



NEWS RELEASE

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Donation of \$500,000 to help prevent adverse drug reactions among children

The Centre for Healthcare Innovation & Improvement at the Child & Family Research Institute, and the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of British Columbia, are pleased to announce a major contribution of \$500,000 over two years by Eli Lilly Canada to a Genome Canada/Genome BC-sponsored research program.

The project, Genotype-Specific Approaches to Therapy in Childhood (GATC) is a B.C.-led national strategy to improve drug safety for children. The study aims to prevent adverse drug reactions in childhood by identifying predictive genomic markers for specific adverse drug reactions.

The study is led from two research centres within the Child & Family Research Institute at BC Children's Hospital. Dr. Bruce Carleton from the Centre for Healthcare Innovation & Improvement is a world-wide leader in drug safety research. Dr. Michael Hayden, the Director of the Centre for Molecular Medicine & Therapeutics, is an internationally recognized expert in pharmacogenomics.

The GATC program was funded by Genome Canada and Genome BC in 2004 and represents a partnership with several other universities including McGill, the University of Toronto, the University of Western Ontario, McMaster University, and the University of Kansas.

The GATC project hopes, within five years, to identify adverse drug reaction markers that may be used to predict and prevent drug toxicity in children. The markers developed will permit specific dosing recommendations for commonly used drugs based on a patient's genetic makeup.

Total funding for the GATC project is set at \$8.4 million over three years. Half of this total is provided by Genome Canada through Genome BC. In addition to Eli Lilly Canada, other major contributors include the Canadian Genetic Disease Network, Provincial Health Services Authority, UBC Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, the Child & Family Research Institute, and Pfizer Canada.

"Our government is committed to investing in research and innovation," said Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell. "Genome British Columbia is producing ground-breaking discoveries that will benefit human health, fisheries, forestry, agriculture and the environment."

"The support announced today by Eli Lilly Canada is an important indication of the willingness of a major pharmaceutical manufacturer to encourage the broad scope of drug safety research while targeting vulnerable children in particular. This is a strong expression of confidence in the Canadian and Vancouver child health research environment," said Dr. Stuart MacLeod, CFRI Executive Director.

The Child & Family Research Institute and the UBC Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences applaud Eli Lilly Canada's commitment to the children of Canada and to the academic communities committed to drug safety research. It is notable that Lilly's commitment has been made independently of any product-specific concerns.

Today's announcement formalizes a significant university – industry partnership aligned with the objectives of Genome Canada. Such partnerships are essential to build the ability to translate rapidly expanding genetic knowledge into better drug therapy for children and patients of all ages.

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