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**MS** Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada

Société canadienne de la sclérose en plaques



*finding a cure*  
*enhancing quality of life*



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## Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### MS Society lobbies government for \$10 million for funding into CCSVI and MS research

**Ottawa, May 5, 2010** – The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada is calling on the government to provide \$10 million for research into chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency (CCSVI) and MS.

The request for funding comes as Canadians with MS continue to seek diagnostics and treatment for CCSVI elsewhere, paying out-of-pocket for tests and experimental therapies that could be provided in Canada.

“The safety and health of people living with MS is our primary concern,” says Yves Savoie, president and CEO of the MS Society. “The Government of Canada can play a leadership role in addressing the needs of Canadians living with MS by funding research, including clinical trials in CCSVI and MS. Doing so will both advance research and provide safeguards to those seeking treatment.”

The Government of Canada has acted quickly in the past to respond to health crises with innovative research, such as its 2009 investment of \$6 million to support research to find alternative medical isotopes.

“The MS community has spoken. They want access to diagnostics and treatment for CCSVI in Canada,” says Linda Lumsden, chair of the national board of directors for the MS Society. “The MS Society has already committed to funding CCSVI research and now we are calling on the Government of Canada to do its part.”

Tomorrow, Lumsden will formally ask Minister of Health Leona Aglukkaq for the funding. The MS Society proposes that the \$10 million be appropriated to the budget of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and earmarked for CCSVI research.

MS Society representatives are in Ottawa for the next two days meeting with various Members of Parliament to advocate on key MS issues.

“It is obvious that the relationship between CCSVI and MS requires further investigation,” says Savoie. “This funding request will give researchers the tools to examine both the prevalence of this condition and the potential benefits of treating people with it.”

In late 2009 the MS Society of Canada announced a special research competition for CCSVI related studies. The results of this competition will be announced on June 14th, 2010.

“I fully support the MS Society’s efforts to lobby the government for research into CCSVI and MS,” says Joan Ozirny, a volunteer board member with the MS Society’s Alberta Division who lives with MS. “Increased research funding is the only way we’ll get closer to unraveling this complicated disease.”

As part of its overall lobbying effort, the MS Society, in collaboration with other Canadian health charities, is calling on the federal government to increase overall funding to the CIHR annually to a level equivalent to 1% of total health

spending in Canada. This amounts to \$1.8 billion based on \$183.1 billion in health care funding as of 2009.

**For more information:**

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