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News Release

LRT witnesses may face Post Traumatic Stress

Calgary, AB – Dec. 7, 2011 – Reliving the event, finding yourself numb, or getting surprised easily - Calgary's leader in counselling services encourages any witness of either recent Calgary Light Rail Transit collisions to seek help if they experience Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) symptoms.

"PTS is a type of anxiety response," says Kim Busch, Counselling Supervisor, Calgary Counselling Centre (CCC). "It can occur if you've seen or experienced a traumatic event."

PTS symptoms may include:

- Reliving the event – where a person might experience flashbacks of the event. The person might have strong reactions to any element from the event that reminds them of the trauma: smells, sights, noises, etc.
- Avoidance – avoiding anything that might remind the person of the event.
- Arousal – a person with these symptoms would startle easily and might have outburst of anger, trouble sleeping or difficulty concentrating.

After two serious collisions between C-Trains and pedestrians since Monday, including one fatality, Calgary Counselling Centre says it's normal for anyone, witnesses, people related to the event or people on the trains might react from the experience.

"People react differently to situations," says Busch, "so if you and a friend were both there, their reaction to the situation may be completely different to how you have experienced the trauma. If you have symptoms that are out of normal behavior for you, that don't go away, don't worry that what you're experiencing is unique. Seek help."

CCC's main area of expertise is depression, anxiety and stress. The three add up to one third of the Centre's business.

"CCC is committed to reducing the effects of this treatable problem in our community" says Busch. "We are Calgary's resource to anyone who might feel they have PTSD. We can provide ongoing support."

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For more information about the study, or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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Calgary Counselling Centre is a registered charitable organization, and the leading research and knowledge-based counselling facility in Canada. Since 1962, the Centre has been committed to providing compassionate, professional and affordable counselling services that help build better lives for Calgarians through positive outcomes. Offering barrier-free services, the Centre is also a recognized leader in the treatment of family violence, depression, eating disorders and self-esteem issues. Through its ongoing research and education programs, Calgary Counselling Centre strives to meet the changing needs of our community.