

Women's Health Centre
May 14, 1997

I am delighted to participate in the Centre's opening ceremonies. From my perspective, this event celebrates two important propositions.

First, the pursuit and attainment of a healthy society requires collective effort and broad-based partnerships between health care providers, governments and community groups. The Maritime Centre of Excellence for Women's Health exemplifies this kind of partnership. Given Dalhousie's primary responsibility in our region for health care education and research, I'm very pleased that we are a participant in this partnership and can work closely with the other members to achieve the Centre's objectives. We all have a role to play in the building of healthy communities.

I want to thank the Women's Health Bureau of Health Canada and Minister Dingwall for their vision and leadership in creating this program and providing \$2 million of support to assist the Centre's critical work. This partnership would not exist without your help.

My second proposition is that the true test of a community's commitment to health care is the level of service it provides to its most disadvantaged members. A few months ago Dalhousie entered into a partnership with Nova Scotia's native communities to explore means to improve their intolerable health levels. We've also introduced measures recently to provide more health care professionals to rural communities

I'm proud of these initiatives, although I wish they weren't socially necessary

In a similar vein, I'm pleased for Dalhousie to be associated with this major women's health care initiative. Wherever we find systemic neglect of community health care needs, it is crucial that we take action. Sadly, women's health care needs require this kind of attention. I'm pleased therefore to welcome the creation of this Maritime Centre, to congratulate those who created this initiative and those who have supported it, and most of all, I wish you every success with this vital community project.

Congratulations and good luck.