News Release

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Neuromuscular disease network will enhance Canadian research and clinical care

Neuromuscular diseases are a significant burden on the Canadian healthcare system and families

The University of Calgary’s Hotchkiss Brain Institute (HBI), Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), and Muscular Dystrophy Canada, are excited to announce the launch of the Canadian Neuromuscular Disease Network.

“Neuromuscular diseases are individually rare but as a group affect many Canadians. This partnership with the patient community is the only way forward in the process of developing and testing potential treatments,” says Dr. Lawrence Korngut, the network Chair, a University of Calgary researcher in the Department of Clinical Neurosciences and member of the HBI.

The network is a critical initiative, organizing neuromuscular disease clinical care and research personnel across the country. It will empower patients and families through improved access to needed information, resources, and connections with each other through a patient portal.

The network plans to enhance the delivery of clinical care, increase capacity and collaboration and improve training opportunities for researchers and clinical care providers.

“Neuromuscular diseases affect tens of thousands of Canadians, both young and old. While there is currently no cure, we will not give up hope. Enhanced collaboration among researchers and clinicians will lead to improving the effectiveness of research investments and the speed with which treatments can be translated from bench to bedside. Muscular Dystrophy Canada is pleased to sponsor this important initiative, and partner with the medical and scientific community to enhance the quality of life and treatment options for people living with these diseases,” says Catherine Sherrard, CEO of Muscular Dystrophy Canada.

Neuromuscular diseases as a group include over 150 different conditions. These diseases result in weakness and physical disability as a result of damage to muscle and nerve tissue.
The Network is a result of a $575,613 investment from a CIHR Network Catalyst grant from the CIHR Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis and $155,820 from Muscular Dystrophy Canada.

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**The University of Calgary**  
The University of Calgary is a leading Canadian university located in the nation's most enterprising city. The university has a clear strategic direction to become one of Canada's top five research universities by 2016, where research and innovative teaching go hand in hand, and where we fully engage the communities we both serve and lead. This strategy is called Eyes High, inspired by the university's Gaelic motto, which translates as 'I will lift up my eyes.'

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**The Hotchkiss Brain Institute**  
Currently celebrating its 10th Anniversary, the Hotchkiss Brain Institute (HBI) at UCalgary, consists of more than 100 scientists and clinician-scientists who are dedicated to advancing brain and mental health research and education. The Institute’s research strengths in foundational neuroscience (axon biology and regeneration, cerebral circulation, neural systems and behaviour) are leading to new treatments for neurological and psychiatric disorders, aimed at improving quality of life and patient care. More information on the HBI can be found at [www.hbi.ucalgary.ca](http://www.hbi.ucalgary.ca).

**About Muscular Dystrophy Canada**  
Founded in 1954, Muscular Dystrophy Canada is a voluntary health charity whose mission is to enhance the lives of those affected with neuromuscular disorders by continually working to provide ongoing support and resources while relentlessly searching for a cure through well-funded research. For more information please visit us at [www.muscle.ca](http://www.muscle.ca) or call 1-866-687-2538.