

Canadian Government Provides Historic Heart & Stroke Research Funding

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The Honourable Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance, and the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Health, today announced \$15 million to support the Heart and Stroke Foundation Centre for Stroke Recovery. This is the largest investment ever provided to stroke recovery and rehabilitation research in Canada.



From left to right: Mike LeClair, Dr. Sandra Black, Jim Flaherty - Minister of Finance, Tony Clement - Minister of Health, Walter Gretzky, and Dr. Richard Staines

"Our government is making significant investments in science and technology to improve our quality of life and sustain economic growth today and into the future," said Minister Flaherty.

"By supporting centres of excellence like the Heart and Stroke Foundation Centre for Stroke Recovery we are targeting resources to areas where Canada has the potential to be a world leader or is currently leading the way."

"The Heart and Stroke Foundation Centre for Stroke Recovery is moving new discoveries from the lab to the bedside faster than ever before and is the first of its kind in the world to streamline research, stroke care, and stroke recovery," said Minister Clement. "By continuing to make breakthrough discoveries and innovating treatments, the Centre is generating new hope for

stroke survivors and their families."

The Heart and Stroke Foundation Centre for Stroke Recovery brings together three institutions - Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, Baycrest, and the University of Ottawa.

The Centre is developing new ways to repair the brain after stroke and is unique in the world in bringing together basic research, clinical research and patient care toward the common goal of reducing disability in stroke patients.

"The Heart and Stroke Foundation Centre for Stroke Recovery is a unique public-private partnership devoted to optimizing stroke recovery," says Dr. Sandra Black, Site Director, Heart and Stroke Foundation Centre for Stroke Recovery and Medical Director of the Regional Stroke Centre for North/East GTA at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. "This investment by the Government of Canada will continue to position the Centre as a beacon for the rest of the stroke community internationally."

According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, research funding into stroke rehabilitation and recovery programs needs to grow exponentially to keep up with the rising number of stroke survivors in Canada. Over 15,000 Canadians die as a result of stroke every year - and currently 300,000 are living with its effects. Statistics also show that more than 70 percent of stroke survivors are left with some degree of disability; and two thirds of strokes occur among people over 65.

"Stroke is the fourth leading cause of death in Canada and the number one cause of serious long-term adult disability," says Mike LeClair, volunteer Chair, Board of Directors, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario. The

Heart and Stroke Foundation, a volunteer-based health charity, leads in eliminating heart disease and stroke and reducing their impact through the advancement of research and its application, the promotion of healthy living, and advocacy.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation Centre for Stroke Recovery is one of seven centres that received federal funding to support its operations through the Budget 2007.