



CENTRE FOR DRUG RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT

Bringing Science to Life

Update for March 2007—September 2008





It's been a very productive 18 months for CDRD. From a start-up with a great concept, we have become a functioning entity turning that great concept into reality.

No question our model is unique. By creating an infrastructure that brings together researchers, institutions, government and industry to bridge the gap between promising discoveries and commercial development, we've not only captured the imagination of BC and Canada, but we're gaining international attention as evidenced by an increasing number of visiting groups from all over the globe.

In early 2007 the University of British Columbia provided CDRD with laboratory and office space. We renovated to accommodate more than \$12 million in state-of-the-art equipment and specialized lab space, and in June 2008, opened our core development labs to research projects.

We also broke new ground with the signing of affiliation agreements with all of BC's major research institutions, ensuring BC researchers have access to our infrastructure and development expertise to pursue their drug discovery activities.

To date, CDRD has attracted over 240 investigators and currently has over 270 projects in its database. With a goal to identify promising discoveries and move them through preclinical development, CDRD has approved 18 projects for active development and is moving an additional 14 through its project approval process.

CDRD also became a significant employer growing from 10 people to a team of 60, including the 5 Postdoctoral Fellows and 10 co-op students in our new training program. This program addresses our objective to provide a new training model to build and broaden the pool of qualified personnel in drug discovery and development. To date, we've had over 21 co-op students and interns cycle through CDRD.

How were we able to come so far so quickly? Over the last 18 months, CDRD has raised and secured \$66 million dollars in funding. We've received tremendous support from the Provincial and Federal Governments, Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research, BIRC, UBC and SFU. We were also named a Centre of Excellence for Commercialization and Research (CECR) which allows us to expand our research facilities to Simon Fraser University and to the BC Cancer Agency. And we forged an important strategic relationship with Pfizer Canada Inc., enabling CDRD to catalyze and directly support early stage projects with commercial potential. We are grateful and confident that these funds will strengthen the reputation of BC's life sciences community, and in turn, attract further investment.

The road to success requires energy, endurance and ingenuity. We only have to look back to see how far we've come. This review reflects on our progress — highlighting our milestones and successes. We thank you for your support and look forward to your continued commitment and to the years ahead.

Natalie Dakers
CDRD CEO

CDRD named Centre of Excellence for Commercialization and Research

In February 2008 CDRD received \$15 million in funding from the Government of Canada and was among 11 organizations to be named a Centre of Excellence for Commercialization and Research (CECRs). CDRD's collaborative research model and our focus on bridging the commercialization gap, exactly addresses what the Government is hoping to achieve through these centres.

The CECR funds allow CDRD to expand its locations and establish capacity through two new drug research institutes. The drug research institute at the BC Cancer Agency will expand animal efficacy and toxicity capabilities, while the drug research institute at Simon Fraser University will expand medicinal chemistry and synthesis for scale-up capabilities. The funds also allow CDRD to establish a pre-commercialization unit to support commercialization efforts.

Pfizer Canada commits \$1 million to CDRD

Pfizer Canada announced it is committing \$1 million to the CDRD to create the "Pfizer-CDRD Innovation Fund". This innovation fund aims to fast-track the commercialization of academic research projects in BC. It enables CDRD to allocate funding to unique scientific opportunities with promising commercialization potential in any of the following areas: cancer research, central nervous system related diseases, inflammation and pain, cardiovascular and metabolic diseases; and areas of excellence supported by CDRD: nanomedicines, imaging, biomarkers, therapeutic peptides.

Provincial funding gives CDRD green light

In March 2007, CDRD received a \$25 million funding grant from the Province of British Columbia. Premier Gordon Campbell made the announcement at the 2007 British Columbia Life Sciences Awards. These funds recognize the Provincial Government's commitment to advance early stage health-related discoveries and have allowed CDRD to build its operations and hire key personnel. On the heels of this announcement the Provincial Government provided an additional \$8 million in funding to match an \$8 million Canada Foundation for Innovation Grant (CFI) CDRD received November 2006.

Recognizing a new way of doing business in health care

The Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR) granted CDRD \$1 million in funding for personnel and programs that enable BC researchers to access the CDRD facility and foster interdisciplinary collaboration. According to former MSFHR President and CEO, Dr. Aubrey Tingle, "The CDRD's nurturing of early stage health research promises to make a significant, positive impact on healthcare and on our economy."

Additional support for medical drug research and development

CDRD received \$300,000 from the Government of Canada, through Western Economic Diversification Canada and an additional \$200,000 from BIRC Corporation, a company that invests in biopharmaceutical drug discovery and development. These funds were used to renovate laboratories and purchase additional laboratory equipment and supplies.

CDRD attracts stellar team

CDRD has invested significant time and energy in building a highly capable and exceptionally skilled team with both research and drug development experience. The team now comprises 60 people including 5 Postdoctoral Fellows and 10 co-op students who are part of CDRD's training program. Twenty-six of those team members hold a PhD, including the 8 highly experienced Division Heads who have been seconded from key universities. CDRD has attracted experienced people who had worked in local biotech companies and health and research organizations such as Inex, QLT, AnorMED, Neuromed, Chromos, Celator, BC Cancer Agency, Angiotech, Inflazyme and Inimex. To date over 21 co-op students have cycled through CDRD.

Well connected through affiliates

Health and life sciences research institutions and care organizations work in partnership with CDRD. To date, CDRD has signed affiliation agreements with UBC, SFU, BC Cancer Agency, University of Northern BC, University of Victoria, Vancouver Coastal Health and the Provincial Health Services Authority.

Official Launch offers tours of new labs

In June 2008, over 250 researchers and other members of the life science community attended CDRD's official launch and appreciation event. The highlight of the event was touring through CDRD's five new core development labs (target identification, screening, design and synthesis, delivery and evaluation). These new labs are outfitted with the most recent instrumentation and sophisticated technologies and can be accessed by researchers across BC looking for key equipment, lab

resources and development expertise. The Honorable Minister Murray Coell, Minister of Advanced Education and Minister Responsible for Research and Technology, Dr. Eliot Phillipson, President and CEO of the CFI and UBC President, Professor Stephen Toope addressed attendees and congratulated CDRD for reaching this milestone.



Pictured from left to right: Dr. Eliot Phillipson, Dr. Pieter Cullis (CDRD's Scientific Director), Natalie Dakers (CDRD's CEO), Minister Murray Coell, and Dr. Stephen Toope.



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Appreciation to our Funders

CDRD would like to sincerely thank the Provincial and Federal Governments and the following organizations for your courageous and timely support of CDRD this past year. This critical funding will enhance B.C.'s reputation as a centre for discovery and commercialization of breakthrough medicines that will benefit British Columbians, Canadians and people all over the world.



Canada Foundation for Innovation
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Michael Smith Foundation for
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