
News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Leading-Edge Health Research Initiative Receives Federal-Provincial Funding to Support Technology Commercialization

Calgary, Alberta – Faster development and testing of new medical devices and technologies that improve healthcare services are becoming a reality through a state-of-the-art medical ward at the Foothills Medical Centre in Calgary.

A combined federal-provincial investment of more than \$1.9 million under the Canada-Alberta Western Economic Partnership Agreement (WEPA) is supporting the Ward of the 21st Century (W21C) to staff and purchase lab equipment. Ultimately, this project will allow small- and medium-sized firms to cost-effectively demonstrate new healthcare solutions and applications in a real healthcare setting.

“Our Government’s investment will help strengthen Alberta’s biomedical sector by promoting new technologies that benefit the health of Canadians, while also creating new economic opportunities and jobs,” said Rob Anders, Member of Parliament for Calgary West, on behalf of the Honourable Lynne Yelich, Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification.

“Health research is about more than just the big discovery, we need to get those discoveries into the hands of our doctors and nurses so they help patients,” said the Honourable Greg Weadick, Minister of Alberta Advanced Education and Technology. “That’s why projects like this one are so important; they move ideas from the lab to the bedside.”

As a cutting-edge test site for prototypical hospital design, innovative medical technologies, and approaches to delivery of care, the W21C will now be able to further assist local firms to assess and refine new and emerging medical technologies. By providing product testing and validation services, as well as access to multi-disciplinary health research expertise, the project is expected to result in the development of innovative solutions that address the needs and challenges of the healthcare sector.

“Innovation, discovery and learning is at the heart of the University of Calgary's mandate—a mandate clearly reflected in the W21C’s multidisciplinary network that enables unique and forward thinking research and clinical care practices to emerge,” said Dr. Elizabeth Cannon, President of the University of Calgary. “The University is very proud of its partnership with W21C.”

The W21C is a not-for-profit research and innovation initiative that is led in partnership by Alberta Health Services and the University of Calgary. The W21C attracts health care professionals, researchers, industry partners and other stakeholders to collaborate on innovative approaches to improving patient safety and quality of care. W21C operates out of the state-of-the-art medical teaching unit at Foothills Medical Centre, as well as the W21C Research and Innovation Centre in the Teaching Research and Wellness (TRW) Building at the University of Calgary's Faculty of Medicine.

"As a leader of the W21C, a citizen of Canada and a resident of Alberta, I am delighted to see the federal and provincial governments invest in innovation," said Dr. William Ghali, Director of the Calgary Institute for Population and Public Health, University of Calgary and Co-Director, W21C. "We are excited to progress with our mandate—improving patient safety and quality of care."

The investments by the Governments of Canada and Alberta are made through the Canada-Alberta Western Economic Partnership Agreement. Through this agreement, Canada and Alberta are jointly contributing \$50 million, over four years, to strengthen economic activity and improve quality of life in Alberta communities.

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A stronger West. A stronger Canada

Backgrounder

Project Funding:

Government of Canada	
Western Economic Diversification Canada	\$1,096,000
Government of Alberta	
Alberta Advanced Education and Technology	\$250,000
Alberta Health and Wellness	\$200,000
Alberta Health Services	\$200,000
Alberta Innovates – Health Solutions	\$250,000
Ward of the 21 st Century	\$705,000
The University of Calgary	\$300,000
Industry	\$605,704
Total	\$3,606,704

The Canada – Alberta Western Economic Partnership Agreement (WEPA)

The Canada-Alberta WEPA targets joint strategic priorities whereby Canada and Alberta will work together and with other interested stakeholders to help create innovative, entrepreneurial and sustainable communities.

Canada-Alberta Joint WEPA Priorities:

- Technology Commercialization - Create and/or grow the knowledge-based economy in Alberta by commercializing new products, technologies and services into domestic and international markets.
- Business Productivity and Competitiveness - Strengthen small business development, growth and competitiveness in the global economy.
- Trade and Investment - Expand access to international markets and investments.
- Value-Added Processing - Increase revenues of traditional industries by adopting new technologies and processes that transform low value outputs into high value products.

Project Funding Partners

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD)

Western Economic Diversification Canada works with the provinces, industry associations and communities to promote the development and diversification of the western economy, coordinates federal economic activities in the West and advances the interests of western Canadians in national decision making.



Western Economic
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie
de l'Ouest Canada

Canada 

Alberta Advanced Education and Technology

In collaboration with Campus Alberta and Alberta Innovates partners, Advanced Education and Technology strives to build a prosperous province through a dynamic and integrated learning and innovation system built on a foundation of highly skilled people in support of a knowledge-based economy and society in Alberta.

Government of Alberta ■

Alberta Health and Wellness

Alberta Health and Wellness is committed to building the best-performing, publicly funded health system in Canada. Together with Alberta Advanced Education and Technology, the two ministries created Alberta's Health Research and Innovation Strategy to map out an approach to health research and innovation that will improve the wellness of Albertans, increase opportunities for economic growth and enhance our health system. Providing safe, high-quality care that is based on the best possible research, scientific evidence, and clinical experience supports the Alberta Government's 5-Year Health Action Plan.

Government of Alberta ■

Alberta Health Services

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than 3.7 million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.



Alberta Health
Services

Alberta Innovates – Health Solutions

Alberta Innovates – Health Solutions was launched January 1, 2010 as part of the new Alberta Innovates research and innovation system. Through Alberta Innovates, the Alberta government is making it easier for researchers, innovators and investors to work together to create new opportunities, new solutions and new sectors that will drive the province's next generation economy. For more information on Alberta Innovates visit www.albertainnovates.ca.



University of Calgary

The University of Calgary is a comprehensive research university and is ranked #9 in Canada for sponsored research revenue at \$272 million. It is also a national leader in fundraising, endowments, number of research competitions and national awards. The U of C has 1,800 faculty members actively engaged in research, scholarship and teaching in Canada and around the world, and more than 2,850 staff, making it one of the four largest employers in Calgary. The university produces an economic impact of \$1 billion in the Calgary area alone. High-priority areas of research include energy and the environment, biomedical engineering and public policy. Multidisciplinary research is core to the university's teaching and research mandate. For more information, visit: www.ucalgary.ca.



Ward of the 21st Century (W21C)

The W21C initiative was developed in partnership by the Calgary Health Region (which is now part of the Alberta Health Services) and the University of Calgary. The focal point of the initiative is Unit 36, a state-of-the-art medical teaching unit at the Foothills Medical Centre in Calgary, Alberta. Opened in May 2004, this 'Medical Ward of the 21st Century' serves as a beta test-site for prototypical hospital design, approaches to the delivery of care, and innovative medical technologies. In 2009, the W21C opened the W21C Research and Innovation Centre in the Teaching Research and Wellness (TRW) Building at the University of Calgary's Faculty of Medicine. The W21C builds medical technology development and innovation capacity by enabling collaboration through co-location of health research, evaluation expertise and industry capabilities. For more information, visit www.w21c.org

