Why do Canada’s health researchers need immediate support?

What is the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)?

- CIHR is Canada’s premier health research investment agency. It was created in 2000 by a Liberal government under the authority of the CIHR Act.
- Its mandate is to promote scientific excellence and support the creation of new knowledge and its translation into improved health for Canadians.
- CIHR supports over 13,000 investigators and has attracted world-leading clinicians and scientists to the benefit of patients, the health system and the economy.

What is the current situation?

CIHR’s core budget has not increased since 2010. For this reason, CIHR has initiated a number of recent reforms that have positioned Canada to lose its best and brightest scientists.

CIHR has been forced to make a number of difficult decisions:

- Leaving the supervisors of 956 staff and students to face a $173 million funding shortfall
- Allocating 30% of funds to more applied initiatives, reducing funding for researchers
- Cutting training programs, such as the MD/PhD program
- Cancelling the Cochrane Collaboration for which Canada is known internationally
- Changing the peer review process to reduce in-person meetings and discussion
- Rejecting 80-95% of funding applications, including those deemed outstanding
- Requiring applicants to find matching funding for their grant applications
- Changing the advisory and funding capacity of its 13 institutes

### Recommendation

Provide immediate restorative funding for CIHR ($150 million added to A-base budget) plus one-time only funding of $50 million over two years to create bridge funding for emerging and mid-career scientists.