



SOGC Annual Clinical Meeting, Vancouver, June 22-27, 2006

## **Founder of “Save the Mothers” to speak In Vancouver: Hamilton obstetrician/gynaecologist honoured for international volunteerism**

**Vancouver – June 22, 2006** - Dr. Jean Chamberlain, an international leader and volunteer in maternal and newborn health, will be honoured today for her tremendous record of volunteerism and her devotion to improving childbirth for women around the world. Thousands of mothers and their babies die needlessly each and every day while giving birth. Dr. Chamberlain works with local health authorities in low-resource countries to reduce the number of women who die during childbirth.

Dr. Jean Chamberlain is an internationally known expert who travels constantly throughout the year, volunteering in some of the world's poorest countries to make childbirth a safer experience. Earlier this year, she was one of only six individuals worldwide presented with the Distinguished Community Service Award from the International Federation of Obstetrics and Gynecology (FIGO). The prestigious honour recognized her unflinching devotion to providing emergency obstetrical care in such places as Yemen, Pakistan, The Congo, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Uganda.

Dr. Chamberlain is also a foremost advocate for the expansion of the ALARM International program, an initiative of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) that trains healthcare professionals in low-resource countries how to address the main causes of death during pregnancy. It is Dr. Chamberlain's goal to bring this kind of training into many more countries around the world, thereby saving thousands of mothers and their newborns.

**For her outstanding accomplishments, Dr. Chamberlain will be honoured on June 22, 2006, at 3:15 pm at the Westin Bayshore in Vancouver.** She will be honoured as part of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada's (SOGC) International Women's Health Symposium, a day-long conference that will bring together hundreds of health professionals from across the globe to discuss safe motherhood and newborn health.

**Members of the media are invited to attend the event, during which Dr. Chamberlain will address delegates on her personal experiences and her current initiatives abroad.**

The International Women's Health Symposium will explore ways to address the hundreds of thousands of preventable deaths that occur during childbirth each year.

The conference will also examine ways of integrating efforts to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic with safe motherhood and newborn health initiatives.

Dr. Chamberlain is the founder and Executive Director of the **Save the Mothers Program in Uganda**, a charitable organization devoted to improving the plight of women in Uganda by training professionals to take a leadership role on the issue of safe motherhood and newborn health. As part of the program, Dr. Chamberlain also helped found a Master's Program in Public Health Leadership at the Uganda Christian University.

Dr. Chamberlain is also the author of the book *"Where have all the mothers gone? Stories of courage and hope during childbirth among the world's poorest women"*, based on her volunteer experiences around the world.

Though Dr. Chamberlain spends the majority of her time working abroad, when she is home in Canada she also teaches as an Assistant Professor in the department of obstetrics and gynecology at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.

- 30 -

#### **About The SOGC:**

The SOGC is one of Canada's oldest national specialty organizations. Established in 1944, the Society's mission is to promote excellence in the practice of obstetrics and gynaecology and to advance the health of women through leadership, advocacy, collaboration, outreach and education. The SOGC represents obstetricians/gynaecologists, family physicians, nurses, midwives and allied health professionals in the field of sexual reproductive health.

The SOGC has been active on the international scene since 1998, when it integrated into its mission the importance of pursuing excellence in international women's health and promoting safe motherhood and newborn health throughout the world. It is the Society's goal to ensure that every woman has the right to survive pregnancy and childbirth and has access to the care she needs to deliver a healthy baby through a safe pregnancy and childbirth

For more information about the SOGC and all its programs, please visit the SOGC web site [www.sogc.org](http://www.sogc.org)

#### **Contact:**

Nancy Bickford, Acting Director, Communications and Public Education

Tel : (800) 561-2416 or (613) 730-4192 extension: 330

Cell: (613) 851-1971

Fax: (613) 730-4314

E-mail address: [nbickford@sogc.com](mailto:nbickford@sogc.com) Website: [www.sogc.org](http://www.sogc.org)

Patricia Robitaille

PR Strategies Inc.

Tel : (604) 873-0080

E-mail address: [probitaille@shaw.ca](mailto:probitaille@shaw.ca)