



**NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

Physicians providing safe rides home for New Year's babies for 30 years

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St. John's, NL – Physicians in Newfoundland and Labrador are celebrating 30 years of providing safe rides home for New Year's babies. The Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association (NLMA) have once again donated infant car seats to the families of each of the first babies born in 2017 at the 10 hospitals that perform routine deliveries.

NLMA President Dr. Christopher Cox 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 the hospital as newborns. To date, more than 340 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. Cox.

Accidents and injuries are the leading cause of preventable death for Canadian children between the ages of one and 11. The leading cause of injury-related death in children is motor vehicle collisions. Despite all provinces and territories having laws requiring the use of child safety seats, many injuries and deaths are directly attributed to nonuse or misuse of child restraints. According to the Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS), misuse rates range from 44 per cent to 81 per cent for car seats.

The top three errors (CPS, 2008):

- Seat not tightly secured to the vehicle (moves more than 2.5 cm [1 inch] in any direction);
- Harness not snug (more than one finger width fits between the harness strap and the child); and,
- Chest clip not at armpit level.

When a child is restrained properly in a car seat or a booster seat that is appropriate to their height and weight, the risk of fatal injury is reduced by 71 per cent and the risk of serious injury by 67 per cent. 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. Parents can learn more about the proper use of motor vehicle restraints for children at www.parachutecanada.org/injury-topics/topic/C2.

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Media Contact:

Robyn Pike

Communications Coordinator

Telephone: (709) 726-7424, ext. 314

E-mail: rpik@nlma.nl.ca

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