

**DR. GARY POLONSKY NAMED SPECIAL ADVISOR FOR BUILDING ON THE BEST CAMPAIGN**

***The Charles H. Best Diabetes Centre welcomes President Emeritus of Durham College and Ontario Tech to campaign team***

**Nov. 9, 2020 Whitby, ON – Dr.** Gary Polonsky has been named Special Advisor for the Building on the Best Campaign.

“Gary’s inspirational leadership and familiarity with the region were essential in the development and growth of Ontario Tech University (OTU) and Durham College,” said Serge Babin, Chair of the Board at the Charles H. Best Diabetes Centre. “We are fortunate to tap into Gary’s experience in working with community volunteers and business leaders to spearhead our campaign.”

The Best Centre’s mission is to keep children, youth and adults living with type 1 diabetes healthy until a cure is found. The centre is in the early planning stages of a \$5M Building on the Best campaign to expand and renovate its current facilities. Without the life-saving care delivered by the Best Centre, type 1 diabetes patients would unnecessarily present with health complications to overburdened health system partners in the community.

“Building on the Best Campaign will be fundamental change for the region,” explained Polonsky. “As Durham Region continues to grow, the community will be well served by an expanded centre, positioned to provide timely and exceptional care. I feel extremely fortunate to be able to support their growth.”

In Canada, over three hundred thousand people live with type 1 diabetes. The estimated future demand for the Best Centre indicates a growth of 93% over the next ten years; the Centre, therefore, will need to double in size by 2026.

**About Gary:**

Dr. Gary Polonsky is the only Canadian to have been simultaneously President and CEO of a college and university. As the longest serving president of Durham College, he helped triple its enrolment and create a 2500-person wholly owned subsidiary (Productivity Improvement Centre).

As Founding President of OTU, seven faculties were created including 20 undergraduate programs and a world class research capacity.

Today, both institutions serve over 20,000 full-time students and thousands more part-time. Together, they contribute billions annually to the economic well-being of Durham Region and Northumberland County.

For his achievements, Gary has received numerous local, provincial and national awards.

## **About the Best Centre:**

The Best Centre delivers one-of-a-kind patient-centred healthcare exclusive to type 1 diabetes. As Canada's only stand-alone centre and charitable organization specializing in type 1 diabetes, the staff provides highly responsive and individualized care. The interdisciplinary clinical team includes registered nurses, dietitians and social workers who provide frontline healthcare and education throughout a patient's lifetime.

## **Quick Facts**

- Type 1 diabetes is an incurable, complex disease. It must be managed 24-hour a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
- The Charles H. Best Diabetes Centre sees almost 2,000 patients and conducts more than 9,200 healthcare interactions per year to support patients living with type 1 diabetes.
- Type 1 diabetes is a disease in which the pancreas does not produce any insulin. Insulin is essential to help the body control the level of glucose (sugar) in the blood.
- Roughly 5-10 per cent of people living with diabetes have type 1 diabetes, insulin-dependent diabetes. Type 1 diabetes generally develops in childhood or adolescence but can also develop in adulthood. People with type 1 need to inject insulin or use an insulin pump to ensure their bodies have the right amount of insulin to survive.

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