

**PFIZER ONCOLOGY SUPPORTS VOBOC'S HOLIDAY BASKET PROGRAM 2013**

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Pointe-Claire, QC – December 9, 2013 - This year it is with great pride and honour that VOBOC wishes to recognize the incredible generosity from Pfizer Oncology for \$15,000 in support of VOBOC's 2013 Holiday Basket Program.

These generous funds will support 150 Holiday Baskets, which will be delivered to adolescent and young adult (AYA) cancer patients hospitalized on December 24th in the McGill University affiliated hospitals and to all persons at the West Island Palliative Care Residence and all hospitalized cancer patients at the Lakeshore General Hospital.

“Cancer touches the lives of 2 in 5 Canadians across the country, “said Richard Fajzel, general manager, Pfizer Oncology Business Unit. “This donation is one small way we can support individuals and families in the local community who are dealing with cancer at this time of the year.”

Over the past 12 years VOBOC has delivered close to 1000 baskets to oncology and palliative care units. We have known that to be hospitalized during the holidays is disappointing for those wishing to be home snuggled in their own beds. Our cheerful baskets arrive quietly and without a lot of fan fair, but with the purpose of letting a cancer patient know that others are thinking of them.

VOBOC is a non-profit charitable organization that supports adolescents and young adults in their fight against cancer. Since 2001, VOBOC has touched the lives of over 8,000 patients by knowing what to say and by providing tools and resources free of charge to adolescent and young adult oncology patients who are treated at the following McGill University affiliated hospitals: Jewish General, Montreal General, Royal Victoria, Montreal Neurological Institute, Lakeshore General, St Mary's Hospital and the Montreal Children's Hospital.

**About Pfizer Oncology**

Pfizer Oncology is committed to the discovery, investigation and development of innovative treatment options to improve the outlook for cancer patients worldwide. By working collaboratively with academic institutions, individual researchers, cooperative research groups, governments, and licensing partners, Pfizer Oncology strives to cure or control cancer with breakthrough medicines, to deliver the right drug for the right patient at the right time.

For more information about Pfizer Canada's commitment to medical research, our company and how we give back to communities across Canada, please visit [www.pfizer.ca](http://www.pfizer.ca). To learn more about how we're helping to encourage Canadians to live healthy, balanced lives, visit [www.morethanmedication.ca](http://www.morethanmedication.ca).

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## **VOBOC - Additional information and Canadian Cancer Statistics**

The VOBOC Foundation, VOBOC (Venturing Out Beyond Our Cancer) is the ONLY charitable organization dedicated to the offering the following three **free** programs:

**Vo-Pak program:** VOBOC delivers backpacks to oncology units to give to their new adolescent and young adult (AYA) cancer patients on their first day of treatment. Each Vo-Pak (venturing out pack) contains tools and resources to help patients navigate through the cancer treatment experience.

**The granting of Special Requests:** At the request of medical teams, VOBOC considers and grants Special Requests to patients in crisis or in palliative care for those whose financial circumstances require VOBOC's assistance in order to realize the Special Request.

**Education and Awareness:** VOBOC supports and leads initiatives that raise awareness and public sensitivity regarding the needs of adolescents and young adults (AYA) with cancer.

VOBOC offers its services to AYA patients in the following 7 McGill affiliated teaching hospitals: the Montreal General Hospital, Montreal Neurological Institute, Royal Victoria Hospital, the Jewish General Hospital, St-Mary's Hospital, Montreal Children's Hospital and Lakeshore General Hospital.

### **VOBOC Statistics for 2012 and the number of lives touched since beginning in 2001:**

- VOBOC delivered over 140 Vo-Paks to newly diagnosed AYA patients, aged 15 to 29 in 2012
- VOBOC granted 47 last Special Requests in 2012, a 51% increase in demand from 2011
- This year, VOBOC will grant an estimated 50 Last and Special Requests
- Each year with its partners, VOBOC co-sponsors four retreats and workshop conferences for over 150 AYA cancer survivors and co-hosts numerous social activities for patients and their families
- Last year 2,144 individuals directly benefited from or participated in delivering a VOBOC service
- Since VOBOC began in 2001, it has touched the lives of over 8,000 cancer patients

**Cancer Statistics** – sources: **Canadian Cancer Statistics (2013), Public Health Agency of Canada, Canadian Cancer Statistics – Focus on AYA, 127 pages, Cancer Incidence in Canada 2007 & 2008, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-231-X**

- Cancer is the leading cause of death in Canada
- 2 in 5 Canadians will develop cancer in their lifetime and 1 in 4 will die of the disease
- 187,600 new cases of cancer will occur in Canada in 2013
- Each hour, an estimated 21 people in Canada will be diagnosed with cancer
- Currently more than 150,000 Canadians are survivors of a young adult cancer diagnoses
- In Canada, more than 7,000 adolescent and young adults (AYA) will learn that they have cancer this year
- This year in Quebec 1,445 persons aged 15 to 39 will be diagnosed with cancer, 750 in Montreal
- Every 12 hours an adolescent or young adult is diagnosed with cancer in Montreal
- Top 5 cancer types in the AYA population are: Lymphoma 20%, Invasive Skin Melanoma 15%, Male Genital System 11%, Endocrine System, Thyroid 11% and the Female Genital System 9%.

VOBOC's vision is that every adolescent and young adult cancer patient will be accompanied throughout their cancer journey – from beginning to end – with the appropriate tools and resources to help them navigate and ease their cancer experience. VOBOC is committed to offering resources and supportive care that is patient-centered and targeted to help improve the cancer experiences of adolescents and young adults.