



New funding to fuel transformational kidney research

Patients have a say in top priorities for the future kidney care

MONTREAL – March 31, 2016 - The Kidney Foundation of Canada (KFOC) and Canadian Society of Nephrology (CSN) applaud an announcement made today which provides kidney research with the largest single investment in Canadian history. It is anticipated the funded project will dramatically change the way in which the kidney healthcare community will collaborate to find ways to improve the lives of those affected.

Canadians Seeking Solutions and Innovations to Overcome Chronic Kidney Disease (Can-SOLVE CKD) has been announced by the Honourable Jane Philpott, Minister of Health, as one of five successful recipients of \$12.5 million of funding through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR).

The Canadian Society of Nephrology and The Kidney Foundation of Canada are proud partners behind years of planning and development which went into the application. Funds for the project must be matched by \$12.5 million in grants, donations and partnerships secured by KFOC, CSN and the researchers involved in the project.

“In the development of the grant we were able to identify matched funding far in excess of the \$12.5 million required, which we believe is a testimonial to the commitment of the various partners to engage in this transformational work,” said Dr. Adeera Levin, co-principal investigator of Can-SOLVE CKD. “Affecting nearly four million Canadians, kidney disease has particular relevance to vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children and Indigenous people. This work, being done by Canadians for Canadians, will make kidney care better for all.”

The Kidney Foundation of Canada has been a staunch supporter of Can-SOLVE CKD and will continue to provide leadership to the Patient Council which was key to assisting in the development of the SPOR proposal. The Patient Council and The Indigenous Peoples’ Engagement and Research Council will provide the unique opportunity for those directly affected by kidney disease to provide ongoing feedback to researchers throughout the duration of the Can-SOLVE CKD initiative.

“It’s important for patients to know that the insights that we share will have an impact on the strategies and decisions that affect our care,” said Barb LeGay, a kidney patient from Nova Scotia who participated in the work which led to the development of the SPOR application. “Those of us who are living with chronic kidney disease and who require frequent medical interventions such as dialysis often feel that we have no control over what happens to us. The Can-SOLVE Network values our experience and encourages us to adopt a broader perspective. The network enables us, as patients, to become directly involved in the development of research that will lead to better ways of identifying and treating kidney disease in patients in years to come.”

Cathy Woods of Manitoba, co-lead of the Patient Council and the Indigenous Peoples’ Engagement and Research Council, agrees the plan will spark improved care for those at risk of or impacted by kidney disease. As per the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action #19 the Can-SOLVE initiative is implementing measures to close the gaps in health outcomes. “Some of the studies taking place will seek to close that gap by improving access to care and increasing awareness in more remote communities about kidney disease,” said Ms. Woods.

“We need to define the optimal ways to deliver patient-centered care in the 21st century,” said Dr. Manns, co-principal investigator of Can-SOLVE CKD and CSN President. “To do that, we need to identify strategies to enhance patients’ self-management. Bottom line, the end result will be that the right patient receives the right treatment at the right time.”

“By supporting this tremendous opportunity, The Kidney Foundation is focused on those outcomes that will have tangible positive impacts on patients by 2020,” said Paul Kidston, National President, The Kidney Foundation of Canada. “Through this process, patients will receive the best recommended care, have the chance to participate in studies with novel therapies and, as a result, have the best possible health outcomes.”

“The Can-SOLVE CKD initiative is taking research to a whole new level, bringing patients and caregivers to the forefront of kidney research projects,” said Kate Huffman, a kidney patient from British Columbia, also participated in the initiative’s development and is co-leading the Patient Council. “They are doing this by engaging patients in each project and getting their invaluable life experiences and feedback to help form research outcomes that are important to patients. I think this initiative is going to help change kidney health for future generations. I am very proud to be part of something that will have positive impacts to the quality of life of those living with kidney disease.”

A multitude of partners will help to make this work possible by providing the funding and in-kind support needed. Contributors include 13 universities, six provincial renal programs, eight professional associations, and nine existing research centres/groups along with a multitude of patient groups, national stakeholders, international research groups, and industry partners. The Kidney Foundation of Canada will continue to raise funds to support its \$3.35 million investment as the largest single funder, outside of government, to this groundbreaking project.

Through the Strategy for Patient Oriented Research (SPOR) grant announced March 31, work that will be undertaken over the next five years will fall into three thematic areas:

- Identify and support people living with kidney disease who are at highest risk for poor outcomes
- Test and define the best treatments to improve outcomes and quality of life
- Define the best ways to deliver patient-centered care in the 21st century

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Canadian Society of Nephrology is a society of physicians and scientists specializing in the care of people with kidney disease, and in research related to the kidney and kidney disease.

The Kidney Foundation of Canada is the national volunteer organization committed to reducing the burden of kidney disease through funding and stimulating innovative research; providing education and support; promoting access to high quality healthcare; and increasing public awareness and commitment to advancing kidney health and organ donation.