



Mood Disorders Society of Canada
Société pour les troubles de l'humeur du Canada

www.mooddisorderscanada.ca | www.troubleshumeur.ca

MEDIA RELEASE

March 29, 2012

Federal Budget Giant Leap Forward: Real Solutions for Canadian Patients

National network of depression research centres and anti-stigma efforts will lead to better patient care

OTTAWA, Ont. — Canadians living with depression will see great benefits from the Government of Canada's commitment to battle depression-related conditions and issues, says the Mood Disorders Society of Canada (MDSC).

In the federal budget tabled Thursday by Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, the government promised to invest \$5 million to seed the development of a national network of patient-focused depression research and intervention centres, and will put another \$200,000 towards anti-stigma mental health training for health-care professionals.

The Mood Disorders Society of Canada (MDSC) will work with the Mental Health Commission of Canada and other partners to support the work of the network.

"These budget measures are a giant leap forward for Canada and for patients across the country," says Phil Upshall, National Executive Director of the MDSC. "The Government of Canada has seen the value in investing in projects that will lead to better patient care and a true understanding of depression, suicide and PTSD."

The network will support more than 80 researchers and clinicians who specialize in depression. In collaboration with other research agencies and the government, these professionals will work towards developing a comprehensive research plan with a special focus on suicide prevention and early Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) detection and intervention.

"As the leading cause of workplace disability in Canada, depression is one of the biggest challenges facing our economy and our communities," says Dr. Zul Merali, President & CEO, University of Ottawa Institute of Mental Health Research and Director of Research, the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre. "Through our research, The Royal has already begun to transform the way major depression is treated. By collaborating nationally on patient-oriented research, we will be able to find real solutions more quickly, making a difference in the lives of Canadians and easing some of the staggering costs that depression places on government."

The highly-interactive research will focus on determining the biological and psychosocial determinants of suicide, PTSD and other depression-related issues so that at-risk populations can be identified rapidly and accurately. It will also make more diagnostic tools available, which will lead to more effective treatments. Clinical trials of innovative pharmacological or cognitive interventions will ensure the results of the research can be translated into clinical practice.

The \$200,000 Continuing Medical Education program will support family physicians and specialists by providing contact-based training to combat the stigma that too often accompanies a PTSD diagnosis as well as the tools and resources to best support the needs of the patient presenting with the illness.

Depression costs the Canadian economy an estimated \$51 billion annually in costs related to health care, criminal justice, child abuse and neglect, lost income and lost productivity.

The seed funding will spur further public- and private-sector investment.

About the Mood Disorders Society of Canada:

The Mood Disorders Society of Canada was launched in 2001 to provide people with mood disorders, their families and caregivers a strong, cohesive voice at the national level on issues relating to mental health and mental illness. With particular regard to depression, bipolar disorder and other associated mood disorders, the MDSC aims to improve access to treatment, inform research, shape program development and government policy to improve the quality of life for people affected by mood disorders.

About the network:

"How do you feel?": Building Economic Resilience by Beating Canada's Depression Epidemic
http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/HOC/Committee/411/FINA/WebDoc/WD5138047/411_FINA_PBC2011_Briefs/Merali,%20Zul%20E.pdf

About PTSD:

http://www.mooddorderscanada.ca/documents/Advocacy/PTSD_Report_EN.pdf

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