Canada's Top Health Researchers To Be Recognized

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OTTAWA (November 22, 2006) - Canada's top health researchers will be recognized tonight at the 5th annual Canadian Health Research Awards. These awards are among the Canadian research community's highest honours.

This year's Health Researcher of the Year will be Dr. Robert Hancock of the University of British Columbia. Dr. Hancock will be awarded the prestigious CIHR Michael Smith Prize for his world-leading research on ways of battling infectious diseases such as Pseudomonas aeruginosa, a major cause of lung infections in hospitals and nursing homes.

Dr. Peter Singer from the University of Toronto will be a finalist for the CIHR Michael Smith Prize. Dr. Singer's current research focus is global health, in particular harnessing life sciences to improve health in developing countries.

Canada's Premier Young Researcher will be Dr. Nicole Letourneau from the University of New Brunswick. She will be presented with the Peter Lougheed/CIHR New Investigator Award for her important research on the impact of domestic violence on infants and their mothers. And the Honourable Peter Lougheed will be named the 2006 Champion of Health Research. He will receive the CIHR Distinguished Leadership Award for his outstanding leadership in helping stimulate health research in Alberta and across Canada.

The Canadian Health Research Awards, which will be held tonight in Ottawa at the National Gallery of Canada, is hosted by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), in collaboration with the Health Charities Coalition of Canada (HCCC), Research Canada - An Alliance for Health Discovery and Canada's provincial health research organizations.

The event will be attended by Canada's leading health researchers as well as the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Health, the Honourable Steven Fletcher, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, other Members of Parliament and Dr. Alan Bernstein, President of CIHR.

"Tonight, we're honouring those individuals who have exemplified excellence and contributed to the health of Canadians and of people throughout the world," said Minister Clement. "They have demonstrated, through their achievements and their commitment, the strong link between health research and improved health-care delivery, improved treatment and prevention of disease. Their work has and will have a major impact."

The following individuals and organizations are among those to be recognized for their outstanding contributions to improving the health of Canadians:

**Dr. Robert Hancock** (Professor, Department of Microbiology and Immunology, University of British Columbia) is the recipient of the **CIHR Michael Smith Prize in Health Research - Canada's Health Researcher of the Year.** This award recognizes innovation, creativity, leadership and dedication to health research. Dr. Hancock is an undisputed leader in microbiology and an outstanding researcher who has dedicated his career to research on
infectious diseases.

Dr. Peter Singer (Senior Scientist, McLaughlin Rotman Centre, University Health Network and Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto) is the finalist for the CIHR Michael Smith Prize in Health Research - Canada's Health Researcher of the Year. Dr. Singer's contributions have included improvements in quality end-of-life care, fair priority setting in healthcare organizations, pandemic influenza planning and teaching bioethics.

The Honourable Peter Lougheed (Counsel, Bennett Jones LLP) is the 2006 Champion of Health Research. He is the recipient of the CIHR Distinguished Leadership Award, which recognizes outstanding leadership qualities and support by individuals for health research. Mr. Lougheed founded the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research, which has funded more than $850 million worth of health research in the province.

Dr. Nicole Letourneau (Associate Professor and Research Fellow, University of New Brunswick) is the recipient of the Peter Lougheed/CIHR New Investigator Award - Canada's Premier Young Researcher. This award is given to Canada’s brightest young health researchers at the beginning of their careers. Dr. Letourneau’s research focuses on the healthy development of vulnerable children, particularly those exposed to domestic violence or whose mothers suffer from depression.

Dr. Stanley Zlotkin (Professor, Department of Paediatrics, Nutritional Sciences and Public Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto) is the national recipient of the CIHR Knowledge Translation Award. This award recognizes an exceptional individual or team currently involved in a collaborative health research or development project that aims to advance and expand the understanding of knowledge translation. Through the Sprinkles Global Health Initiative, Dr. Zlotkin is ensuring that children with anemia in rural areas of the developing world receive Sprinkles, a dry, tasteless, single serving packet that includes all the nutrients a child or adult needs to fight anemia.

Dr. John Mann, Director of Engineering and Regulatory Affairs, DaimlerChrysler Canada Inc. and Dr. Anne Snowdon, University of Windsor, are the recipients of the CIHR Partnership Award for their education program Bobby Shooster Rides Safely in his Booster. This award recognizes partnerships that bring health research communities together to create innovative approaches to important research questions. DaimlerChrysler has entered into an innovative partnership to increase knowledge of child safety in vehicles. This project, tested in Ontario, has led to a significant increase in parents' knowledge and is now being tested in six other Canadian provinces.

Ms. Isabelle Chouinard (Graduate Student, University of Calgary) is the recipient of the CIHR Douglas Kinsella Doctoral Award for Research in Bioethics. This award honours the accomplishments of Dr. T. Douglas Kinsella in bioethics and his lifelong promotion of the ethical treatment of humans in research. Ms. Chouinard is developing guidelines to help health practitioners conduct ethically sound evidence-based medicine in the Canadian health care system.

"Health research is fundamental to strengthening our health care system and improving the health of Canadians," said Dr. Bernstein. "The excellence and commitment of the recipients of tonight's awards attest to the significant contributions Canadian health researchers are making to
both advancing and applying new scientific knowledge - something in which Canadians can take
great pride."

For a complete list of award recipients, please visit the CIHR website http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/ [1].

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 over 10,000 health researchers and trainees across Canada.