



## **Vancouver Convention Centre Awarded Healthy Venue Accreditation by the World Obesity Federation**

**Wednesday, May 4, 2016 (Vancouver, BC)** – Today at the closing session of the International Congress on Obesity, the Vancouver Convention Centre was accredited as a Healthy Venue by the World Obesity Federation. The Vancouver Convention Centre is the first venue to be accredited in the Americas and only the second in the world.

The Healthy Venue Award recognizes venues worldwide whom support their visitors and staff in making healthier choices in terms of nutrition and well-being. The Vancouver Convention Centre is recognized around the world as one of the most environmentally sustainable convention centres, including being the world's first LEED® Platinum certified convention centre. This commitment to being as sustainable as possible extends beyond the facility to include a commitment to being as environmentally sustainable as possible in daily practice as well.

One of the key factors that lead to the Healthy Venues recognition is the diligence of the Vancouver Convention Centre's highly-talented culinary team who produces an amazing range of meals for clients as diverse as international conventions, corporate meetings and weddings. With everything from dressings and stocks to bread and pastries made in house, the kitchens are able to ensure that guests are offered delicious, healthy menu items that feature reduced fat, sugar and sodium.

“Being situated in the heart of Vancouver, we are proud to be recognized as a Healthy Venue, since healthy living is fundamental to what makes Vancouver a remarkable destination,” said Craig Lehto, General Manager, Vancouver Convention Centre. “We are pleased to have partnered with the World Obesity Federation on this program and to have welcomed them to our facility. We look forward to continuing to develop our program in the years ahead.”

The Healthy Venues Award is part of World Obesity's Action Initiative that aims to stimulate and support practical actions that will help people achieve and maintain a healthy weight and reverse the global obesity crisis. The award focuses on steps that venues can take to support healthy eating and to encourage more activity. The venues work in partnership with the World Obesity Federation, looking holistically at the attendee experience, from healthy snacks in vending machines through to encouraging people to use the stairs rather than lifts.

Chris Trimmer, Executive Director of the World Obesity Federation said: “The Healthy Venues Award was conceived to help combat the unhealthiness of meetings & conferences and the impact these can



have on people's lives. It is broken down into three components – workplace health, healthy catering and promoting activity and is awarded at three levels – bronze, silver and gold.

We chose to hold our International Congress on Obesity (ICO) at VCC this year because of the efforts they have made in this area and we have thoroughly enjoyed working on the event with them. It was great they were able to offer us and our delegates a healthy meeting, with hydration stations, a wonderful healthy menu, standing space at the back of session rooms, not to mention the wonderful location on Vancouver seawall for long lunchtime strolls! Having VCC as an ambassador for Healthy Venues will show other exhibition & conference providers that the healthy choice is the right choice.”

Research has shown that unhealthy diets and sedentary lifestyles increase the risk of obesity, diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease. Being active can be difficult when in an average lifetime a 25 - 60 year old spends around 87,562 days at work and a large percentage of this time is spent in meetings. Around the world efforts are underway to combat obesity and reduce the health risks posed by poor diets and inactivity. Amongst these there have been some efforts to improve the healthiness of locations within communities where people spend a lot of their time, such as schools, workplaces and sporting venues. Improving access and relative availability to healthy food and opportunities for activity at these sites helps people to live healthier lives and create healthier social norms and behaviours. In America alone there are an estimated 225 million visitors to conventions, conferences, congresses, trade shows and exhibitions, incentive events and corporate/business meetings every year. These present an opportunity to nudge people towards healthier choices during a time when they are stepping outside of their normal routines.

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#### About the Vancouver Convention Centre

Located on Vancouver's downtown waterfront with a dramatic mountain backdrop, the world's first LEED® Platinum certified convention centre offers one of the most beautiful settings in the world. The award-winning Vancouver Convention Centre features two connected buildings with a combined total of 466,500 ft<sup>2</sup> (43,340 m<sup>2</sup>) of flexible meeting, exhibition, ballroom and plenary space. The facility is committed to environmental sustainability as well as unparalleled service, technology offerings and culinary excellence.

#### About the World Obesity Federation

World Obesity Federation represents professional members of the scientific, medical and research communities from over 50 regional and national obesity associations. Through our membership we



create a global community of organisations dedicated to solving the problems of obesity. Our mission is to lead and drive global efforts to reduce, prevent and treat obesity.

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