



British Columbia

British Columbia at a Glance

Some of Canada's most innovative and relevant health research happens in British Columbia (B.C.). CIHR awarded approximately \$84 million in funding for health research in B.C. in 2006-07, an increase of more than 211 % from 2000-01. This funding supports more than 960 projects by principal investigators in eight funded institutions.

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) supports health research in British Columbia.

CIHR Investment in British Columbia



Figures include the Canada Research Chairs and the Networks of Centres of Excellence. Figures are rounded to the nearest million.

Funding Excellence CIHR-Funded Health Research in British Columbia

Universities in British Columbia are known for their expertise and research achievements in a variety of areas. Here are some examples of research in progress:

Overcoming antibiotic resistance

Dr. David Vocado, Simon Fraser University

Antibiotics are becoming less and less effective, in part because of the increasing numbers of bacteria containing enzymes called AmpC beta-lactamases, or AmpC as they are known. These enzymes destroy some types of antibiotics, creating antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Dr. David Vocado of Simon Fraser University is trying to develop chemicals that will block the activation of AmpC and make once-resistant bacteria susceptible to antibiotics again. This CIHR-funded research will help provide another tool in the ongoing battle against antibiotic-resistant bacteria.



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.

Regenerating movement

Dr. Timothy O'Connor, University of British Columbia

Neurons play a critical role in helping the nervous system send messages but, once damaged, they typically do not regrow, leaving people with spinal cord injuries in wheelchairs. A group of CIHR-funded researchers led by Dr. Timothy O'Connor at UBC is searching for chemicals that will help neurons grow. They are using a technology known as high throughput screening, which uses a combination of robotics and high-speed computer technology to test thousands of chemicals in a day. Once Dr. O'Connor and his team have identified a chemical that will promote neuron growth, they will begin testing the chemical in animals in the hopes of developing a treatment for humans with spinal cord injuries.

Preventing unnecessary treatment

Dr. Marianne Sadar, University of British Columbia

Prostate cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in Canadian men. Physicians screen their male patients with a blood test for prostate-specific antigen (PSA) or a digital rectal examination. Suspected prostate cancer is confirmed by a biopsy of the prostate. However, PSA screening is leading to the over-treatment of prostate cancer, resulting in men receiving radical therapies even though they may never develop the disease. These therapies can produce negative side effects such as impotence and loss of bladder control. CIHR-funded researcher Dr. Marianne Sadar of the University of British Columbia and her team will evaluate a new diagnostic procedure that can potentially distinguish between aggressive prostate cancer and benign forms.

The complexities of drug use

Dr. Tim Stockwell, University of Victoria

Drug users typically use more than one drug, yet most of Canada's drug policies and programs focus on a single drug or behaviour. CIHR-funded researcher Dr. Tim Stockwell of the University of Victoria is studying substance use and addictive behaviour from a more complex perspective. Dr. Stockwell's multidisciplinary team will be examining how drug-use patterns change with a person's age, which drug-use patterns increase a person's risk of injury and drug-use patterns among street drug users. This research will lead to more effective drug policies.



Recognizing Regional Leaders in Health Research

Dr. Robert E. W. Hancock CIHR Award Winner

Dr. Robert Hancock is a leader in the study of microbiology and an active entrepreneur, having established two companies as offshoots of his research, Migenix Inc. and Inimex Pharmaceuticals Inc. His research focuses on infectious diseases, which are responsible for a third of all deaths on the planet. He currently holds the Canada Research Chair in Pathogenomics and Antimicrobials at the University of British Columbia. In 2006, Dr. Hancock received the CIHR Michael Smith Prize in Health Research as Canada's Health Researcher of the Year.

Dr. Cecilia Benoit Institute Advisory Board Member

Dr. Cecilia Benoit is a research associate with the University of Victoria's Centre for Youth & Society and the Centre for Addictions Research of BC. Dr. Benoit is currently leading several CIHR-funded projects on youth health, workers' health, and access to health care. Dr. Benoit is a member of the Advisory Board for CIHR's Institute of Population and Public Health.



For more information, go to
www.healthresearchatwork.cihr-irsc.gc.ca

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