
News Release

New partnership formed to improve lives of Albertans with digestive disease

ALBERTA, CANADA – December 20, 2018 – The University Hospital Foundation (UHF), Ministry of Alberta Economic Development and Trade, and Shire Pharma Canada ULC (Shire Canada) through the Calgary Health Trust (CHT), have jointly invested \$1.7 Million to create a pan-provincial Collaboration of Excellence to advance long-term health outcomes, quality of life, and economic prosperity for Albertans suffering with digestive diseases.

According to a recent National Digestive Disorders Prevalence and Impact Study, approximately two-thirds of Canadians suffer from digestive disorders. Often, people with digestive diseases suffer in silence or are treated with medication for their symptoms, with little understanding of how changes in nutrition may lead to significantly better health outcomes. To address this, Shire Canada, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, and the University Hospital Foundation recognized the need to invest in a new partnership for research and treatment of digestive diseases using nutrition-based therapies for the benefit of all Albertans.

Dr. Maitreyi Raman, Medical Director - Southern Alberta Home Enteral and Parenteral Nutrition Program, is the clinical lead on the project. “Our major objectives are to develop novel research to support the advancement of nutrition therapy in inflammatory bowel disease, develop novel nutrition and dietary therapies in the setting of liver cirrhosis, and then optimize how we provide care to patients with intestinal failure,” said Dr. Raman.

About the AsCEND Collaboration

The provincial partnership for Alberta’s Collaborations of Excellence for Nutrition in Digestive Diseases (AsCEND) is supported by an interdisciplinary team comprised of Shire Canada, the Government of Alberta, Alberta Health Services, the University of Alberta – Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, and the University of Calgary.

AsCEND will support education and training, post-graduate physician nutrition fellowships, and clinical patient support and development, focused on three main pillars:

- **Discovery:** Developing and evaluating nutrition-based therapies in gastrointestinal disease.
- **Patient Experience:** Using personalized medicine to provide evidence-based nutrition care to patients with GI disease.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Providing nutrition-focused training and education to patients and practitioners, and advocating for enhanced nutrition delivery in acute and primary care.

“At Shire, we have long believed we have a unique opportunity to champion the underserved patient communities,” said Eric Tse, General Manager for Shire Canada. “We are delighted to be a part of the AsCEND collaboration to help accelerate the development of new treatments and nutrition based therapies, remove obstacles to diagnosis and increase access to therapies that are so greatly needed for those who face digestive disease.”



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“Alberta is home to world-leading healthcare and research teams in gastroenterology, nutrition and inflammatory bowel diseases. The UHF is proud to be a partner in this collaboration as we know it will have a positive impact the health of Albertans living with these conditions”, says Christy Holtby, Vice President, Strategic Partnerships with the University Hospital Foundation. “We’re so grateful for the support from community members through our Foundation to help fund this ground-breaking collaboration.”

“This partnership is an excellent example of how collaboration between the public and private sectors, and our foundations in both Edmonton and Calgary can work together to make a transformational impact on healthcare outcomes for Albertans,” adds Dr. Chris Eagle, CEO of Calgary Health Trust. “We are pleased to have the opportunity to work alongside University Hospital Foundation and Shire Canada in bringing this opportunity to Alberta.”

“Alberta’s health innovators are making our province proud – attracting international attention and investment,” says the Minister of Alberta Economic Development and Trade, Deron Bilous, “World-renowned life-sciences experts want to help our researchers and entrepreneurs create new products and businesses based on Alberta discoveries. That means healthier lives for people around the world – and new jobs and a more diversified economy here at home.”

About the AsCEND Partners

The University Hospital Foundation raises and manages funds to advance patient care, research and healthcare education at the University of Alberta Hospital, the Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute and the Kaye Edmonton Clinic. You can find more information at www.universityhospitalfoundation.ab.ca/.

The Ministry of Alberta Economic Development and Trade focuses on economic growth and diversification by supporting innovation and research; expanding access to capital for small and medium-sized enterprises; promoting trade, investment and market access initiatives; and leading Alberta’s negotiations on trade agreements. Please visit our website at <http://economic.alberta.ca>

Shire is the global biotechnology leader serving patients with rare diseases and specialized conditions. We seek to push boundaries through discovering and delivering new possibilities for patients across our portfolio of therapeutic areas including Immunology, Hematology, Genetic Diseases, Neuroscience, Internal Medicine, and Ophthalmics. For more information, please visit: www.shirecanada.com.

Calgary Health Trust raises money to advance healthcare within Calgary. Funds raised benefit Foothills Medical Centre, Peter Lougheed Centre, Rockyview General Hospital, South Health Campus, many community health programs and 12 Carewest care centres in our community. For more information about Calgary Health Trust and its strategic priorities, visit www.calgaryhealthtrust.ca.

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than four million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.



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Reference Information

<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/digestive-disorders-cost-canadians-18-billion-annually-in-health-care-andlost-productivity-study-finds-538836181.html>

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