



Media Release

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Windsor Regional Hospital Becomes First Community Hospital to Bring Upopolis Social Network to Young Patients

Youth under medical care can now stay safely connected when it counts the most

Windsor, ON –Windsor Regional Hospital has become the first community hospital to join [Upopolis](#), an innovative social networking tool helping young patients safely and securely access kid-friendly medical content and stay connected to their families, friends and schools.

Founded and created by [KHLF](#) and [powered by TELUS Health](#), Upopolis.com is Canada's only private, secure and trusted online social network designed just for kids and teens receiving medical care in hospitals and clinics. What sets Upopolis apart from typical social networks, aside from its security and privacy, is its therapeutic benefit for the youth who use it. Being able to access medical content written specifically for kids is one of the ways Upopolis does this. Another is its ability to provide a secure and private way for patients and their friends and family outside the hospital or treatment centre to stay connected. Patients are also able to connect with other patients who share similar diagnoses, experiences and interests through public and private discussion groups they create. Upopolis also provides familiar features of social networking, such as personal profiles, newsfeed, instant chat, photo uploading and creating spaces based on common interests and/or diagnoses.

"We're excited to bring Upopolis to Windsor Regional Hospital and to see our patients benefit from being able to safely connect with other youth across Canada dealing with a medical diagnosis as well as family members and friends at a time when they can feel very isolated," said Jennifer Burton-Liang, Child Life Specialist, Windsor Regional Hospital.

KHLF and TELUS Health launched the first Upopolis program in 2007 at McMaster Children's Hospital in Hamilton. Since then it has expanded to 13 additional hospitals and health organizations across Canada. The Upopolis team and TELUS Health also work together to adapt the program to meet the specific needs of each facility, whether adding French language capabilities or information specific to mental health.

"Through the overwhelming support of TELUS as our technology partner, as well as our many individual and corporate supporters, today over 1,500 kids in children's hospitals across Canada have been able to take advantage of Upopolis," said Basile Papaevangelou, chairman and founder of Kids' Health Links Foundation. "Having Windsor Regional Hospital join our growing Upopolis family puts us one step closer to our goal of making Upopolis available across the country in every medical treatment facility that serves children and teens."

“The need for youth to stay connected using social networks and technology in Canada has grown exponentially over the last decade, as has the importance to have a safe and secure connection during time spent online,” said Paul Lepage, President, TELUS Health. “TELUS is committed to providing ongoing support of the innovative Upopolis platform for young patients across the country so they can continue to make meaningful connections throughout their care cycle in an effort to improve their health outcome.”

About Windsor Regional Hospital

Providing Acute Care Services with 650 plus beds and an operating budget of half of a billion dollars, Windsor Regional Hospital is one of the largest community teaching hospitals in the Province of Ontario.

About the Kids’ Health Links Foundation

The Kids’ Health Links Foundation was founded by Basile Papaevangelou and his daughter Christina to foster initiatives focused on alleviating the stress, isolation and loneliness for kids and teens undergoing medical care so that they might be better able to overcome traumatic medical experiences. These initiatives include: Upopolis -- targeting healthy connections for paediatric patients; Upedia -- providing resources supporting child life specialists; and UMIND -- connecting professionals dedicated to child and youth mental health. For more information about the Kids’ Health Links Foundation please visit: kidshealthlinks.org.

About TELUS Health

TELUS Health is a leader in telehomecare, electronic medical and health records, consumer health, benefits management and pharmacy management. TELUS Health solutions give health authorities, providers, physicians, patients and consumers the power to turn information into better health outcomes. For more information about TELUS Health, please visit telushealth.com.

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For more information, please contact:

Ron Foster
Windsor Regional Hospital
519-995-2482
Ron.foster@wrh.on.ca

April Ganong
Kids’ Health Links Foundation
905-817-1717
april@kidshealthlinks.org

Jill Yetman
TELUS Media Relations
416-992-2639
jill.yetman@telus.com