

MEDIA BACKGROUNDER: MS FUNDING AND CLINICAL TRIALS

On October 19, 2010, the Government of Saskatchewan made \$5M available to SHRF to fund clinical trials for the MS liberation treatment.

SHRF will provide the money in stages to a top-quality research team to be chosen in a competitive grant review process based on accepted standards of science, ethics and clinical care.

SHRF will manage the grant funds according to its well-established grants management processes.

- **FIRST STEP** – SHRF will form an expert advisory panel to assist in developing criteria for a call for research proposals and in overseeing the selection process. The advisory panel will be convened in early November.
- The panel will consist of about six people from Saskatchewan and other jurisdictions. It will include clinical specialists, research experts, and a patient advocate. Possible areas of expertise to be included are neurology, vascular surgery, interventional radiology, rehabilitation therapies, and clinical trials design.
- **SECOND STEP** – An expedited call for proposals will be based on sound evidence and best practices. A call for proposals typically outlines the scope of the research, funding available, timelines, application requirements, and criteria for success. SHRF's goal is to issue a call for proposals early in December.
- **THIRD STEP** – An expert peer-review committee will assess all proposals submitted to SHRF in response to the call and provide its funding recommendation in early spring 2011. SHRF expects to announce the outcome of the competition in April 2011.
- The successful research team will include clinicians and scientists comprising expertise in designing and managing clinical trials, providing medical care for patients with multiple sclerosis, and leading a multi-disciplinary, multi-site research team. Given the focus on Saskatchewan patients, a portion of the research team will be from Saskatchewan. Team members will have a demonstrated record of excellence in their fields.
- The actual start of clinical trials will depend upon the successful research team's plan and timeline.

For MS Patients and their families

- MS patients and their families in Saskatchewan will play an important part in any clinical trials research project that is carried out by the successful research team.
- The goal is to have a process in place for proceeding with clinical trials by the spring of 2011.
- Until a successful research team has been announced, there is no list or requirement for patients to register their interest in participating. SHRF and Health Ministry will not be collecting patient information or expressions of interest related to the potential for MS liberation treatment procedure trials; that role lies solely with the research team selected.
- Information about how interested patients may take part in any potential trials will be available *after* a successful research team has been announced. Your physician or other care provider will not have any additional information regarding your ability to participate.
- Patients are encouraged to watch for updates and announcements in the spring of 2011. Information about the call for proposals for research team interest in MS liberation treatment trials will be posted on SHRF's web site: www.shrf.ca.

ABOUT SHRF

The Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF) is a provincial agency that funds the work of researchers, facilitates the growth of health research in Saskatchewan, and promotes the value of this R&D sector of the health system.

As the lead agency for the province's Health Research Strategy, SHRF works as a catalyst, supporting the work of individual researchers and research groups, as well as furthering numerous initiatives that enhance and increase capacity of our province's health research enterprise.

SHRF offers grant programs that help researchers establish careers and build capacity in areas where our province has a pressing need or can play to a particular strength.

Since its formation in 2003, the Foundation has developed considerable expertise in managing public research funds, from program design, through scientific review, to financial management.