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For Immediate Release

## **Asthma Society of Canada Celebrates World Spirometry Day with Donation to Markham Stouffville Hospital**

MARKHAM - The Asthma Society of Canada donated a new spirometer to the Markham Stouffville Hospital in celebration of World Spirometry Day. Joining hospital personnel, Asthma Society of Canada President & CEO, Dr. Robert Oliphant, presented the new spirometer to Lynne Campkin, Director, Diagnostic Imaging and Respiratory Services at Markham Stouffville Hospital.

World Spirometry Day, observed on June 27<sup>th</sup> this year, is an awareness campaign that demonstrates the importance of diagnosis, monitoring and controlling of respiratory illness. Across the globe, lung diseases are among the leading causes of death – and the numbers are rising. The number of people dying from lung disease is expected to increase between now and 2020. However, many lung diseases, especially asthma, can be better controlled at an early stage if diagnosed or detected via spirometry testing.

“We are pleased to be able to support the excellent work being done at Markham Stouffville Hospital,” said Dr. Oliphant. “Asthma affects over 3 million Canadians, 60% of whom do not have their disease under control. The use of spirometry will not only improve patient outcomes, but could also help save as much as \$2 billion of taxpayer money over the next 10 years,” Oliphant concluded.

Spirometry is a basic and commonly performed pulmonary function test. It measures lung capacity and one’s ability to move air in and out of the lungs. The test is performed using a spirometer. An individual breathes in and forcefully exhales through a mouthpiece. One’s results are compared to measurements of healthy people of the same race, age, gender, height and weight.

“We are very thankful to the Asthma Society of Canada for this generous donation,” says Campkin. “The spirometer will allow the hospital to test more patients and diagnose them sooner. We think this will lead to an improved quality of life for some of our patients.”

The National Asthma Patient Alliance (NAPA) has expressed concern about government funding cuts that could reduce the availability of spirometer testing in Ontario. “Need-based spirometry testing is an essential tool for the prevention and management of respiratory disease,” said Noah Farber, Executive Director of NAPA. “We are working to ensure adequate funding is available for asthma patients in Ontario and across Canada to have access to this important diagnostic tool.”

For more information on World Spirometry day, visit <http://www.wsd2012.european-lung-foundation.org/>.

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