

## **Canada funds program to treat hearing loss in infants in Jordan**

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**Ottawa** — The Honourable Aileen Carroll, Minister of International Cooperation, today announced that Canada will provide up to \$383,000 to support the early detection and treatment of hearing loss in infants in the Middle East.

The funds will be provided by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to the Canada International Scientific Exchange Program (CISEPO). This is a further contribution to the organization's earlier initiatives in early detection and treatment of hearing loss in infants in Jordan. It should enable these programs to become self-sufficient.

"Children who suffer from hearing loss and their families are often isolated from mainstream society," Minister Carroll said. "This initiative will continue to improve the quality of their lives by giving them access to specialized health services, special education, and the resources that they need."

Since 2000, over 17,000 newborns and infants have been tested in the region. Hearing aids or therapy are being provided to those in need. Today's announcement will allow the continued assessment of some 130,000 infants in Jordan and follow-up treatment of those affected. The comprehensive model for early detection and habilitation of hearing loss among infants developed through this initiative will be made available under national health care programs for the Jordanian population.

"This important contribution from the Canadian government will have a direct, positive impact on the lives of children, their parents, and society," said Dr. Arnold Noyek, Chair of CISEPO, Otolaryngologist at Mount Sinai Hospital, and professor at the University of Toronto. "This funding supports CISEPO's continued work of peacebuilding through cooperative health initiatives. It allows us to continue building essential bridges between Israelis, Jordanians, and Palestinians by addressing common societal health needs."

CISEPO is a Canadian cooperative initiative based at the Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of Toronto and the Peter A. Silverman Centre for International Health at Mount Sinai Hospital. CISEPO created the Middle East Association for Managing Hearing Loss—an association of senior medical officers from Jordan, Israel, and the West Bank and Gaza that promotes peacebuilding through medical and scientific collaboration in the Middle East—and works in close partnership with the Royal Medical Services of Jordan, the Ministry of Health of Jordan, and with the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf, which are local providers of hearing services to Jordanian families.

Funding for this initiative was provided for in the March 2004 federal budget and is

therefore built into the existing fiscal framework.

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