
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Health

PROVINCE SUPPORTS CHILDREN'S MEDICAL RESEARCH

VANCOUVER – A \$12-million grant from the Province will support the groundbreaking work of the Children with Intestinal and Liver Disorders (CH.I.L.D.) Foundation to find a cure for children with intestinal and liver disorders such as Crohn's Disease, Premier Gordon Campbell announced today.

“When our children are seriously ill, they need the best care possible. We recognize and appreciate the work of the CH.I.L.D. Foundation in raising funds for medical research into Crohn's Disease, Ulcerative Colitis, and liver disorders in children,” said Premier Campbell. “This \$12-million grant will help to support new, integrated research that will hopefully one day find a cure for these terrible disorders.”

Children with Inflammatory Bowel Diseases (I.B.D.) suffer unpredictable inflammation and ulceration causing excruciating pain, bloody diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting, weight loss or gain, chronic fatigue, and anaemia. These children are often confined to their homes, miss a great deal of school and often cannot participate in sports.

“We want to ensure our children continue to receive high quality care for any and all illnesses and injuries,” said Health Minister George Abbott. “We are committed to supporting new and innovative approaches to health care, medical research, and reducing the burden of chronic disease.”

The CH.I.L.D. Foundation intends to use the grant for two initiatives that aim to dissolve provincial boundaries and bring together all of Canada's research community.

The first is The CH.I.L.D. National Inflammatory Bowel Disease (I.B.D.) Research Collaborative, which will connect healthcare professionals, researchers, hospitals, funding agencies and families from across the country with a focus on finding a cure for Crohn's Disease. By leveraging the minds and the resources across the country, they hope to shorten the length of time it takes to reach success in research, but also to make the most efficient use of the technology and the outstanding brainpower of the nation.

The second is The CH.I.L.D. National I.B.D. Research Network, which will allow researchers in different geographic locations to work together in teams, which could lead to an international effort led by Canada to defeat Crohn's Disease. It will be the first time since S.A.R.S. that a nation-wide collaborative effort in Canada has been undertaken to target one disease.

“This is an outstanding opportunity for our cause – a real breakthrough in research. It will help us break new ground and establish B.C. as the leader in Canada in pioneering a new approach for improved management of health issues and medical research,” said Grace McCarthy, chair of the CH.I.L.D. Foundation Board.

“This could be an example for other orphan diseases,” added Lindsay Gordon, president of CH.I.L.D. “It is our hope that we can create a model for orphan diseases that often have no voice.”

The Province has invested more than \$1.5 billion in research and innovation since 2001, including significant investments in research to improve treatments and seek cures for major health-care challenges such as cancer, depression and spinal cord injuries.

Government is committed to improving health services delivery for all children and youth in B.C. In April 2008, the BC Children’s Hospital Foundation joined government in announcing a fundraising campaign towards a new acute/critical care building for BC Children’s Hospital and BC Women’s Hospital & Health Centre.

Media contact: Bridgitte Anderson
Press Secretary
Office of the Premier
604 307-7177

Michelle Stewart
Communications Director
Ministry of Health
250 812-5571
250 952-1887 (media line)

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