

## For immediate release

### Diversity unites the Parkinson's community for Parkinson's Awareness Month

**Vancouver, BC** - April 1, 2016 - April is internationally recognized as Parkinson's Awareness Month, and with every year that passes, the need to draw attention to the incidence and prevalence of the disease grows. There are over 12,500 British Columbians living with Parkinson's disease (PD), a number that is expected to increase 65% by 2031. One of the first illustrations of Parkinson's disease was published in 1886, and since then, it has been widely understood as a disease that only affects the senior population, primarily characterized by shaking. Parkinson Society British Columbia (PSBC) is committed to changing that perception. The truth is that Parkinson's doesn't discriminate based on age, gender, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation. It affects people from all walks of life, and at PSBC, we are firm believers that the diversity of our community strengthens us. **We're in this together.**

This year, we are proud to launch *This is Parkinson's disease*, a campaign that will reshape your understanding of PD. A campaign that will bring together individuals across the province, country and internationally, in an effort to better the lives of those affected by Parkinson's disease. To do this, we're sharing the stories of real-life British Columbians living with PD.

"Every individual of the Parkinson's community has a unique experience with the disease" says Jean Blake, CEO of Parkinson Society British Columbia. "It is our belief that our differences will unite us rather than divide. Unique perspectives contribute to our overall understanding of the disease, and rather than face a life-changing diagnosis on your own, you can find comfort and support in the collective."

Help us spread this message of awareness and inclusion by participating in our *This is Parkinson's* campaign in April. Put a poster in the window of your home, place of business and favorite local hangout (with permission). You can download a poster from our website at [www.parkinson.bc.ca](http://www.parkinson.bc.ca), or alternatively we have a limited supply of print posters available in 8.5" by 11" and 18" by 24" format. Together, we can make a difference.

#### About Parkinson Society British Columbia

Established in 1969, PSBC is a not-for-profit registered charity acting as the voice of British Columbians living with Parkinson's. Its purpose is to ease the burden and find a cure for Parkinson's disease through advocacy, education, research and support services. The Society receives no government funding and is supported entirely by the generosity of individual donors and members, corporations, foundations and the dedicated efforts of volunteers.



For more information, or to arrange for an interview with a person with Parkinson's featured in this campaign, please contact:

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