



Manitoba
Health
Research
Council

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MHRC PROVIDES UPDATE ON MS CLINICAL TRIALS

Winnipeg, MB - September 27, 2012 - The Manitoba Health Research Council (MHRC) today provided an update on the national call for proposals for clinical trials for studying the treatments for CCSVI in Multiple Sclerosis (MS).

After a thorough review, the international scientific review team, including specialists from clinical neurosciences, biostatistics, medical imaging and vascular surgery, has determined the sole application received does not meet the criteria set for a safe, ethical clinical trial.

"MHRC has a duty to ensure any funded research meets criteria for safety and ethics, and the scientific review team, consisting of leading national and international researchers determined the application we received did not meet that criteria," explained MHRC Chair and Dean of Medicine, University of Manitoba, Dr. Brian Postl.

MHRC continues to monitor emerging MS research activities across Canada and abroad and notes that a separate call for proposals coordinated by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) has identified a research team to conduct clinical trials on the CCSVI treatment procedure. MHRC has recommended to the Manitoba government that a partnership, with CIHR to support the original, preferred, gold-standard study method of a multi-site clinical trial, be explored. MHRC further recommended that a portion of the original \$5 million investment the government made for MS research be set aside for a potential CCSVI clinical trial that would include Manitoba patients, and that a portion of that funding be retained for other emerging MS treatment clinical trials.

"Emerging research from around the world suggests the CCSVI procedure may offer some therapeutic benefit to MS patients but there remains concerns over its safety and efficacy, so we recommend to the government that some of the original funding continue to be used to pursue CCSVI clinical trials," said Postl. "At the same time, other research into potential MS treatments is being identified and should be explored as well."

Manitoba's Health Minister Theresa Oswald accepted MHRC's recommendations today.

"Manitoba's government has always been committed to helping MS patients, their families and their doctors get the answers they need about CCSVI," said Oswald. "We accept MHRC's recommendations to pursue a safe CCSVI clinical trial that will include Manitoba patients."

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About the Manitoba Health Research Council

The mission of the Manitoba Health Research Council, which reports to the Minister of Innovation, Energy and Mines, is to promote the growth and co-ordination of the health research enterprise in Manitoba. Its mandate is to promote and assist basic, clinical and applied research in the health sciences in Manitoba and advise the Minister with respect to matters relating to health research. From moneys received from the Province, Council provides funds for research in the health sciences through a number of grants and awards programs.

More information is available at www.mhrc.mb.ca.