



February 26, 2015

## United Way of Central Alberta Launches 211 Phone Service in Red Deer

Red Deer, Alberta – February 26, 2015 – United Way of Central Alberta is excited to announce the launch of 211 phone service for Red Deer. 211 phone support is a complement to the existing online [www.ab.211.ca](http://www.ab.211.ca) service, and has been made possible through the generous support of The City of Red Deer, which has committed to funding the program for three years.

[ab.211.ca](http://ab.211.ca) helps Central Alberta residents navigate the complex array of community, social, government and health services in order to find the specific support they need. The phone service is an important addition to the online support because it gives City of Red Deer residents 24/7 multilingual access, not only to in-depth information about programs and agencies, but also to the kind of human support that only a friendly voice on the other end of the line can provide. This is especially important in times of emergency or crisis.

In fact, the value of the 211 service became very apparent during the 2013 flooding in Southern Alberta, which encouraged the United Way of Central Alberta to make 211 a priority in our region. United Way Central Alberta was able to deliver funding for 211 online coverage across the region in June, 2014. Securing funds for region-wide phone support is the next phase, and this three-year commitment from The City of Red Deer is an important first step in that direction.

“United Way is thrilled that The City of Red Deer has embraced the vision and importance of the complete 211 phone service,” stated Robert Mitchell, CEO for United Way of Central Alberta. “Hopefully The City’s example will inspire other Central Alberta municipalities to follow suit in order to ensure that all Central Albertans have equal access to 211 services.”

“We are pleased to fund this valuable service in our community, which will augment the good work already being done by 211 online,” said Tara Veer, Mayor of The City of Red Deer. “It’s important for The City to be supportive of our most vulnerable citizens. A streamlined, single point of entry is a citizen friendly means for our public to access essential social services.”

The official launch of the 211 Phone service in Red Deer will take place on Thursday, February 26, 2015 at the Snell Auditorium Library from 10:00 to 11:00 AM. Officials from both the United Way and The City of Red Deer will be present and available for comment.

*For more information, please contact:*

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