

**Huntington Study Group and Huntington Society of Canada
Fund Research Project in an Effort to Offer Relief to
Those with Huntington Disease**

(Rochester, NY) *February 25, 2009* - - The Huntington Society of Canada has partnered with the Huntington Study Group to provide two research awards of approximately \$100,000 (US dollars) each. The first award is to test an experimental exercise treatment for individuals suffering from Huntington disease (HD). The project, to be conducted by Anne Kloos, PhD, PT, NCS of The Ohio State University and Deb Kegelmeyer, DPT, MS, GCS of The Ohio State University, is entitled "The Effect of Video Game Biofeedback Modulated Exercise (ViBE) on People with HD". The project will use a video game with an exercise component (Dance Dance Revolution), to assess whether regular exercise, which includes a cognitive component, improves physical function in HD patients. In awarding this grant, the review committee noted the study's strong potential to lead to new information regarding whether exercise may give people with HD a way to slow the progression of their disease, and improve the quality of their lives.

The second award is to test an experimental interventional treatment in individuals who suffer from HD. The clinical trial will be conducted by Erik van Duijn, MD of Leiden University and Josef Priller, MD of Charit -Universit tsmedizin Berlin, and is entitled "Treatment of Apathy in Huntington's Disease: Bupropion in a Randomized, Double Blind, Placebo-controlled Trial". No systematic research on specific treatments for apathy has been performed in the HD population. Psychiatric disorders and behavioral problems have an enormous impact on those suffering from HD, as well as their caregivers and family members. The review committee was favorably impressed with this proposal, and felt the study will test an experimental intervention that shows promise of providing demonstrable symptomatic benefit in hopes of improving both functional capacity and interpersonal relationships.

There are many unmet needs of patients living with HD. The HSG/HSC Request for Proposals initiative was designed to encourage research projects which show promise of providing demonstrable symptomatic benefit for the cognitive (intellectual), motor, behavioral or weight maintenance problems facing patients with manifest Huntington disease (HD). HSG Investigators located in Canada, the United States, Australia and Europe were invited to submit proposals. Fifteen responses were received, with eleven final proposals submitted in all.

Ira Shoulson, MD, Professor of Neurology, Pharmacology and Medicine at the University of Rochester, and founder of the Huntington Study Group says "We are pleased with the initial success of this collaborative project. We look forward to expanding participation by HD investigators worldwide to develop treatments that make a difference for our patients and families, sooner rather than later."

Don Lamont, Executive Director of the Huntington Society of Canada stated “The process used to approve these projects, especially the Bupropin trial, was an exemplary example of collaboration in the HD community by bringing together the European Huntington Disease Network (EHDN) and HSG to work on a high priority project and share resources. Apathy is considered to one symptom of great concern for HD families, with very few drugs being used to deal with it.”

The information resulting from the funded project will be reported in a public forum. All HSG trial results are published in an effort to indicate the generation and dissemination of new knowledge to the public.

The Huntington Study Group (HSG) is a non-profit group of clinical investigators from medical centers in the United States, Canada, Europe and Australia, experienced in the care of patients and families affected by Huntington disease and dedicated to clinical research of this hereditary disorder. The HSG focuses on the conception, conduct and communication of clinical research, including treatment trials and observational studies aimed at relieving the burden and slowing the progression of Huntington disease. See <http://www.huntington-study-group.org> for more information.

The Huntington Society of Canada is a national network of volunteers and professionals united in the fight against HD since 1973. The Huntington Society of Canada aspires to a world free from Huntington disease. The Society maximizes the quality of life of people living with HD by delivering services, enabling others to understand the disease and, furthering research to slow and to prevent Huntington disease. See <http://www.huntingtonsociety.ca/> for more information.