

Handy Influenza Prevention Strategy Kicks Off

School District 2 partners with Medavie Blue Cross to provide automated hand sanitizer pump stations for 37 schools

For Immediate Release

December 3, 2009 – Moncton, NB School District 2 has announced a partnership with Medavie Blue Cross to provide 37 schools in the southeast district with free standing automated hand sanitizers in school entrances and high-traffic areas.

Schools, often identified as vulnerable locations for transferring contagious viruses, face the challenge of educating students, teachers and parents on seasonal influenza prevention. This year the added concern of the H1N1 virus has made the issue even more important to address.

A chance meeting in the Montreal airport between Shelley Kee, Vice-President, Group Business (Atlantic Region), Medavie Blue Cross and Aubrey Kirkpatrick, Director of Finance, Administration and Communication, School District 2, ignited the idea of co-sponsoring a hand sanitizer project to help with preventing the spread of seasonal influenza and the H1N1 virus.

“We are confident that setting up the automated hand sanitizer stations in 37 schools will result in a decrease of the number of seasonal influenza cases in our community,” offered Aubrey Kirkpatrick. “We all need to try to do our part in educating and putting into action best practices for a healthy community. This is one small step that creates big results and we’re proud to be partnering with Medavie Blue Cross on this project.”

Building strategic partnerships between public and private organizations is a key element to developing a strong community. Focusing on common goals and drawing from each other’s strengths means greater results will be achieved and shared. This latest initiative between Medavie Blue Cross and School District 2 is just one example of a well-balanced partnership for the greater good of the community.

“We’re really excited to be able to help make the schools in our community healthier for our kids and our teachers,” said Shelley Kee. “We understand the importance of prevention in combating H1N1 and seasonal flu and we’re happy we can help through this strategic partnership.”

Availability of hand sanitizers in schools is one part of the overall prevention plan. The Public Health Agency promotes thorough hand washing as a critical element of prevention. It is recommended that all Canadians visit www.fightflu.ca for information on staying healthy during the flu season.

“To be able to connect with-like-minded organizations and work together for the betterment of our kids, teachers and parents is the true definition of community,” said Karen Branscombe, School District 2 Superintendent. “We must continue to monitor the seasonal flu and H1N1 and stay dedicated in the promotion of prevention methods. This prevention initiative with Medavie Blue Cross is just one example of our firm and continual commitment to our community.”

ABOUT SCHOOL DISTRICT 2

School District 2 is NB’s largest school district serving more than 15,800 students. Located in Southeast NB, District 2 serves 37 schools with more than 2,400 staff. All schools in District 2 focus on the “Three Big Ideas” of a Professional Learning Community when organizing improvement efforts at the school level: (1) Focus on Learning, (2) Focus on Collaboration and (3) Focus on Results. School District 2 teachers work in teams to develop goals that support the School Improvement Plan. These goals are based on data from provincial, district and school assessments and are focused on the achievement targets in “When Kids Come First”, the provincial and district education plan.

ABOUT MEDAVIE BLUE CROSS

Medavie Blue Cross is a recognized health services partner for individuals, employers and governments across Canada. For 65 years, it has set the standard in health, dental, travel, life and disability benefits. A member of the Canadian Association of Blue Cross Plans, Medavie Blue Cross operates from offices in Moncton, Dartmouth, Halifax, Montreal, Quebec City and Toronto, as well as Fredericton, Saint John, Bathurst, Charlottetown and St. John's. Medavie Blue Cross is committed to improving lives and supporting healthy outcomes in communities across Canada.