one ethnic origin that was not English or French; Canadians of Italian, Aboriginal, Chinese and South Asian descent were among the top 15 largest ethnic groups. Cultural diversity is compounded by the fact that in 1991, Canadians practiced at least eight different religions, including Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism.

A care provider's knowledge of an individual's personal and cultural background can help promote a supportive and trusting relationship, thereby contributing to a more meaningful palliative care experience. *Caring Across Cultures* provides a brief overview of the major cultural groups in Canada and outlines some basic principles of the world's major religions.

*Caring Across Cultures* is just one of Saint Elizabeth Health Care's many initiatives to meet the diverse and unique needs of Canadian consumers with client-centred health care programs and services.

The organization recently launched @YourSide™, an innovative line of Web-based technology solutions that provide clients with personalized health management education, information and tracking tools in areas such as mother and baby care, diabetes management, cardiac care and caregiver support.

"*Caring Across Cultures* and @YourSide™ are two great examples of how Saint Elizabeth Health Care is putting people in charge of their own health care, influencing the direct care of individuals and families, as well as the health system at-large," says Shirlee Sharkey, President and CEO.

Since *Caring Across Cultures* was first published in 1988, Saint Elizabeth Health Care has distributed thousands of copies to hospitals, residential care facilities, educational institutions and other social agencies throughout Canada and beyond its borders.

The second edition features new information on five additional cultural groups, a national orientation, updated statistics and an expanded list of community resources. The project evolved from a grassroots investigation that was primarily informed by interviews with community leaders and experts in palliative care.

LEADING THE EVOLUTION OF HEALTH CARE

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For more information about *Caring Across Cultures* or to set up an interview with a Palliative Care specialist, please contact:

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Saint Elizabeth Health Care is a distinguished not-for-profit Canadian health care organization that provides a comprehensive range of family-centred programs and services that meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of individuals and their families.

For almost a century, we have been forging strong client-care provider relationships that are rooted in our traditional values of professional excellence, compassion and respect for human dignity.

If you would like to learn more about the programs and services offered by Saint Elizabeth Health Care, including exciting new capacity-building @YourSide™ technology solutions and consulting services, please visit our website at [www.saintelizabeth.com](http://www.saintelizabeth.com) or call (905) 940-9655 ext. 2269.