

NEWS RELEASE

\$1.35 MILLION INVESTED TOWARDS FASD RESEARCH

May 27, 2014, Winnipeg, Manitoba – Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries is providing \$1.35 million towards research aimed at improving early diagnosis, intervention and prevention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). The funding is awarded to the Canada-Israel International Fetal Alcohol Consortium (CIIFAC), made up of research teams from the University of Manitoba and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The CIIFAC's research is focused on:

1. Better understanding the susceptibility factors for FASD including genetics, nutrition, and socio-economic factors in order to offer improved prevention strategies.
2. Developing new tools for diagnosing FASD earlier in order to improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities.

“People with FASD are all unique. They have different gifts and talents but they also have different challenges. We want to provide families living with FASD the services and supports they need to live successfully – and to support women to have healthy pregnancies,” said the Honourable Kevin Chief, Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities. “This funding from Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries supports our government’s cross-departmental FASD Strategy, and will bolster world leading research here in our province.”

“Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries is very pleased to support this important research,” said Winston Hodgins, President and CEO of Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries. “Our corporation is committed to social responsibility and has implemented FASD-related public awareness programs for many years. Consuming alcohol during pregnancy is directly related to the development of FASD – therefore, we are committed to FASD research and prevention.”

Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries commits two percent of annual net income for liquor and gaming social responsibility programs in research, education, and awareness. This year, that amounts to \$11.6 million.

“This new funding strengthens our research partnership on FASD with the Hebrew University,” said Dr. Digvir Jayas, Vice-President (Research and International) and Distinguished Professor at the University of Manitoba. “Our research teams are seeking innovative approaches to

understanding FASD in an effort to enhance the well-being of individuals, families and communities affected by FASD in Manitoba and beyond.”

The \$1.35 million supports three research projects, led in Manitoba by Drs. Brenda Elias, Geoff Hicks, and Miyoung Suh. Together, the projects aim to:

1. Understand the role of genetics to identify children affected by FASD at a younger age. This would allow earlier intervention and support.
2. Understand the role of nutrition in mitigating the risk and reducing the effects of FASD when women consume alcohol during pregnancy.

The research consortium was made possible through the work of the Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (CFHU), which was instrumental in bringing together all of the stakeholders.

“We are delighted at the continued success of the partnership for FASD research between the University of Manitoba and the Hebrew University,” said Rami Kleinmann, President and CEO, CFHU. “The funding from Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries speaks to the importance of collaborative research in addressing the complex medical and social implications of conditions such as FASD.”

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