



Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research

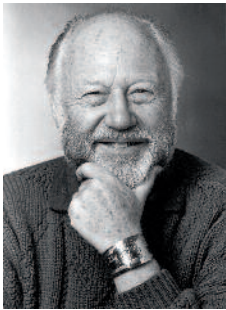
Funded by the Government of British Columbia

MSFHR at a Glance

The Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR), funded by the provincial government, is BC's health research agency. MSFHR's mandate is to strengthen BC's health research enterprise — which in turn improves the health of British Columbians, their health system and their economy.

MSFHR was established in 2001 to build BC's capacity for health research and revitalize the province's health research enterprise. Over the past nine years, we have delivered on this mandate by:

- Funding health researchers – from trainees to those with established careers – engaged in biomedical, clinical, health services and population health services research.
- Funding research teams whose collective efforts through provincial platforms and networks have maximized efficiencies and effectiveness.
- Leading numerous special initiatives aimed at resolving health system issues, including the SARS Accelerated Vaccine Initiative and the BC Nursing Research Initiative.



Dr. Michael Smith

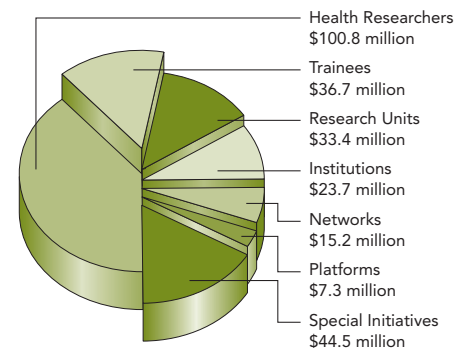
A Legacy of Health for the Province of British Columbia

MSFHR was named to honour Nobel Laureate Dr. Michael Smith (1932–2000), a pre-eminent BC scientist whose commitment to excellence positioned BC's health research community on the world stage.

Research funding highlights since 2001

- **\$100.8 million** to support 283 health researchers — including recruits to BC from elsewhere in Canada and other countries
- **\$36.7 million** to support 1,088 health research trainees — our future leaders — through BC's universities, teaching hospitals and health authorities
- **\$33.4 million** to support 31 research units (e.g. units working to identify anti-cancer drug targets and to evaluate new vaccines) and for team planning and start-up activities
- **\$23.7 million** to research institutions, helping create a vibrant, sustainable health research environment across the province
- **\$15.2 million** to support eight research networks in priority health areas, including aging, Aboriginal, child and youth, rural and remote
- **\$7.3 million** to develop provincial technology/methodology platforms, sharing data and resources among researchers across BC
- **\$44.5 million** to support special initiatives focused on health and health system priorities, including:

- **\$16 million** to help the health system improve practice and policy through research
- **\$8 million** for research on nursing practice and policy issues
- **\$2.6 million** to fast-track vaccine development during the SARS epidemic



MSFHR Strategic Direction 2009 – 2015

Three priorities underpin MSFHR's *Strategic Direction*, enabling us to demonstrate a measurable return on investment in health research for BC. From 2009 through 2015, MSFHR will focus on:

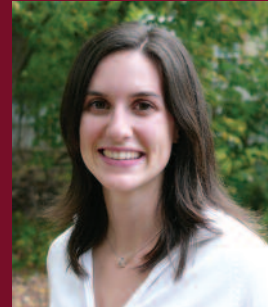
Building Health Research Capacity

Since 2001, MSFHR programs have enabled recruitment and retention of new and established researchers, significantly increasing BC's health research capacity. Our *Strategic Direction* calls for a new research portfolio with a mix of open and targeted funding opportunities, increasing support in existing areas and nurturing talent in emerging areas.



MSFHR awards build BC's health research capacity by recruiting, supporting and retaining leading researchers. University of Victoria psychology professor and 2007 MSFHR Scholar **Dr. Clay Holroyd's** award allowed him to reduce his teaching time and focus on research into attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in children. The awards also have significant leverage potential, in Holroyd's case helping secure him a federally funded Canada Research Chair in cognitive neuroscience.

Dr. Jennifer Hutcheon, one of 78 2009 MSFHR Trainees, is researching the optimum delivery timing for pregnant women with hypertension. Her award is co-funded by the Provincial Health Services Authority. Trainee awards support highly qualified master's, PhD and post doctoral students to work with leading BC researchers. By funding their training, BC is better positioned to retain them as future leaders in key areas of health research.



Addressing Health and Health System Priorities

Central to our *Strategic Direction* is mobilizing BC's health research capacity to respond to immediate as well as longer term health and health system issues. MSFHR will deliver by convening appropriate expertise, identifying existing knowledge and information gaps, and fast-tracking solutions.

In April 2009, the H1N1 outbreak caused the World Health Organization to declare the first influenza pandemic in over 40 years. MSFHR co-funded rapid response research, with the Provincial Health Services Authority, to assess the strength of British Columbians' immune systems by age group.

Dr. Danuta Skowronski, BC Centre for Disease Control epidemiologist and the study's co-principal investigator, says the research was key to informing the H1N1 vaccine roll-out in the province — and that support for such research is critical to addressing our health system's most pressing priorities. The H1N1 project is an example of research with an immediate policy impact as well as long term scientific relevance.



Partnering on a BC Health Research Plan

BC needs a long term view on health research priorities and strategies, and MSFHR will work with government, health sector and health research community partners to develop a provincial health research plan.



Towards partnering on a BC health research plan, MSFHR funds foundational initiatives that link and share data, build common platforms, and connect researchers and resources across the province. One platform, Population Data BC, is a comprehensive data source on human health, well-being and development. By collecting and linking information sources such as vital statistics registries, provincial health records and census data, Population Data BC is an invaluable resource for investigators, says **Dr. Michael Hayes**, platform board member and Director, Health Education and Research at the University of Victoria.

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