

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

211 Nova Scotia partners with police agencies in Nova Scotia

December 16, 2014-Everybody needs help sometimes and with the cold weather and holiday season quickly approaching, needs can be greater than ever. Thousands of Nova Scotians have reached out to 211 since its launch in February of 2013, and a new partnership between 211 and the Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police Association (NSCPA) will ensure that even more Nova Scotians know that 211 is here to help.

Those working in law enforcement are witness to the struggles that people face every day. When police officers respond to a call, they often see needs associated with food, shelter and clothing or more complicated issues like abuse or addiction. And for those in need, searching for the right help can be a daunting and time consuming task.

Together, 211 and the NSCPA hope to make it easier for people to connect with the help they need.

The NSCPA has endorsed 211 as an additional tool for all police officers in the province. Central to this endorsement will be NSCPA-branded 211 information cards that police officers can provide to members of the public whom they believe would benefit from reaching out to 211.

Chief Dave MacNeil, president of the Association says “Today, police have become the social agency of first choice; while statistics confirm that crime rates are dropping, actual calls for service are on the rise. Police are called upon as first responders for just about everything, including homelessness, addictions, and mental health. Referring people to 211 gets them the right help they need, and ultimately, reduces the potential for similar follow-up calls to police, which can be better addressed by other social agencies.”

211 is a free, confidential information and referral service for thousands of community and social services available across the province. The service is available 24/7 and has interpretation services in over 100 languages. When you dial 2-1-1, trained information and referral specialists help callers understand and find services like food, shelter, mental health and addiction services, employment counseling, seniors programs, home support, legal assistance, child care and much more.

“Our mission is to connect Nova Scotians to the right community and social services,” says Mike Myette, executive director of 211. “Getting the 211 message out, particularly in rural communities, has proven to be challenging. Police officers, as respected protectors of the community, are a natural fit as 211 promoters, and we are so pleased to have them on board, committed to spreading awareness.

211 Nova Scotia is a non-profit organization whose operations are funded primarily by the Province of Nova Scotia, with support from United Way organizations across the province. Currently, 211 services are available to over 60 per cent of Canadians; including citizens of Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta and Quebec, and 211 services are available to more than 90 percent of Americans.

For more information, dial 2-1-1 or visit ns.211.ca.



(L-R) 211NS Executive Director, Mike Myette and President, Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police Association, Dave MacNeil, pose with a mock-up of what the newly co-branded information cards will look like.

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Media Contacts:

Allison Currie
Community Relations Officer-211 Nova Scotia
902.466.5727
902.210.3200
acurrie@ns.211.ca

Chief David MacNeil
President, Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police Association
902.897.3274
dmacniel@truro.ca