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Curling's Sandra Schmirler Foundation puts weight behind care for Southern Alberta's newborns

CALGARY – In Canada one in ten newborns rely on the care of the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). But, in Southern Alberta it is one in eight – a notable 25 per cent higher than the national average.

These infants and their families will spend their first days, weeks and even months requiring very specialized care and customized equipment.

The Sandra Schmirler Foundation has granted \$20,000 over two years through the *Grand Slam of Curling* event hosted by SportsNet to support the purchase of a very specialized piece of equipment, called an InfantView Video Laryngoscope, which gives neonatal clinical teams better and more precise vision when inserting intubation tubes. The gift has been made to Calgary Health Foundation in support of the NICU at Peter Lougheed Centre in Calgary and will open the door for further education for clinical teams.

The grant was to coincide with the Boost National, a *Pinty's Grand Slam of Curling* event presented by Sportsnet. The event was scheduled to take place in Chestermere in December, but due to COVID-19 has been rescheduled to 2021.

"Despite the cancellation of the event, the Sandra Schmirler Foundation is honouring its commitment to supporting *Pinty's Grand Slam of Curling* host cities with NICU grants. We are thrilled to be able to support Calgary Health Foundation." said Ian Cunningham, Chair of the Sandra Schmirler Foundation Board.

"We believe that every baby deserves the chance to grow up and be a champion, like Sandra Schmirler."

The Sandra Schmirler Foundation is committed to providing funds for hospital Newborn Intensive Care Units to purchase life-saving equipment for premature and critically ill newborn. This mandate directly aligns to Calgary Health Foundation's Newborns Need campaign which is focused on enhancing care, wellness and research to advance newborn health.

"The generosity of the Sandra Schmirler Foundation and commitment they have to neonatal care provides equipment that is creating breakthroughs in care for our tiniest and most vulnerable patients," said Mike Meldrum, President & CEO of Calgary Health Foundation. "This investment means that we can continue to

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strive to provide the best possible outcomes for newborns from their first breath.”

Over 3,300 newborns and their families require the care of Calgary’s NICU every year, including at Peter Lougheed Centre. These hospitals are part of an integrated NICU network that provides critical and life-saving care to newborns and their families across Southern Alberta.

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*The **Calgary Health Foundation** is a philanthropic organization uniting our donors, four hospitals, care providers, and community partners with the ambitious aim of revolutionizing health outcomes. Through deep cooperation, unrelenting persistence and a sharp focus on care, wellness and research, we are unyielding in our efforts to ensure Calgarians receive the most progressive care in the world — because our loved ones and yours deserve nothing less. For more information go to **calgaryhealthfoundation.ca***

***The Sandra Schmirler Foundation** sees a future where every hospital NICU has the necessary life-saving equipment to handle any emergency and save the lives of babies born premature and critically ill. With the support from individuals like you, we have given over 4.9 million dollars to fund life-saving equipment in NICUs in hospitals across Canada. To donate or learn more, please visit **sandraschmirler.org**.*