



NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

NLMA provides a safe ride home for province's New Year's Babies

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St. John's, NL – Physicians in Newfoundland and Labrador have been providing safe rides home for newborns at hospitals around the province for 28 years. Again this year, the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association (NLMA) will present an infant car seat to the first baby born in 2015 in each of the province's 10 hospitals that perform routine deliveries.

NLMA President Dr. Wendy Graham said the intent of the NLMA's car seat program is to encourage all parents to use approved car seats for their children from the moment they leave hospital as newborns. To date, more than 320 car seats have been presented to families of newborns.

"The only safe way to keep small children protected in cars is with infant carriers, child seats and booster seats," said Dr. Graham.

Motor vehicle collisions are the number one cause of death by preventable injury for Canadian children between the ages of one and nine (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2008). In 2009, Newfoundland and Labrador ranked fifth highest among Canadian provinces in the child hospitalization rate (13.7 per 100,000 population) due to vehicle occupant injury. When a child is restrained properly in a car seat or a booster seat that is appropriate to their height and weight, they are much less likely to suffer serious injury or die in the event of a crash. According to the Canadian Paediatric Society, when used correctly child seats reduce the risk of fatal injury by 70% and the risk of serious injury by 67%. The safest place for any child under 12 years of age is in the back seat of the vehicle, away from dangers like front-on collisions and front-seat airbags.

Community retailers continue to support the NLMA's program by generously donating infant car seats for babies born in their communities including Wal-Mart stores in Carbonear, Clarenville, Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Labrador City and Marystown. The St. John's West (Kelsey Drive) store provided a seat to the Health Sciences Centre and the St. John's East (Aberdeen Avenue) Wal-Mart provided a seat to the Curtis Memorial Hospital in St. Anthony. Goose Sales/Home Hardware Building Centre donated a car seat to the hospital in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. The NLMA would also like to acknowledge Crosstown Express and Day and Ross Transportation Group for assisting with delivering the car seats.

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