

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Parkinson Society BC provides critical funding for expanding treatment of Parkinson’s disease**

**VICTORIA, BC** – JULY 16, 2020 – Parkinson Society British Columbia (PSBC) has reached an agreement with Island Health whereby the Society will provide funding, in the amount of \$498,000, for hiring a speech-language pathologist. Funding for this position will transition into the Health Authority’s base budget in years 4 and 5.

Parkinson’s disease (PD) is most prevalent in those over the age of 60. As the worldwide incidence of the disease is expected to double by 2040 due to the aging population, funding for more holistic treatment is more critical than ever. British Columbia is home to over 13,000 people living with the progressive neurological disorder – 2,649 of which live in the Vancouver Island Health Authority’s region.

Although pharmaceutical therapies are effective, they must be complemented by other interventions to prevent complications such as choking, social withdrawal due to communication impairment (softened speech), and caregiver burden. “Allied healthcare professionals provide a comprehensive multidisciplinary approach to the care of people with Parkinson’s disease,” says Jean Blake, Chief Executive Officer, Parkinson Society BC. “By allowing people to live independently for longer, this not only improves quality of life, but reduces the overall impact on the healthcare system by decreasing hospital admissions due to issues such as aspiration or fractures.”

A partnership between Island Health and Parkinson Society British Columbia, has allowed for expedited hiring of speech-language pathologist – bringing better care to people affected by Parkinson’s disease in the region.

**About Parkinson Society British Columbia**

Established in 1969, Parkinson Society British Columbia serves to empower the Parkinson’s community across the province by providing resources and services to enable self-management, self-reliance, and self-advocacy. Our purpose is to ease the burden through advocacy, education, and support services, while pursuing the search for a cure by investing in promising research. The Society is supported entirely by the generosity of individual donors, corporations, foundations, and the dedicated efforts of volunteers.



**For more information, please contact:**

Jean Blake, Chief Executive Officer

Phone: 604-662-3240

Toll-free: 1-800-668-3330

Email: [jblake@parkinson.bc.ca](mailto:jblake@parkinson.bc.ca)

Website: [www.parkinson.bc.ca](http://www.parkinson.bc.ca)