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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020

*Kootenay Boundary Division of Family Practice*  
*Shared Care*

### **Business and Community Rally To Support Local Moms Experiencing Postpartum Challenges**

**Kootenay Boundary, BC** – The Kootenay Boundary Motherwise Program offers mental health support and wellness groups to new moms experiencing postpartum challenges. The program has received a significant boost of financial support through local Shoppers Drug Marts, which is making a big difference in the lives of women and families in our region.

Castlegar and Nelson Shoppers Drug Marts generously donated almost \$10,000 to the Motherwise Program through their Growing Women's Health campaign in 2019. They also selected the program as their charity of choice for 2020 and have raised an additional \$7000 in community support.

The funds have enabled over 40 families to receive peer and professional group mental wellness support. Additionally, with this incredible support, Motherwise organizers can focus their energy on planning group sessions and offering this service into the future, something that wouldn't have been possible without the donations.

"As a primary care provider, we understand how stressful and foreign the transition to parenthood can be. Although we can listen to mother's concerns and reinforce that sometimes negative feelings are normal, it does not have the same impact as hearing from a group of women sharing similar experiences" says Tanya Momtazian, Registered Midwife at Apple Tree Maternity in Nelson BC. "By openly discussing and normalizing these challenging feelings, they then have less impact on the mom's and their families".

Echoing both the value and impact of the program, a local mom shares her experience, "after having my son, I experienced severe postpartum depression and anxiety. In a place of feeling alone and overwhelmed, Motherwise made me feel supported and validated. It was an invaluable tool in my journey and I'm so grateful to have had this program in our community."

Beginning in 2017 as a pilot project funded and managed through the Kootenay Boundary Division of Family Practice, Shared Care and Interior Health in collaboration with local community organizations, Motherwise support groups have shown beneficial and lasting impacts not just for mothers but also for their children and the entire family.

Participants meet with other new moms for weekly group sessions focused on improving mental health and well-being. This is especially important in a time when access to individual mental health supports can be difficult and costly, particularly in a rural setting.

Since the initial pilot, it has been a challenge to secure a sustainable funding source for the groups to continue, and community organizations have scrambled to find creative ways to fill the gaps.

A huge expression of gratitude goes out to the Shoppers Drug Mart fundraising teams. The Motherwise Program can't thank Shoppers enough for their support in raising both funds and awareness for this service in our area.

To find out more about upcoming Motherwise groups in Castlegar, Trail, Nelson and Grand Forks, please visit <http://bit.ly/kb-motherwise>.

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#### **BACKGROUND:**

The *Kootenay Boundary Shared Care Initiative* and is composed of specialists, family physicians, Interior Health staff and patients.

Funding and support for the committee and this initiative is provided by Shared Care Committee, a joint Doctors of BC/Ministry of Health partnership. The Committee's support enables family and specialist physicians in the Kootenay Boundary region to work together and collaborate with Interior Health in their communities to improve patient care.

Visit us online at <http://kbdivision.org> to learn more about our work throughout the Kootenay Boundary region.