



# Partnerships and Collaborations



## The Power of Partnerships

By working with partners, CIHR can more effectively: build capacity, translate knowledge, build support for health research, minimize redundant work and set the Canadian health-research agenda.

Partnerships, with the private sector, health charity groups, other levels of government and research agencies in Canada and abroad, play a central role in advancing CIHR's work. Effective health research needs the collective efforts of the many people and organizations committed to making Canadians healthier and building an effective health-care system. Partnerships allow CIHR to invest in more career awards for researchers and engage in industry-research collaborations. Partnerships also help Canada define strategic priorities for research on topics as diverse as mental health in the workplace and cardiovascular health. In 2006-07, CIHR signed 280 partnership agreements with 239 different partners. These partnerships contributed approximately \$90<sup>1</sup> million in additional funding for CIHR-led health research projects. In the past seven years, CIHR has been able to leverage more than \$558<sup>1</sup> million in additional funding for health research.

## Partnership Activities

The **CIHR/Rx&D Collaborative Research Program** is inspired by the longstanding successful collaboration between the pharmaceutical research industry and CIHR. Under this Program, the eligible company partner is a member of Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D). Currently, the Program better enables CIHR and Rx&D to maximize the impact of clinical and translational research in Canada in order to contribute to the health of Canadians, better delivery of health research and services as well as contribute to the economy of Canada and the world. CIHR and its partner organizations have invested over \$150<sup>1</sup> million between 1999-2000 and 2006-2007 for research funded under the CIHR/Rx&D Collaborative

<sup>1</sup> Currently, these figures represent only partner funds being administered by CIHR. As in-kind partner contributions can not accurately be validated and partner contributions not administered by CIHR are not included, partner contributions are likely understated.



## About CIHR

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) is the Government of Canada's agency for health research. CIHR's mission is to create new scientific knowledge and to catalyze its translation into improved health, more effective health services and products, and a strengthened Canadian health-care system. Composed of 13 Institutes, CIHR provides leadership and support to more than 11,000 health researchers and trainees across Canada.

Research Program, approximately \$40 million of which was contributed by CIHR. The investments have been to valuable research projects at universities and teaching hospitals across Canada, making this the largest and most successful public-private health research program in the country.

### **Mental health in the workplace**

Mental illness is hitting Canadian businesses hard in the pocketbook, costing them \$16 billion/year in lost productivity. CIHR, in partnership with the Global Business Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health, is pursuing a research program to investigate the causes of poor workplace mental health and find solutions. The research program, which is taking place in workplaces across Canada, will provide information to help employers accurately identify individuals with or at risk for mental illness in the workplace and develop programs to help them. Key research questions include: What management practices are most unhealthy? What are the most effective treatments and how can the workplace assist employees to gain access to them? How can employers reduce the stigma associated with mental illness? The joint CIHR-Roundtable research initiative on workplace mental health brings together partners from across the spectrum, including researchers from numerous fields, workers, employers and unions.

### **Intergovernmental partnership and collaboration – Safe Food and Water Initiative**

Although Canada's food and water supplies are among the safest in the world, contamination from microbes and bacteria remains an important health and economic threat. Scares provoked by the original discovery of a single cow with bovine spongiform encephalopathy, 'mad cow disease', caused substantial damage to Canada's cattle industry. CIHR helped form a 17-member coalition to conduct research to increase the safety of these resources. The group includes partners from seven different Government of Canada departments and agencies, including Environment Canada and the National Research Council of Canada, working alongside researchers from numerous different universities. The partnership, which is ongoing, has produced a number of commercialization opportunities, including

one spin-off company, and helped deepen partnerships between governments and universities.

### **International partnerships – Canada-China initiatives**

Collaborations with international partners create access for Canada's health research community to international knowledge networks and help strengthen Canada's diplomatic links to nations in the developed and developing world. In 2005, CIHR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Natural Sciences Foundation of China to create new health research collaborations between Canada and China. So far, two funding competitions have been held and a number of joint Canada-China research projects are underway. CIHR and China's Ministry of Education, through the Chinese Scholarships Council, signed a second agreement in 2006 for the Canada-China Norman Bethune Health Research Scholarship Program. Under the program, up to 30 scholarships will be offered annually to Chinese students to pursue PhDs in health research at Canadian universities. The first recipients are scheduled to start their training this fall.

### **Partnerships with health charities – Canadian Heart Health Strategy**

CIHR has partnerships with numerous members of Canada's health charity sector. One of CIHR's largest partners is the Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation (HSF). In addition to partnered training, fellowships and directed cardiovascular research programs, CIHR and HSF are partners on the new Canadian Heart Health Strategy, announced last fall by the Government of Canada. The goal of the strategy is to ensure that knowledge about best practices in prevention and treatment of heart disease is available quickly and effectively to health-care providers in all provinces and territories. Heart disease remains the number-one cause of death in Canada and a new strategy will reduce disability, improve quality of life and, ultimately, save lives.

