

Ministry of Health Services
Government of British Columbia

B.C. HOME TO WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED SPINAL CORD CENTRE

Vancouver's Blusson Centre for Spinal Cord Research is the most advanced research and care facility of its kind in the world. The six-storey, \$45-million centre is home to the International Collaboration On Repair Discoveries (ICORD), the Brenda and David McLean Integrated Spine Clinic and the Spinal Cord Injuries Solutions Network. This multidisciplinary network of scientists, clinicians, and health care providers are working together to develop strategies that will help people adapt to and recover from spinal cord injuries.

- The Blusson Spinal Cord Centre building is fully accessible and the entire building has been designed to function as a testing ground for new accessibility technologies.
- A ramp at a five per cent slope services the building's three public floors, elevators equipped with specialized kick plates allow everyone to control them, all outlets and light switches are placed three feet above the floor and all work/lab benches are fully adjustable.

Quick Facts (source: Rick Hansen Foundation)

- Spinal cord injury affects over 41,000 Canadians, with approximately 1,100 new injuries occurring each year.
- Eighty-four per cent of spinal cord injuries occur to people under the age of 34.
- The most common causes of spinal cord injury in Canada are: motor vehicles collisions (55 per cent), other medical conditions and sports injuries (27 per cent), and falls (18 per cent).
- The cost to the Canadian health system is between \$1.25 million and \$25 million, during the lifetime of each injured person, depending on the severity of the injury.
- Annual health care costs to the Canadian Health Care system for Canadians with spinal cord injury are \$750 million.
- Research is important because 90 per cent of what we know about spinal cord injury has been discovered in the last 20 years.

ICORD

- ICORD is a partnership of the University of British Columbia, the Rick Hansen Foundation, and the Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute.
- Research at ICORD focuses on three main areas:
 - Discovery science, which includes stem cell research and repair and regeneration strategies;
 - Human-based rehab research, which focuses on upper-and lower-limb rehab and cardiovascular and respiratory fitness; and,
 - Clinical research, including clinical trials for acute spinal cord injury.
- Researchers and staff at ICORD use leading-edge, innovative equipment including the Lokomat program, a robot-assisted walking therapy that aims to help people improve their ability to walk after disability caused by brain or spinal cord injuries.

- Other projects include :
 - The development of the Pro-Neck-Tor™ mountain biking helmet, which protects the wearer against neck and spinal cord injury – and potential paralysis – in a head-first impact; and,
 - Groundbreaking research into the potential benefits of the Segway personal transporters on spasticity, pain, and fatigue in individuals with spinal cord injuries.

Brenda and David McLean Integrated Spine Clinic

- Provides one-stop outpatient care including specialized services such as pain management, sexual health and fertility, skin and wound care, urodynamics and surgery, and post surgery follow up.

Spinal Cord Injuries Solutions Network

- The Spinal Cord Injury Solutions Network is a Canada-wide collaboration of people with spinal cord injuries (SCI), researchers and service providers, along with their respective organizations, all committed to addressing priority needs and generating solutions for Canadians with SCI.

CONTACTS

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In 1985, at the age of 27, Rick Hansen struck out on a journey that would make history. Propelling his wheelchair through 34 countries on four continents, for over 40,000 km, his Man in Motion tour raised awareness of the potential of people with disabilities and \$26 million for spinal cord injury. 2010 marks the 25th anniversary of Rick's Man in Motion Tour and he has helped generate more than \$200 million for quality of life projects, awareness programs and research.

ICORD/ Brenda and David McLean Integrated Spine Clinic
Contact through Lisa Carver, Vancouver Coastal Health Research Communications 604-875-4111 ext. 61777

Dr. John Steeves (Director of ICORD)

Research interests: CNS regeneration; preclinical validation and clinical trial design

Dr. Peter A. Cripton (Assistant Professor, UBC; Researcher, ICORD)

Research interests: Injury biomechanics, orthopaedic biomechanics, injury prevention

Dr. Bonnie Sawatzky (Associate Professor, Orthopaedics, UBC)

ICORD (International Collaboration on Repair Discoveries)

Ian Denison (*Physio Therapist / Equipment Evaluation Specialist*)

Research interests: Assistive technology

Dr. Marcel Dvorak (Associate Director of ICORD)

Research interests: SCI trauma, quality assurance and surgical outcome

Dr. Brian Kwon (Department of Orthopaedics, Division of Spine, UBC & VCH)

Research interests: Spine and spinal cord injury

SCI Solutions Network

Eric Boyd, Chief Executive Officer

Spinal Cord Injuries Solutions

604-707-2102

eboyd@scisolutionsnetwork.ca

VISUAL RESOURCES

- Stills and b-roll – contact Lisa Carver (contact details below) for more information.

WEB RESOURCES

- www.icord.org – Official website for the International Collaboration on Repair Discoveries (ICORD) includes background information and detailed information on ongoing studies.
- <http://www.scisolutionsnetwork.ca/> - SCI Solutions Network is located at the Blusson Spinal Cord Centre and works to minimize disability and maximize the quality of life of people with spinal cord injury.
- <http://www.rickhansen.com> – Website for the Rick Hansen Foundation. The Foundations focuses on improving quality of life, advancing world-class research and building awareness about spinal cord injury.
- http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2005-2009/2008OTP0274-001748.htm - Link to November 2008 news release announcing the opening of the Blusson Spinal Cord Centre.
- www.pronecktor.com – Provides background, including videos of the new Pro-Neck-Tor™ helmet technology that is being developed by Blusson Centre researchers.
- <http://www.hocoma.ch/en/products/lokomat/> - Website for Hocoma, supplier for Lokomat, the computer-controlled walking rehabilitation system.
- <http://www.hometelemed.com/index.htm> - Website for Hometelemed, which provides information on ReJoyce, an upper-extremity rehabilitation system.

MEDIA COVERAGE

- Device helps quadriplegics regain motion in hands, CTV News , July 4, 2009
http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20090704/rejoyce_device_090704/20090704?hub=Health
- Centre for spinal cord injury care opens, Vancouver Sun, November 19, 2008
<http://www2.canada.com/vancouvernews/news/westcoastnews/story.html?id=83c5a906-2b1c-43db-ab72-316ed703983a>
- \$45m spinal-cord centre opens for research, care, Vancouver Province, November 19, 2008
<http://www.canada.com/theprovince/news/story.html?id=c5b8ff79-3878-4e82-a06b-74d4d2688179>
- UBC researchers believe new helmet could prevent spine injuries, CBC News, June 25, 2008
<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/british-columbia/story/2008/06/24/bc-neck-protecting-helmet.html>
- UBC designs a better helmet, Vancouver Sun, June 25, 2008
<http://www.canada.com/vancouvernews/news/westcoastnews/story.html?id=f86565ac-453e-4a85-978b-8b800743b9c8>

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