We are thrilled to announce that November has been declared Lung Month across Canada. Lung Month is The Lung Association’s opportunity to come together and inspire an unstoppable force of Canadians to be passionate about breathing!

Lung Month originated in Ontario in 2013. After seeing great success through awareness and educational initiatives, it was adopted across the country. This year, plans are made to reach new audiences through social media, events and public outreach. During the month of November, The Lung Association will reach out to Canadians with information on how to protect and care for their lungs – and how to recognize problems in early stages – so that they can save their breath.

Lung Month will also be an opportunity for The Lung Association to introduce our bold, new Breathing as One Campaign and highlight the urgent need to increase funding for lung health research. The Breathing as One Campaign will enable the National Respiratory Research Strategy to bolster and elevate respiratory research in Canada.

Please support our Lung Month initiatives, and help us educate and inspire Canadians to be passionate about breathing! Together, we will shine a much needed spotlight on lung health.

Sincerely,

Dr. John Granton
Head, Division of Respirology, Toronto General Hospital, University Health Network; Chair, Breathing as One Campaign for Lung Research
THE GAME CHANGER— DR. J. MARK FITZGERALD

The much-lauded researcher and physician is determined to tear down the historical barriers that limit communication between medical health care providers and patients. His vision is to dramatically improve the models of lung health care and expedite the transfer of patient information.

As Head of the Respiratory Medicine Divisions at both UBC and Vancouver General Hospital, Dr. J. Mark FitzGerald is furthering our knowledge of asthma, chronic obstructive lung disease, tuberculosis, and health outcomes.

In a recent Q&A, Dr. FitzGerald emphasized the urgency for increased funding for lung research in Canada. He feels that without research, we cannot make progress in evaluating new ways of identifying people with lung disease at an early stage, as well as providing new treatments and creating new models of care for chronic respiratory diseases. Unfortunately, lung research is underfunded in Canada relative to the burden of the disease. In his volunteer role with the Fundraising Campaign Advisory Committee, Dr. FitzGerald is motivated to bring to people’s attention this imbalance, and recognizes that the dollars invested in lung research in Canada will have a very high impact. He recalls, “in a recent study looking at lung research internationally, Canadian lung researchers were the most cost-effective and most productive researchers in the world relative to GDP and population”.

"Leadership involves showing by example. By showing a personal commitment to the Breathing as One Campaign, I hope to motivate others who may be thinking of contributing to the Campaign." - Dr. J. Mark FitzGerald, MD, FRCPC

He stresses that it is timely that we begin to create change in lung health and bring much-needed awareness to lung research. "With climate change, pollution internationally, and quality of air, it is imperative that Canadians see the importance of lung health and see the opportunity of a well-coordinated, organized, national campaign to improve lung health research. It will not only benefit individual patients, but will benefit Canadian society more generally by supporting the need for innovative new diagnostic tests and treatments, ensuring better air quality, the need for better work-related lung health, and better management of chronic diseases”, he says.
PHILANTHROPY AT WORK

Transamerica Life Canada, a national insurance company, uses its own mortality data to guide where its charitable dollars go. “What was rather eye-opening was the rate of lung cancer deaths among Canadians,” says Glenn Daniels, Senior Vice-President General Counsel and Corporate Secretary, and Co-chair of the company’s corporate giving committee.

Daniels says the company’s corporate social responsibility strategy is to support organizations that conduct research to prevent and eliminate diseases such as heart disease and stroke, diabetes, and cancer.

Daniels hopes that the company’s $20,000 investment can make a difference for people with lung cancer. “We hope we can contribute towards reducing the number of deaths,” he says. “Our company sees research as the first step. The Lung Association is making great strides in that regard.”

FROM STRATEGY TO REALITY

The National Respiratory Research Strategy (NRRS) represents an exciting and bold plan to strengthen lung research in Canada, and make a real difference in the lives of the one in five Canadians affected by lung disease. Through this strategy, The Lung Association is committed to increasing much-needed support of lung research, building capacity through mentorship and training, and converting research into concrete guidelines, practices and treatments, designs and policy.

The NRRS represents a new way of working together as a federation, from coast-to-coast. It is a true collaboration where all voices are coming together to build a strategy committed to raising awareness for lung research.

RESEARCH SAVES LIVES

“With lung research a core priority, we will fundamentally change the lives of patients and families affected by lung disease. Through the National Respiratory Research Strategy, we will raise the profile of lung research and support life-changing and life-saving projects.”

– Dr. Dina Brooks, BScPT, MSc, PhD
Chair, Canadian Respiratory Health Professionals; Professor, Department of Physical Therapy, University of Toronto; Member, National Research Steering Committee

“I am inspired by the many stakeholders’ efforts to create a well-organized and impactful National Respiratory Research Strategy which will allow us to look to better diagnose and manage lung disease and improve the quality of life of those affected by lung disease.”

– Dr. Diane Lougheed, MD, MSc, FRCPC
Professor of Respirology, Physiology, and Epidemiology, Queen’s University; Director and Medical Advisor, Asthma Education Centre, Kingston General Hospital; Adjunct Scientist, ICES-Queen’s; Member, National Research Steering Committee
It will position The Lung Association and the lung family for success in years to come.

On October 8th, the NRSS Steering Committee, which is responsible for overall oversight and strategy, made an all-day commitment to advance the work of the strategy by confirming key priorities, and providing clarity and focus that will guide the Breathing as One Campaign. Members built a patient-centered matrix that recognizes the capacity and potential to impact lung research in Canada across the continuum from discovery to knowledge translation at the individual patient level.

The implementation of the NRRS shows amazing commitment and strong will from all stakeholders across the country to build a successful strategy that will collaborate, co-ordinate and push beyond traditional lung research.

IN THE LAB

THE CANADIAN LUNG ASSOCIATION’S FAMILY CAMPAIGN
BY: MICHELLE MCEVOY

On October 2nd, we kicked-off our Breathing as One Family Campaign with a trip to the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute (OHRI) to find out more about the excellent research that is being done in lung health. We were very privileged to have been so graciously hosted by Dr. Shawn Aaron and his research team, Kathy Vandemheen, Amanda Bergeron, Gay Pratt, and Megan Beninger. It was such a dynamic, inspiring, and informative session!

We learned about Dr. Aaron’s asthma research projects and the Canadian Respiratory Research Network (CRRN). It was amazing to find out that so much care was put into the design of these research studies that Dr. Aaron and his team are using, and how a strong research team is pivotal to the success of his research projects.

It was interesting to learn that most research studies are based on project funding through competitions in which only the most competitive grants receive support. Some of these grants can be as short as one year while others are multi-year grants. We were shocked to hear there are many highly-ranked research grants go unfunded every year because there is not enough funding available. What this means is that teams grow and shrink depending on the project funding available, making it tough to keep highly skilled teams together, and often leading to the need to train new team members for new projects.

IMPACTING LIVES

Each year, employees at Gamma-Dynacare Medical Laboratories nominate charities that are important to them and then vote to choose the company’s “lead charity”. This year, they chose The Lung Association and its Breathing as One Campaign for its $25,000 corporate donation.

“The Lung Association and Gamma-Dynacare are a natural fit,” says Scott Hickey, Vice-President of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs with Gamma-Dynacare.

The company’s social responsibility strategy is driven by its corporate mission to provide information, impact lives and care for people. “In this program in particular, each year we select an organization that promotes health and wellness, has a national reach, has a strong connection to our employees, and is typically something that is underfunded, to make the biggest possible impact,” says Hickey.

“We know that The Lung Association is laying the groundwork for a new area of research,” says Hickey, referring to the Breathing as One Campaign. “We think that’s really innovative.”
We’re hopeful that our contribution to Breathing as One will help increase the amount of research funding that is available for lung researchers, and we’re looking forward to working collaboratively as a community to have a greater impact for people living with lung disease!

CIRCLE OF CHAMPIONS

With your help, The Lung Association is going to radically change the way we think about breathing, what we do to enable it, how we therapeutically treat it and the measures we do to safeguard it. Medical professionals will learn more about diseases that affect patients, researchers will discover new treatments, and together, we will reduce the risk of lung disease and improve the lives of all Canadians with lung disease.

Led by Dr. Dina Brooks, a Canadian Respiratory Health Professional and rehab researcher at the University of Toronto, the Circle of Champions is a group of Canadian Respiratory Health Professionals who have committed to getting involved and investing in the Breathing as One Campaign. Participation and support through meaningful gifts will inspire others and pave the way to improved lung health for Canadians. We thank Dr. Brooks for her leadership and generous support to the Breathing as One Campaign.

Will you join the Circle? To learn more about Breathing as One and how you can get involved with the Circle of Champions, please email Bick Chan at bchan@on.lung.ca.

THE LUNG ASSOCIATION™