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News



## Abbott and McMaster University Partner to Create Education Chair in Rheumatology

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**HAMILTON, ONTARIO, June 1, 2011** — Abbott, a global, broad-based health care company, and the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine at McMaster University today announced the creation of an endowed chair to focus on teaching the next generation of rheumatologists for the growing number of Canadians living with arthritis.

Abbott has given funds to McMaster University to create an education chair of rheumatology, which will be matched by the Department of Medicine of the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine.

The chair holder is Dr. Alfred Cividino, a rheumatologist and clinical professor who in 2010 received the Canadian Rheumatology Association Clinician Educator Award for his work in educating both students and doctors about the field of rheumatology.

“The best way we can ensure better care for people with arthritis is to attract more doctors to become rheumatologists and teach more family doctors how to better care for their patients with arthritis,” said Dr. Cividino. As an example, he said doctors have to become more comfortable with assessing muscular skeletal disorders, which are more difficult to evaluate than measurements such as blood pressure. “That’s my goal: We need better awareness because if we can treat patients appropriately and earlier, they’ll have better quality of life.”

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, arthritis is among the top three most common chronic diseases in Canada. In 2007, more than 4.2 million Canadians (16%) aged 15 years and older reported having arthritis. With the aging population, this number is expected to increase to approximately 7 million (20%) by 2031.

In Canada, there are only 300 rheumatologists. The number of diagnosed cases is steadily increasing, making arthritis the leading cause of pain, work disability and healthcare utilization in Canada. The economic burden of arthritis in Canada is estimated at \$7.7 billion annually.

“Abbott is helping to address the evolving needs of the Canadian health care industry stakeholders,” states Felipe Pastrana, general manager, Abbott Canada adds: “A small number of specialists are serving a growing population and arthritis incurs high financial costs and decreased work productivity. Our goal as an organization is to serve our patients and the partnership with McMaster University



is a concrete example that will surely make an impact to those living with rheumatic diseases.”

John Kelton, dean and vice president of McMaster’s Faculty of Health Sciences said the focus puts a dedicated spotlight on a chronic problem. “At McMaster, we’re known for our innovative ways of education, so we particularly appreciate Abbott’s generosity in supporting this new position.”

The Honorable John Milloy, Ontario Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities adds: "McMaster University's new education chair in rheumatology will help to ensure that we continue to have some of the best-trained doctors and one of the best health care systems in the world."

**About McMaster University**

McMaster University, one of four Canadian universities listed among the Top 100 universities in the world, is renowned for its innovation in both learning and discovery. It has a student population of 23,000 and more than 140,000 alumni in 128 countries. Visit [www.mcmaster.ca](http://www.mcmaster.ca).

**About Abbott**

Abbott is a global, broad-based health care company devoted to the discovery, development, manufacture and marketing of pharmaceuticals and medical products, including nutritionals, devices and diagnostics. The company employs nearly 90,000 people and markets its products in more than 130 countries.

Abbott has been operating in Canada since 1931 and its Canadian operations are headquartered in Montreal, Quebec. Abbott Canada employs more than 2,000 people.

Abbott’s news releases and other information are available on the company’s Web sites at [www.abbott.ca](http://www.abbott.ca) and [www.abbott.com](http://www.abbott.com).

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