

News Release

Alberta partnership strengthens the link between nutrition and digestive disease

ALBERTA, CANADA – October 18, 2019 – A new provincial collaboration has been formed to improve the long-term health outcomes, quality of life, and economic prosperity for Albertans suffering with digestive diseases. The University Hospital Foundation (UHF), Ministry of Alberta Economic Development, Trade and Tourism, and Takeda Canada through the Calgary Health Trust (CHT), have jointly invested \$1.7 Million into the partnership. Alberta’s Collaboration of Excellence for Nutrition in Digestive Diseases (AsCEND) announced the official launch today at the Western Canadian Nutrition Conference in Edmonton, Alberta.

From prevention programs to acute treatments that enhance the quality of life for survivors, this collaboration is funding cutting edge research, and taking an innovative and comprehensive approach to understand the role nutrition can play in numerous types of digestive diseases. The internationally-recognized researchers are performing studies on three key gastrointestinal conditions: inflammatory bowel disease, intestinal failure, and cirrhosis.

In the past several decades, prevalence of Inflammatory Bowel Diseases (IBD) has rapidly increased. Canada has one of the highest rates in the world at 1 in 360 Canadians living with the chronic disease. Dr. Maitreyi Raman is the Medical Director for the AsCEND collaboration. “There is currently no cure for IBD.” said Dr. Raman. “Patients describe IBD or Crohn’s Disease as an inner demon that’s impossible to defeat, and are bombarded with medications after diagnosis. There is potentially new hope for disease management in patients with IBD using personalized anti-inflammatory diet therapy, which improves diet quality and meets nutrient recommendations.”

The provincial partnership for Alberta’s Collaborations of Excellence for Nutrition in Digestive Diseases (AsCEND) will support education and training, post-graduate physician nutrition fellowships, and clinical patient support and development, focused on three main pillars:

- **Discovery:** Developing and evaluating nutrition-based therapies in gastrointestinal disease.
- **Patient Experience:** Using personalized medicine to provide evidence-based nutrition care to patients with GI disease.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Providing nutrition-focused training and education to patients and practitioners, and advocating for enhanced nutrition delivery in acute and primary care.

“At Takeda, we are driven to make a real difference in the lives of Canadians with digestive diseases,” said Gamze Yüceland, General Manager for Takeda Canada. “We are excited to be part of the AsCEND collaboration which aims to make a difference through a comprehensive nutrition-based approach to achieve better health and a brighter future for Canadian patients.”

“Alberta is home to world-leading healthcare and research teams in gastroenterology, nutrition and inflammatory bowel diseases. The University Hospital Foundation is proud to be a partner in this collaboration as we know it will have a positive impact the health of Albertans living with these



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conditions”, said Christy Holtby, Interim CEO with the University Hospital Foundation. “We’re so grateful for the support from community members through our Foundation to help fund this ground-breaking collaboration.”

“This partnership is an excellent example of how collaboration between the public and private sectors, and our foundations in both Edmonton and Calgary can work together to make a transformational impact on healthcare outcomes for Albertans,” added Mike Meldrum, CEO of Calgary Health Trust. “We are pleased to have the opportunity to work alongside University Hospital Foundation and Takeda Canada in bringing this opportunity to Alberta.”

About the AsCEND Partners

University Hospital Foundation

The University Hospital Foundation raises and manages funds to advance patient care, research and healthcare education at the University of Alberta Hospital, the Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute and the Kaye Edmonton Clinic. Through Strategic Partnerships, the University Hospital Foundation brings together industry, the public sector, and philanthropy to fund research and find solutions that impact the health of all Albertans. www.GivetoUHF.ca

Government of Alberta

The Ministry of Alberta Economic Development, Trade and Tourism focuses on economic growth and diversification by supporting innovation and research; expanding access to capital for small and medium-sized enterprises; promoting trade, investment and market access initiatives; and leading Alberta’s negotiations on trade agreements. <http://economic.alberta.ca>

Takeda Canada

Takeda Canada headquarters is currently located in Oakville, Ontario and is the Canadian subsidiary of Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited. Takeda Canada is delivering better health for Canadians through leading innovations in gastroenterology, oncology, neuroscience, and rare diseases. Additional information about Takeda Canada is available at www.takeda.com/en-ca

Calgary Health Trust

Calgary Health Trust raises money to advance healthcare within Calgary. Funds raised benefit Foothills Medical Centre, Peter Lougheed Centre, Rockyview General Hospital, South Health Campus, many community health programs and 12 Carewest care centres in our community. For more information about Calgary Health Trust and its strategic priorities, visit www.calgaryhealthtrust.ca.

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