

Investment in the endMS Research & Training Network

What the MS Society recommends:

The Government of British Columbia invests in the Society's *endMS Research and Training Network* to recruit, train, support, and retain in Canada the next generation of MS researchers in order to accelerate their research activities to find a cure and improved treatments for MS.

Basic Facts:

- MS is the most common disabling neurological condition in young adults worldwide.
- Canada has one of the world's highest prevalence rates for MS, with the disease affecting more than 1 in 500 Canadians.
- Close to 80% of people with MS are eventually unable to work full-time. The economic burden to the Canadian economy of MS is estimated at almost \$1 billion per year. The lifetime economic burden is estimated at \$1.6 million per person with MS.
- The cause and cure for MS are still unknown. However, leading researchers are no longer asking if the cause of MS will be found, but rather when.
- The *endMS Research and Training Network*¹ will secure Canada's position as the premier destination in the world to train for and pursue a career in MS research.
- The design of the *Network* is based on a simple proposition:
The best MS researchers + more MS research = better quality of life today + an end to MS faster
- At present, many young scientists-in-training gravitate toward other fields of investigation because of a widely held perception that these fields are more generously funded than MS.

Features of the Network include:

- participation of leading university and hospital research institutions across Canada
- use of telecommunications and teleconferencing technologies to facilitate ongoing communication, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing among MS clinicians, scientists, teachers and trainees
- financial support for grants, fellowships, seed funding, translational research awards and other forms of professional development for MS professionals at all levels and stages of their careers
- innovative training curriculum of MS-specific courses covering all disciplines related to MS research for researchers and clinicians to deepen their knowledge and expertise

¹ www.endMS.ca

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- practical hands-on workshops and in-depth seminars on MS-related subjects
 - online library of MS research data and educational resources
 - dedicated career-mentoring program to partner scientists-in-training with leading investigators and involve them personally in their research work
 - national MS research conferences to bring the entire research community together to discuss the latest findings and opportunities for further investigational work

Participating MS research centres will include:

- Brain Research Centre/Vancouver Hospital & Health Sciences Centre/UBC/Vancouver Coastal Health MS Research Clinic - University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

View of the MS Society:

The *endMS Research and Training Network* will help the Government of British Columbia to meet key outcomes, such as to:

- focus on leveraged investment and constructive change founded on new partnerships...with all who want to help our province build for the future²
- implement human resource training plans, including increasing education and training opportunities and reviewing education programs to ensure new graduates are ready to participate³
- address succession planning needs through initiatives to develop future leaders capable of managing the increasingly complex health system²
- create safe, positive work environments within a sustainable health system that attracts and retains talented people²
- increase access to post-secondary education and training throughout the province, including general access to post-secondary educational opportunities and expanded health education programs to address health human resource shortages⁴

² 2009 Speech from the Throne

³ Ministry of Health Services, *2008/09-2010/11 Service Plan*, Feb 2008: Goal 3, Objective 3.1

⁴ Ministry of Finance, *Budget and Fiscal Plan, 2009/10-2011/12*, Feb 2009: page 24