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Local partners spread the “arrive alive – DRIVE SOBER” message

Today, community partners launched a new initiative to shut out impaired driving in our community during the holiday season. Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, Thunder Bay District Health Unit and the Ontario Ministry of Transportation have teamed up with provincial partners to encourage residents to “arrive alive – DRIVE SOBER.”

While *arrive alive – DRIVE SOBER* posters throughout the city promote planning for a safe ride home, local restaurants are delivering the message directly to patrons. Kelsey’s Restaurant, Montana’s Cookhouse & Bar, The Keg and The Madhouse will provide ballots to guests all week long beginning today. On Sunday, December 20, one winner from each restaurant will be awarded a prize pack containing a \$100 gift certificate to the restaurant, a party planning kit and *arrive alive – DRIVE SOBER* t-shirts, mugs, hockey pucks and posters.

“We want our customers to drink responsibly,” says Claudio Foresta, owner/operator of Montana’s Cookhouse & Bar and Kelsey’s Restaurant. “The program complements our ongoing efforts to ensure people get home safely.” In addition to providing patrons the opportunity to win prizes, participating restaurants will spread the *arrive alive – DRIVE SOBER* message through coasters, staff T-shirts and posters.

Deborah Luby, Special Project Facilitator at the Health Sciences Centre believes the initiative will help reduce incidences of trauma due to impaired driving. “While we are able to provide excellent trauma services, we prefer to help keep people safe and healthy, decreasing the need for trauma care.” she says.

“If we can prevent just one death or injury, we’ll have succeeded,” notes Glenn Craig, President & CEO of the Health Sciences Foundation. The Foundation provided funding for the initiative.

“100% of impaired driving injuries and deaths are preventable,” explains Judi Marton, Public Health Nurse, Injury Prevention, Thunder Bay District Health Unit. “Impaired driving injuries and deaths are predictable and we know awareness initiatives like this work to prevent them.”

“Ontario has some of the safest roads in North America. But road safety takes an ongoing commitment to educational initiatives like this one,” says Tom Marinis, Regional Planner, Road Safety Marketing Office, Ministry of Transportation. “Today, we want to convince people that if you’ve been drinking, getting behind the wheel is never worth the risk. You have a choice: call a cab, stay overnight, find a designated driver or be one.”

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