

## NEWS RELEASE

Thursday, February 23, 2017

### **Dr. Robin Hsiung announced as new recipient of Professorship focused on dementia research**

**Vancouver, BC** – The Alzheimer Society of B.C. and UBC celebrated a decade-long partnership in maintaining the Ralph Fisher and Alzheimer Society of B.C. Professorship in Alzheimer Disease Research earlier this week and welcomed Dr. Robin Hsiung, who was recently awarded the Professorship.

“We are so proud of our partnership with UBC and the role the Professorship has played in supporting world-class scientists who are making B.C. a pre-eminent place for research on dementia,” says Alzheimer Society of B.C. CEO, Maria Howard. “We are working towards our ultimate vision: a world without Alzheimer’s disease or other dementias.”

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. and the UBC Hospital Clinic for Alzheimer and Related Disorders have a shared goal of supporting research to find the causes and cures of dementia. There are approximately 70,000 people living with Alzheimer’s disease or another form of dementia in B.C. – and millions of hours spent caring for them.

“This Professorship is a tangible and symbolic representation of the strength of our relationship with the Alzheimer Society of B.C., as well as our commitment to dementia research,” says Dr. Haakon Nygaard, Assistant Professor in the Division of Neurology, and the Charles E. Fipke Professor of Alzheimer’s Research at UBC. “It has helped foster cutting-edge science in British Columbia, and to continue to move research and discovery forward faster.”

Dr. Robin Hsiung is Associate Professor in the Division of Neurology, Department of Medicine at the University of British Columbia, and a staff neurologist at the UBC Hospital Clinic for Alzheimer and Related Disorders and St. Paul's Hospital.

His work has yielded promising results, including discovery of genetic risks associated with Alzheimer’s disease and frontotemporal dementia, and development of biomarkers and clinical assessment tools to recognize the earliest phases of dementia. He’s also providing leadership on clinical trials that investigate cutting-edge therapies for the disease at various stages.

“My work is focused on understanding the neurological basis of cognition and the pathological mechanisms leading to dementia. This is a great opportunity to continue this work – and for families affected by the disease, it provides hope of a future without dementia,” says Dr. Hsiung.



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### **About the Professorship and the Alzheimer Society's commitment to research in B.C.**

The Ralph Fisher and Alzheimer Society of B.C. Professorship in Alzheimer Disease Research was established in 2007 through donations from the Ralph Fisher Foundation, Larkspur Foundation, the University of British Columbia and the Alzheimer Society of B.C., to honour the memory of Ralph Fisher.

The Professorship was established to create a leadership position to advance translational research and clinical care and to promote awareness of the importance of research into Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

In order to provide sufficient, ongoing support to the Professorship holder, UBC recently identified a need to increase the capital of the endowment for a fully funded Professorship. UBC has now confirmed it will provide all additional funding towards the capital of the Professorship. The Alzheimer Society of B.C. will continue to find ways to support research in B.C. in order to move closer to a cure for dementia.

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Dr. Haakon Nygaard, Dr. Robin Hsiung and Maria Howard are available for interviews. Photos are available upon request.

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### **About dementia**

Dementia is an umbrella term for a set of symptoms that are caused by disorders affecting the brain. Symptoms may include memory loss and difficulties with thinking, problem-solving or language, severe enough to reduce a person's ability to perform everyday activities. A person with dementia may also experience changes in mood or behaviour. Dementia is not a specific disease but can include Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, Lewy body disease, frontotemporal dementia and others. These conditions can have similar and overlapping symptoms.

### **About the Alzheimer Society of B.C.**

Families across British Columbia are affected by Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. The Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s ultimate vision is a world without dementia; that vision begins with a world where people living with the disease are welcomed, acknowledged and included. Working in communities throughout the province, the Society supports, educates and advocates for people with dementia, as well as enabling research into the disease. As part of a national federation, the Society is a leading authority on the disease in Canada.