

For immediate release

BC Ministry of Health Confirms Funding for Second Neurosurgeon Specializing in Deep Brain Stimulation

Vancouver, BC – July 27, 2022 – Parkinson Society BC (PSBC) is pleased to announce that the BC Ministry of Health has moved forward on their February 5, 2019 commitment to recruit *“an additional qualified neurosurgeon with sufficient experience in primary insertions”* as a part of the Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) program in the province (<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2019HLTH0029-000159>).

We thank the Ministry, the Honorable Minister of Health, Adrian Dix, and the Health Authorities for all their hard work for the people of British Columbia during this unprecedented time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate all they have done to keep us safe and informed.

Parkinson Society BC also appreciates the work done by the Ministry of Health and Vancouver Coastal Health Authority to increase the number of DBS surgeries since 2019. However, there remains many patients, some of whom have been waiting for up to five years to access this life changing surgery. As Parkinson’s is a progressive disease, some of these people may no longer be eligible after a five year wait.

Currently, Dr. Christopher Honey, remains the sole neurosurgeon in BC. Although once on the surgical list, the wait can be as short as six months, an additional trained surgeon is essential as the waitlist to see Dr. Honey for initial assessment is currently up to four years.

Across Canada, there is at least one functional neurosurgeon for every two million people – except in BC, where it is one for every five million people. In comparison, Saskatchewan with a much smaller population of 1.174 million people has virtually no wait list with three qualified neurosurgeons; and Alberta, again with a smaller population than BC, has a waitlist of six months with two qualified neurosurgeons.

We are extremely appreciative that **the recruiting of a second DBS neurosurgeon will be occurring this fall as it is essential to reducing the waitlist** and improving the quality of life for those living with Parkinson’s disease.

About Parkinson Society British Columbia

Established in 1969, PSBC is a not-for-profit registered charity acting as the voice of British Columbians living with Parkinson’s. Its mission is to empower the Parkinson’s community in British Columbia by providing resources and services to enable self-management, self-reliance, and self-advocacy.

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For more information, or to arrange for an interview, please contact:

Alicia Wrobel
Senior Manager, Resource Development & Communications
Parkinson Society British Columbia
awrobel@parkinson.bc.ca | 1-800-668-3330 ext. 237