



New Brunswick
Health Research
Foundation



Fondation de la
recherche en santé
du Nouveau-Brunswick



INSTITUT ATLANTIQUE
DE RECHERCHE SUR
LE CANCER

ATLANTIC
CANCER RESEARCH
INSTITUTE

\$4 MILLION PARTNERSHIP TO REDUCE BARRIERS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALIZED MEDICINE IN ONCOLOGY

'Personalize My Treatment' (PMT) Initiative aims to:

- *Make Canada's rich scientific resources accessible to the research community*
- *Create a comprehensive cancer database of tissue samples, genomic data and clinical data from the cancer patient population*
- *Match patients to available clinical trials based on the profile of their cancer*

Moncton, New Brunswick - April 18, 2016 - At an announcement made earlier today at the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont University Hospital Centre, Merck, known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, confirmed its commitment to research and innovation in oncology by contributing a total of \$2 million to the Exactis Innovation 'Personalize My Treatment' (PMT) initiative. In addition, the Cancer Research Society (CRS) and the New Brunswick Health Research Foundation (NBHRF) will also contribute \$1 million each to help bring innovative precision medicine to Canadians living with cancer.

"The Exactis vision is to build a Canadian Centre of Excellence in Cancer Precision Therapeutics. This project takes a giant step forward today with the partnership of New Brunswick's medical scientific community, and with the participation of patients here. Together we will accelerate discoveries and expand treatment opportunities so that we can really make a difference", said Dr. Gerald Batist, Co-Founder and Scientific Director of Exactis Innovation and of Q-CROC and Director, Segal Cancer Centre at the Jewish General Hospital.

"This contribution reaffirms Merck's commitment to developing cutting-edge treatments for Canadians living with cancer," said Chirfi Guindo, President and Managing Director, Merck Canada Inc. "When we bring leading research institutions across Canada together, including established hubs such as the Atlantic Cancer Research Institute (ACRI) in New Brunswick, we can more effectively respond to promising discoveries in cancer research."

PMT Platform: Bringing Patients Closer to Innovative Treatments

PMT is a pan-Canadian network initiative, led by Exactis Innovation, engaging cancer patients to create a comprehensive cancer database of tissue samples, genomic data and clinical data from the cancer patient population. The main goal of PMT is to match patients to available clinical trials based on the molecular profile of their cancer and defined study inclusion criteria. The initiative aims to reduce barriers to personalized medicine by making Canada's rich scientific resources accessible to the research community.

With support from Merck, the CRS and the NBHRF, the PMT initiative plans to expand its platform throughout Atlantic Canada, starting with the ACRI in New Brunswick. This will effectively increase the Institute's patient recruitment pool, broaden its molecular profiling capacity and strengthen its IT capabilities.

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“As a founding partner of the Exactis PMT initiative, the Cancer Research Society is pleased to be part of this innovative personalized medicine project, co-funded with NBHRF and Merck for the benefit of all Canadian cancer patients,” said Andy Chabot, President and CEO, CRS.

“This collaboration between three funders - a pharmaceutical company, a national health charity and a provincial health research foundation - is concrete evidence that a team effort is necessary to deliver better healthcare to cancer patients,” said Dr. Bruno Battistini, President, CEO and Scientific Director of the NBHRF. “The era of personalized medicine is amongst us. This combined investment into the knowledge economy via a New Brunswick R&D institution, namely ACRI, will serve our province, all of Atlantic Canada and expand the pan-Canadian network initiated by Exactis Innovation.”

“To have an innovative economy, we must invest in research and development. To have healthy families in New Brunswick, we must fight cancer,” said the Hon. Brian Gallant, Premier of New Brunswick. “These are the reasons New Brunswick is investing in this research opportunity.”

Precision Cancer Therapy: Designed for Patients Who Are Likely to Respond

Through decades of research, scientists have come to recognize that cancer is not a single disease, but a collection of over 200 distinct conditions. Personalized medicines, including immune- and gene-targeted therapies, can help deliver clinical benefits to suitable patients, while sparing others from needless treatments.

However, studies designed to test potential drug candidates need to have enough patients screened in order to identify only those suitable for treatment with personalized medicine. This can become a difficult and costly barrier against finding such treatments.

About Exactis:

Exactis Innovation (Exactis) is a Canadian not-for-profit organization created in 2014 with funds from a public/private sector collaboration, including the Canadian Government Business-Led Networks of Centres of Excellence, and several pharmaceutical, biotech, not-for-profit and research organizations. Exactis aims to build an integrated, agile research network for personalized medicine. At the heart of the network is the PMT Platform: a central patient consent protocol for longitudinal tissue sample collection, curation of clinical data, molecular profiling and clinical trial matching across the country. The infrastructure of this network is comprised of a central database, coordinated biobanks and a state of the art molecular laboratory. For more information, visit www.exactis.ca.

About Merck

For 125 years, Merck has been a global healthcare leader working to help the world be well. Merck is known as MSD outside the United States and Canada. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies, and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to healthcare through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. For more information about our operations in Canada, visit www.merck.ca and connect with us on [YouTube](#).

About the New Brunswick Health Research Foundation

The NBHRF is an independent organization governed by a board of directors comprised of key stakeholders from the health research community in New Brunswick. Provincial funding is provided by GNB-Regional Development Corporation (RDC), DoH-Medical Research Fund (MRF) and GNB-DSD Wellness Research Fund (WRF) for a number of health research programs (HRP), major strategic initiatives (HRI) with federal Tri-Councils, national health charities and the private sector, and Strategic Investment in Health Research Innovations (SIHRI). The foundation's mission is to provide leadership and support to build health research capacity, improve the health of New Brunswickers and advance the knowledge economy. For more information, visit www.nbhrf.com.

About the Cancer Research Society

Founded in 1945, the Cancer Research Society is a national not-for-profit organization whose sole mission is to fund research on all types of cancer, thereby contributing to the advancement of science aimed at preventing, detecting, and treating this disease. For more details on the Cancer Research Society and on the research it funds, go to CancerResearchSociety.ca.

About the Atlantic Cancer Research Institute

The Atlantic Cancer Research Institute (ACRI) is a non-profit organization founded in 1998. Located at Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont University Hospital Centre in Moncton, New Brunswick, the ACRI employs a research team of over 50 people that is striving to innovate by accelerating its understanding of cancer, thus paving the way to better diagnosis, more accurate patient stratification and drug discovery.

Forward-Looking Statement of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA

This news release of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, N.J., USA (the "company") includes "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based upon the current beliefs and expectations of the company's management and are subject to significant risks and uncertainties. There can be no guarantees with respect to pipeline products that the products will receive the necessary regulatory approvals or that they will prove to be commercially successful. If underlying assumptions prove inaccurate or risks or uncertainties materialize, actual results may differ materially from those set forth in the forward-looking statements.

Risks and uncertainties include but are not limited to, general industry conditions and competition; general economic factors, including interest rate and currency exchange rate fluctuations; the impact of pharmaceutical industry regulation and health care legislation in the United States and internationally; global trends toward health care cost containment; technological advances, new products and patents attained by competitors; challenges inherent in new product development, including obtaining regulatory approval; the company's ability to accurately predict future market conditions; manufacturing difficulties or delays; financial instability of international economies and sovereign risk; dependence on the effectiveness of the company's patents and other protections for innovative products; and the exposure to litigation, including patent litigation, and/or regulatory actions.

The company undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Additional factors that could cause results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements can be found in the company's 2015 Annual Report on Form 10-K and the company's other filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) available at the SEC's Internet site (www.sec.gov).

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