



Faculty of Medicine

ALS Society of BC **PROJECT HOPE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 4th, 2021

The ALS Society of BC and its community of donors and patients believe we are at crossroads of unprecedented hope, with over eighty (80) promising Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis therapies in the late stages of the clinical trials taking place around the world. Tragically, the reality is much of this research has been largely happening outside of Canada. British Columbians diagnosed with ALS must travel, at their own expense, to other provinces and countries to participate in clinical trials. With many promising ALS therapies currently in late-stage clinical trials, and the UBC Faculty of Medicine poised to accelerate translational research, it is a critical time to invest in building research capacity for ALS right here in B.C.

In 2020, the ALS Society of BC officially launched PROJECT HOPE, donating \$5.3M to establish the ALS Society of BC Professorship in ALS Research at the University of British Columbia – the Professorship holder will strive to create an optimal environment integrating research and clinical care. UBC has also committed funding through the President’s Academic Excellence Initiative to support the recruitment of a senior ALS clinician-scientist and bring rapid access to clinical trials for patients with ALS.

To that end, the ALS Society of BC pledges to donate an additional \$20M to UBC to support this ambitious goal. In principle, it is our common goal to now work towards creating an environment to improve clinical care by accelerating cutting edge ALS research and treatment breakthroughs at UBC. “We are tremendously grateful for ALS Society of BC’s incredible vision, leadership,

and partnership in advancing our shared goal of getting new treatments to ALS patients in BC faster. As we begin our work to recruit the ALS BC Professor to UBC, this new investment will help ensure we are able to attract the very best talent to our province. PROJECT HOPE continues to demonstrate the power of coming together with a shared vision to transform the health of patients and communities.” – Dr Jon Stoessl, Professor & Head, Neurology; University of British Columbia.

From this landmark pledge, it’s our shared hope that this will benefit all Canadians living with ALS as well as other neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s disease. “Establishing enhanced clinical services is the next step in providing ALS patients in BC with world-class care. Bringing enhanced clinical care for ALS patients is an opportunity to collaborate with researchers studying similar neuro-degenerative diseases while providing world-class care locally.”- Brad MacKenzie ALS Society of BC Advocacy Committee Chair and person living with ALS.

More information contact:

Wendy Toyer, Executive Director, ALS Society of British Columbia

Phone: (604) 278-2257

Email: w.toyer@alsbc.ca

Cell: 778-999-6257