



December 22, 2015

Dear Member,

On behalf of Research Canada: An Alliance for Health Discovery, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and membership in Research Canada. I have captured in this letter some highlights of the strategic advocacy activities we have carried out on your behalf during this past year as well as provided you with an overview of our 2016 Advocacy Program. I have also identified some exciting new benefits of a Research Canada membership in 2016--a **Media Portal** and **Catalogue of Products and Services**. You will also find an invoice for your organization's 2016 membership fees as well.

The 2015 Advocacy Program

The Caucus

In 2015, Research Canada held two Health Research Caucus events: a luncheon on Vaccine Development in Canada (April 2015) and a reception on Global Health Research and Innovation (May 2015). At both events, Research Canada profiled a significant number of our Member institutions and researchers. The Vaccine Development in Canada Luncheon featured the made-in-Canada Ebola vaccine, a groundbreaking development in a global public health disaster. Our event on Global Health Research trumpeted Canada's excellence in research and innovation in maternal and child health, global infectious disease, global health systems, chronic disease and gender and health.

Both events were extremely well attended by Parliamentarians from all parties.

National and Provincial Poll

Also in May, Research Canada celebrated its 10th Anniversary Annual General Meeting of Members and launched its first **National and Provincial Public Opinion Poll on Health Research in Canada** in partnership with five national organizations and the Provinces of British Columbia and Saskatchewan.

Poll 2015 demonstrated that Canadians continue to be dedicated to investments in health and medical research even in the face of the country's ongoing economic challenges and; even more Canadians than those polled in 2006 and 2009 – 92% in fact – told us that basic research should be supported by the federal government, even when its impact is not immediate.

Your Candidates, Your Health

This year was an election year, and Research Canada took Canadians at their word when they told us in the 2015 Poll that they were more likely to vote for a Candidate in the 2015 election who supported increased funding for health care and health and medical research. We conveyed this fact to federal election Candidates and proceeded to educate them about the social and economic benefits of health research and health innovation through Research Canada's **Your Candidates, Your Health** advocacy campaign. The campaign also mobilized Research Canada's Members, Supporters and Partners to meet with Candidates in their ridings during the election. Research Canada received very positive feedback from our Members on the **Your Candidates Kits**, sent to them to distribute to local Candidates.

Leadership Award

Research Canada's Leadership Award honours health research advocacy champions and draws greater attention to health research and health innovation in Canada. The award is given on an annual basis to recognize individuals and/or organizations that have made outstanding efforts in advocating for Canadian health research at the local, provincial and/or national level.

The 2015 Leadership Award, announced at the Prix Galien and the Health Research Foundation's Medal of Honour Award Ceremony on November 17, 2015, was given to **Dr. Michel Bergeron**, a Medical Scientist and Professor in the Department of Medicine in the Division of Endocrinology at McGill University Health Centre Research Institute.

Dr. Bergeron is one of the world's most accomplished cell biologists and is respected across the globe as a leader in his discipline. His contributions have been extensive, not only to his chosen field, but most importantly, to the cause of health research in Canada over many decades.

CIHR

Over the past year, many of Research Canada's Members have shared their concerns about the reforms to the Open Operating Grants Program and the Peer Review System at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). On their behalf, Research Canada has engaged CIHR's leadership and with its national partners, namely HealthCareCAN, we aim to address Members' substantive concerns in 2016.

Into the Future

Welcome Reception and Kit

In February 2016, Research Canada will launch a Welcome Kit to introduce new and returning Parliamentarians to the Canadian health research and health innovation community. The Kit will be

followed by a Welcome Reception in early March where we hope to introduce to the new Chair and Vice-Chairs of Research Canada's Health Research Caucus (TBA).

The 2016 **Welcome Kit** will introduce Members of Parliament to the academic-, private- and voluntary-sector stakeholders in our community and show them how we are on the threshold of significant

breakthroughs in health R&D — breakthroughs that save lives, reinvent health care and help our economy to grow and prosper. We want Members of Parliament to know about our community's successes and understand that building upon them *is* nation building. We also want to tell them about the challenges we face as a community and what the new government can do so that we can get on with what we do best: building a better health care system and economy for Canadians.

Health Research Caucus Events

At least two Health Research Caucus Events will be held in 2016: One on **Paediatric Research and Child Health** in the spring and another on **Research and Innovation in Frailty In the Aging Population** in the fall. We will reach out to our Members several months before each to solicit advice on possible themes, research and innovations we should profile at these events.

Social Media

In the last year, Research Canada's social media reach has increased substantially. At the end of 2013, the Research Canada Twitter Account had 2,400 followers. By the end of 2014 this rose to 3,300. Currently, the Research Canada Twitter account has over 4,500 followers. The Research Canada Facebook page in May 2014 had 130 likes. By the end of 2014, Research Canada had 220 Likes. Today we have 679 Likes, having tripled our reach on Facebook in the last year. Research Canada's social media reach is growing dramatically and has a following already greater than many similar organizations.

Media Portal

The **Media Portal** is an original idea, formulated in-house at Research Canada, to better serve the research community. We heard from Members who expressed some frustration with the cost of sending media releases. Through national news wires, they typically cost upwards of \$1,000 or more with each release.

The Portal will do two things: It will host the news and commentary the health research community want to see. We will gather the stories and comment relating to our community and make them available for free. The Portal will also send our community's media releases directly to journalists across the country and target those health and science journalists our community most want to reach. This service will cost Research Canada Members significantly less than non-members and a fraction of what newswire services now cost.

Journalists interested in health research and innovation will also be able to browse and search stories specific to our communities. It will be easier for them to access additional background information and find people to speak with from our community.

Catalogue of Products and Services

In an effort to offer our Members exceptional and direct value for a Research Canada membership, the **Catalogue of Products and Services** is a new asset in Research Canada's Membership Benefit Program. After consultation with Research Canada's Members, specifically communications' experts within our Member organizations, and potential Suppliers, Research Canada decided to create a Catalogue of Products and Services that would provide our Members with significant discounts for products and services they used on a regular basis in carrying out their operations. Research Canada will release more information on this benefit early in 2016.

Always Mission-Driven

As a mission-driven organization, Research Canada continues to take the long-term health research and health innovation advocacy view recognizing that advocating for investments in health research and policies that build a strong health innovation system take time and persistence and require a consistent presence on Parliament Hill — a presence that Research Canada has because of your ongoing support.

We look forward to working with you in 2016 and thank you, once again, for your continued support of Research Canada: An Alliance for Health Discovery.

Sincerely,

Judy Noordermeer
Chair, Membership Committee

cc. Dr. Ryan Wiley, Chair
Ms. Deborah Gordon-El-Bihbety, President and CEO

ENCL.