Media Release

For Immediate Release

Hamilton, ON (July 20, 2009) – AllerGen NCE Inc., the Allergy, Genes and Environment Network (AllerGen), a national research network, is pleased to announce that it has awarded $11 million to fund Canadian research that reduces the morbidity, mortality and socio-economic burden of allergic and related immune diseases.

Earlier this year, AllerGen invited proposals for multidisciplinary, networked and partnered programmes of research that it could support to 2012 towards understanding, preventing, controlling or eliminating allergies, asthma and anaphylaxis.

After rigorous internal and international expert peer review, 20 outstanding research teams from 15 hospital and academic institutions from across Canada have been selected for funding.

Principal Investigators of the 20 teams awarded AllerGen funding are located at the following Canadian institutions:

- Dalhousie University - $750,000
- The Hospital for Sick Children, University of Toronto - $176,800
- McGill University Health Centre, McGill University - $531,450
- McMaster University - $2,267,171
- Queen's University - $600,000
- St. Joseph's Healthcare - $192,396
- University of Alberta - $1,251,273
- University of British Columbia - $2,172,797

Co-investigators participating in AllerGen-supported multi-disciplinary research projects are also based at:

- Simon Fraser University
- Université de Montréal
- Université du Québec à Chicoutimi
- Université Laval
- University of Manitoba
- University of New Brunswick
- University of Saskatchewan

In addition, AllerGen has committed $3 million to the Canadian Healthy Infant Longitudinal Development (CHILD) Study, a multi-site study of gene-environment interactions and early life exposures and their impact on children's subsequent development of allergy and asthma. The CHILD Study is being undertaken at four sites across Canada: the University of British Columbia, University of Alberta, University of Manitoba and University of Toronto/The Hospital for Sick Children. The administrative headquarters and Director of the CHILD Study, Malcolm Sears, MB, ChB, FRACP, FRCP(C), is based at McMaster University.

Since 2005, AllerGen has invested in three research foci of strategic importance dedicated to the generation of new knowledge with potential for social and economic impact in the area of allergic and related immune disease - *Gene-Environment Interactions; Diagnostics and Therapeutics; and Public Health, Ethics, Policy and Society.* Research into work-related asthma, aboriginal allergy and asthma, mind-body interactions and allergic disease, food labelling and development of therapeutics through clinical trials are just a few of the additional research thrusts supported within AllerGen's 2009-2012 research portfolio.

Scientific Director and CEO, Judah A. Denburg, MD, FRCP(C) says, "the high calibre of these newly funded projects will help position Canada at the forefront of allergic disease research.

"From 2009-2012, AllerGen will fund nationally networked research teams that demonstrate excellence, productivity and offer unique capacity building opportunities. AllerGen's investments are supporting Canada's next generation of allergy and asthma researchers and clinician scientists," Denburg added.

"These 20 national research teams build on and extend existing AllerGen and partner investments. They were funded on the basis of their scientific excellence and their significant potential to accelerate social and economic impact through application of research results to real world problems and challenges faced by patients, their healthcare providers and partner organizations," says Denburg.

Mr. Graham W.S. Scott, Chair of the AllerGen Board of Directors says, "it is extremely pleasing to see such innovative research project teams partnering with reputable organizations from around the world."

"These multidisciplinary research teams have established strong national partnerships with industry, policy makers, provincial research foundations, health care and non-profit organizations such as Altair Therapeutics, Asmacure, Genentech and GlaxoSmithKline, Health Canada, Environment Canada, various provincial ministries including health and aboriginal justice, Anaphylaxis Canada, the Asthma Society of Canada, the Allergy/Asthma Information Association and the Association Québecois des Allergies Alimentaire. In addition, there are numerous international partnerships that have been formed with organizations such as the Karolinska Institute in Sweden and the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology that place Canada on the leading edge of global knowledge creation," says Scott.

AllerGen's networked approach to research unites more than 170 researchers, 250 highly qualified personnel and involves more than 100 partners in Canada, United States of America, Europe, Australia and the United Kingdom.

AllerGen is funded through the federal Networks of Centres of Excellence program. The Networks of Centres of Excellence Canada is a joint initiative of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and Industry Canada.

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AllerGen Funded Cross-programmatic Research Teams 2009-2012

Dalhousie University

- ***The Canadian Group on Food Allergy Research (CanGoFAR)***
  Principal Investigator, J. Marshall, Dalhousie University **$750,000**

Hospital for Sick Children, University of Toronto

- ***Respiratory syncytial virus in the development of infant wheezing disorders: a bench to bedside approach to gene-virus interactions***
  Principal Investigator PJ. Subbarao, The Hospital for Sick Children, University of Toronto **$176,800**

McGill University Health Centre, McGill University

- ***Surveying Prevalence of food Allergy in All Canadian Environments (SPAACE) Study***
  Principal Investigator A. Clarke, McGill University Health Centre **$531,450**

McMaster University

- ***Hemopoietic stem cell biomarkers in the diagnosis and prediction of allergic inflammation and disease***
  Principal Investigator D. Denburg, McMaster University **$654,220**
- ***Clinical Investigator Collaborative (CIC***
  Principal Investigator P. O'Byrne, McMaster University **$1,330,000**
- ***The distribution and function of FceR1 on nerves***
  Principal Investigator J. Bienenstock, McMaster University **$182,951**
- ***Can e-health tools improve health outcomes in asthma?***
  Principal Investigator A. Levinson, McMaster University: **$100,000**

Queen's University

- ***Work-Related Asthma and Allergy: Prevention and Early Detection (WRAAPPED) research program***
  Principal Investigator D. Lougheed, Queen's University **$600,000**

St. Joseph's Healthcare

- ***Developmental plasticity and fetal programming of asthma in mice***
  Principal Investigator, P. Forsythe, St. Joseph's Healthcare **$192,396**

University of Alberta

- ***Neuroimmune interactions: a partnership in drug development and translational research***
  Principal Investigator D. Befus, University of Alberta **$249,143**

- ***Evidence, ethics and health policy research***
  Principal Investigator T. Caulfield, University of Alberta **$300,000**

- ***Engaging Aboriginal families affected by allergies and asthma in support-education program development***
  Principal Investigator, M. Stewart**,** University of Alberta **$400,000**

- ***Non-invasive assessment of atopic diseases: Metabolomic profiling of urine using Nuclear Magnetic Resonance***
  Principal Investigator D. Adamko, University of Alberta **$302,130**

University of British Columbia

- ***Genome wide association study of allergy and asthma in the Canadian Asthma Primary Prevention Study (CAPPS) and the Study of Allergy Genes and Environment (SAGE)***
  Principal Investigator P. Paré, University of British Columbia **$326,696**

- ***Traffic-related air pollution as a risk factor for the development of childhood asthma***
  Principal Investigator M. Brauer, University of British Columbia **$516,563**

- ***Functional genetics in allergy***
  Principal Investigator A. Sandford, University of British Columbia **$447,750**

- ***After allergen challenge, why do some individuals develop an isolated early response while other individuals develop both early and late phase responses? Addressing this question by studying unique cohorts of asthmatic and allergic rhinitis subjects, using functional genomics, proteomics and genetics.***
  Principal Investigator S. Tebbutt, University of British Columbia **$216,288**

- ***Vaccines for asthma & allergies - a bacterial immune-prophylactic and therapeutic approach***
  Principal Investigator T. Kollmann, University of British Columbia **$265,500**

- ***Environmental impact, inflammation and the role of IL-13 receptor a2***
  Principal Investigator, D. Dorschied, University of British Columbia **$100,000**

- ***Platform for Outcomes Research and Translation in Asthma and Allergy (PORTAL)***
  Principal Investigator L. Lynd, University of British Columbia **$300,000**

In addition, the CHILD Study has received $3 million to fund four recruitment sites - Vancouver, Winnipeg, Alberta and Toronto - and one administrative centre based in Hamilton.

Canada

AllerGen is supported by the Government of Canada through the Networks of Centres of Excellence program. AllerGen est appuyé par le gouvernement du Canada dans le cadre d'un programme des Réseaux de centres d'excellence.

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