



Solve ME/CFS Initiative

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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\$500,000 grant awarded to the Solve ME/CFS Initiative to further epigenetic research

The Solve ME/CFS Initiative (SMCI) has received a one-year, \$500,000 *Catalyst Research Program Award* through the Dr. Ralph & Marian Falk Medical Research Trust. This competitive funding opportunity was designed to support research that leads directly to the development of treatments and cures for diseases for which there are no effective treatments or cures today.

SMCI will partner with Drs. Lucinda Bateman founder and director of the Fatigue Consultation Clinic and Patrick O. McGowan of the University of Toronto to expand the epigenetic study of myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS) originally funded by SMCI in 2012. "Epigenetics is really a funnel by which the outside environment interacts with the genome," explains Patrick O. McGowan, PhD, assistant professor at the University of Toronto and co-investigator on this project. This, in turn, influences how cells work (or don't work). In research originally funded by SMCI, McGowan found evidence of distinct epigenetic profiles in immune and other physiologically relevant genes in a selected group of female ME/CFS patients. This award from the Falk Medical Research Trust will allow the team to expand on these original findings and partner with ME/CFS clinical expert Dr. Lucinda Bateman. Bateman will be the lead clinical investigator to expand enrollment of study participants to include male ME/CFS patients and more female patients. This new study will be substantially expanded to include 300 patients and healthy controls.

The Solve ME/CFS Initiative is targeting its work in order **to one day understand ME/CFS at an unprecedented molecular level to guide research and development of new diagnostic tests and better treatments**. SMCI will do this through funding and organizing rigorous, expansive, early research to deliver results that lead to the development of new diagnostics, therapies and cures. This grant will allow SMCI to accelerate its work, yet there is still much to be done. The support and participation of many patients, caregivers and loved ones has provided the funds for SMCI's work thus far and remains critical to the path forward.

The Solve ME/CFS Initiative is a 501(3) non-profit organization, whose mission is to make ME/CFS understood, diagnosable and treatable. Founded in 1987, SMCI is the longest standing organization serving ME/CFS patients by advancing rigorous research.

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