



LifeCanada E-Newsflash

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We invite you to forward this E-Newsflash to anyone who might be interested in these news items

Activists Challenge New Brunswick's Policy on Abortion Funding

A new group has been formed to challenge New Brunswick's guidelines that restrict abortions within the province's hospitals. The province only funds abortions performed in a hospital within the first 14-weeks of pregnancy and deemed to be medically necessary by two physicians. The group of abortion activists which includes doctors and lawyers plan to launch a court challenge if the provincial health minister does not drop the restrictions. "This lawsuit is a guise for abortion on demand, something not mandated or required by any court or legislation" said Peter Ryan, executive director of New Brunswick Right to Life. It was reported in the *National Post* that a spokesperson from the New Brunswick Health Department said that "the province is complying fully with federal requirements to fund medically necessary abortions."

Peter Ryan has urged the province to stand firm. He said, "I'm proud of the fact that New Brunswick has restrictive policies on abortion. I believe that the restrictions are really very progressive, in the sense that they are consistent with modern science that shows the humanity of the unborn child."

LifeCanada Joins Campaign for Ethical Vaccines

Canadian Physicians for Life have issued a press release alerting us to the reality that some vaccines have been developed from tissue from aborted fetuses. The good news is that ethical alternatives do exist for some of these vaccines. Pediacel, an ethical alternative to the infant vaccine Pentacel, has been approved by Health Canada. While both vaccines are considered to be equally effective in protecting against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio and Haemophilus B, Pediacel is not yet marketed in Canada. LifeCanada will join Canadian Physician for Life's campaign to ask that the infant vaccine Pediacel be made available. The campaign has resulted in the province of Alberta's decision to make Pediacel available in Alberta after the current contract runs out in March, 2007. All provinces should be encouraged to make the same available to

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concerned Canadian parents nation-wide.

A kit will be prepared to empower parents to discuss this issue with physicians and other health care workers. The kit will include background information on the origins of several childhood vaccines which utilize cell strains developed from tissue derived from aborted fetuses in the 1960s, as well as sample letters asking for ethical alternatives to current abortion-tainted vaccines to be made available to all Canadians.

Campus Pro-life Group Gets Club Status

Carleton University's pro-life group Lifeline was granted club status by an almost unanimous vote held during a January club certification meeting of 55 representatives of various school associations. We wish to congratulate student members of Lifeline for courageously and articulately defending their rights. They succeeded in making this a national media story and igniting a debate about the importance of freedom of speech. Even though the group has been recognized and is eligible for up to \$2000 in annual funding, members have expressed concern that the policy passed by Carleton University's Student Association in December which opposes efforts that "seek[s] to limit or remove a woman's options in the event of pregnancy" will make it difficult for them to operate. They fear that their activities may be closely monitored and their club status be challenged in the future.

Stem Cells Found in Amniotic Fluid Show Promise

A report published in the journal *Nature Biotechnology* revealed that stem cells have been found in the amniotic fluid which surrounds babies in the womb. These stem cells are very promising since they have successfully been transformed into bone, heart muscle, blood vessels, fat, nerve and liver tissues according to the study. Researchers are also encouraged by the fact that the stem cells found in amniotic fluid do not seem to form tumours when implanted as is the case with embryonic stem cells. Another obvious advantage is that this research does not raise the same ethical and moral concerns as research using embryonic stem cells which destroys the living human embryo.

To date, the stem cells in amniotic fluid have been obtained from the fluid left over from amniocentesis tests which were given to pregnant women to screen for disabilities. This process has the potential of being ethically charged since amniocentesis increases a woman's risk of miscarriage and fetal testing is often used to identify babies with disabilities so that they can be eliminated by abortion. We recognize the tremendous potential of using stem cells found in amniotic fluid and hope that efforts will be made to ensure that it is obtained using ethical means.

Radio Station Honors Contract

Radio station Y108 has re-instated the advertising campaign contracted by the Niagara Region Right to Life. They had pulled the ad campaign after receiving just seven complaints from listeners – six emails and one voice mail. Jakki Jeffs, executive director of Alliance for Life Ontario (AFLO), urged members of the sixty educational pro-life groups across Ontario to contact the station manager and ask her to re-consider. The radio station will now run the pro-life ads. When the radio station called to let the group know they would honor the contract, they asked that AFLO contact their members so they would stop calling the station.

BC Pro-Life Group to Lead Boycott Targeting Corporations That Fund Abortions

Surrey-Delta Pro-Life has announced that it is teaming up with Life Decisions International, the publishers of The Boycott List, for an organized effort across Canada. The group is asking Canadians to participate in an organized letter writing campaign targeting corporations that fund Planned Parenthood, now known in Canada as the Federation for Sexual Health and Options for Sexual Health. The goal is to continue the campaign month-to-month, with the target corporation changing every month. For more information, please email: monthlytarget@gmail.com

Obstetrics Group Promotes Abortion

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada (SOGC) plans to issue a recommendation next month that all pregnant women should undergo genetic screening for fetal abnormalities. Currently, they recommend the tests for women over 35. The SOGC makes it clear that the screening is to allow women to abort if the tests indicate a problem. Dr. Andre Lalonde, executive vice-president of the SOGC, told the *National Post* that “Yes, it’s going to lead to more terminations” but he added that “We have to be fair to give women a choice.” The Canadian Down Syndrome Society announced in response that it would launch a public awareness campaign to offset the notion that having a child with Down Syndrome is a “death sentence.” Krista Flint, the group’s executive director said, “Just because we can [test], doesn’t mean we should.” Her group will focus its campaign on the positive aspects of dealing with Down Syndrome. Without a positive message to counteract the negative one, she worries that those with Down Syndrome will be eliminated by abortion. The *National Post* published a number of letters to the editor from parents of Down Syndrome children objecting to the SOGC policy. Dr. Will Johnston, president of Canadian Physicians for Life told the *National Post* that the SOGC decision is troubling. “I think it shows our inability as a culture to be as inclusive and accepting of diversity as we would like to think we are.”

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Designing For Disabilities

While the Society for Obstetricians and Gynecologists is busy promoting the elimination of those with "abnormalities", the Associated Press is reporting on a trend by people with disabilities to seek embryo screening to have so-called designer babies with disabilities that match the parents. The AP story mentions that deaf parents and those with dwarfism have sought in vitro fertilization and preimplantation genetic screening to ensure that they have babies that will be born deaf or have the dwarfism gene. The survey, which will be published in an issue of the journal *Fertility and Sterility*, found four clinics in the United States said they have participated in embryo screening to produce a child with a disability.

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Another Gruesome Ethical Minefield

Last week newspapers reported the story of a Seattle couple who had doctors surgically mutilate their severely disabled daughter so that she would not mature. Three years ago when their daughter, who suffers from encephalopathy, was 6 years old they had doctors remove her uterus, appendix and breast buds and treat her with high doses of estrogen to stunt her growth. The couple have not been identified but have defended their decision on several different grounds: their daughter will be easier to care for, pick up and hold if she doesn't mature and grow; she won't have to suffer from menstrual cramps or risk of breast cancer; they won't have to worry about her being molested. The procedures were approved by a hospital ethics committee. The news sparked outrage from many including doctors and ethicists. The child's doctors defended the treatment in the October issue of the *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*. They wrote that the treatment "would remove one of the major obstacles to family care and might extend the time that parents with the ability, resources and inclination to care for their child at home might be able to do so." Surely a good support network, home care assistance and subsidies to provide equipment for lifting (although the parents are described as professionals) could accomplish the same ends and respect the inherent dignity of this little child.

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LifeCanada Office Needs a Book Case

We have recently received a wonderful gift of about a hundred books all related to our pro-life work. We are really pleased about this but now need to find space to display them in our office so we can easily find the reference we are looking for. If any of our readers have an

extra book case they would like to donate we would gladly receive it. Please bear in mind that the LifeCanada office is located in the Ottawa area.

Pre-Authorized Giving Plan

LifeCanada is now able to accept pre-authorized monthly donations. This is a tremendous option for LifeCanada because it allows us to schedule our educational pro-life activities since we know in advance how much support is coming in each month. It is also easy for our supporters since they just complete a form, send in one cheque and then the pre-authorized amount is automatically deducted from their bank account. Donors maintain control of their donations by simply contacting us by phone, email or letter to let us know if they wish to make changes or cancel the plan.

If you would like to donate ten, twenty, fifty dollars or any other amount to LifeCanada each month, please contact us and we will send you the necessary form to complete.

Become a Partner for Life

We are actively seeking sponsors/advertisers for our newly-designed website (www.lifecanada.org) and for our bi-monthly newsletter. We do not have a charitable tax number but these ads can certainly be a business expense as you promote your business to our supporters.

Our rates for this project are reasonable. A business card ad in LifeCanada News will cost \$125 per issue or \$600 for the full year. Your sponsorship ad on our website will be posted for a year for a cost of \$500. We see this as a great opportunity to build a pro-life network across the country and help to secure LifeCanada's financial base.

For more information, please call LifeCanada's toll free number 1-866-780-5433 or email us at carroll@lifecanada.org

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