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Canadian Association
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Olympic athletes in good hands with Canada's top sport physiotherapists

TORONTO (January 2010) – In just under a month the world's attention will be focused on Vancouver and the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. The world's best athletes will be competing in a wide variety of challenging and high pressure events that will put incredible demands on their bodies. The possibility of getting injured is a reality every Olympic athlete has to contend with. But at these Games the athletes will be getting the best possible care to prevent them from getting hurt, and the best possible treatment for any injuries that may arise.

A large contingent of physiotherapists (92), including many of Canada's top sport physiotherapists will be in Vancouver and Whistler to make sure the athletes are able to perform at the highest level without compromising their health. Besides prevention and treatment of current injuries, these physiotherapists will also be involved in providing therapy and intervention to facilitate recovery.

A majority of the physiotherapists who will be at the Olympics are members of Sport Physiotherapy Canada (SPC), a division of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association. They are specially trained to treat high performance athletes and provide the daily physiotherapy treatments that are often critical for an Olympic athlete's performance. These treatments can be a significant factor in the ability of the athlete to make it onto the medals podium.

The Canadian physiotherapists who will be working at the Vancouver Games fall into two groups. First, 19 physiotherapists will be responsible for providing care to the Canadian athletes during the games as part of the Canadian Olympic Committee's Olympic Health and Science Team. They will be guided by Chief Therapist and SPC member Marc Rizzardo and will be working directly with the athletes at sport venues and in the Olympic Village.

"Our job will be to make sure the Canadian athletes are in top form so that they have the best chance of winning medals," says Rizzardo. "Although the public's perception is that mainly athletes in high risk sports like aerials in free style skiing, alpine skiing and snowboarding competitions require physiotherapy coverage; in fact all of the Canadian athletes will have our full attention and equal support as they compete to be on the podium."

The second group of Canadian physiotherapists will be working with athletes from ALL of the participating countries. This group will be led by SPC member Rick Celebrini, the Chief Therapist and Regional Medical Manager for the Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC) Medical Services and Therapy Team.

"Not all of the participating countries are able to send their own physiotherapists. As the providers of host medical and therapy coverage for the Games, it is our job to make sure all competitors get the care they need," says Celebrini. "The international athletes will be well taken care of by a highly trained and very competent contingent of Canadian sport physiotherapists recognized around the world for their skills and integrated as part of the multidisciplinary host medical and therapy team."

Physiotherapists are pleased to be playing a critical role in the medical preparation and treatment of the Canadian and International athletes that will be competing in Vancouver and Whistler in February 2010.

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For more information and spokesperson interview:

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