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October 15th, 2024

To the Sponsors of the CIBC Run for the Cure

We are writing to you as members of the Advisory Board of the Animal Defence and Anti-Vivisection Society of British Columbia (ADAV Society). We understand and appreciate your commitment to supporting cancer research through your sponsorship of the CIBC Run for the Cure. We all want to contribute to finding a cure for devastating diseases such as cancer, as well as to provide assistance to those affected by it.

As advocates for both human and animal welfare, we would like to bring to your attention the fact that, sadly, many leading health charities, including the Canadian Cancer Society, continue to fund experimentation on animals. A significant portion of funds raised at the CIBC Run for the Cure will likely be allocated to animal experimentation, despite mounting evidence that this approach is not the most effective or ethical way to advance cancer treatments

Myriad superior alternatives exist to enable the study of disease and injury, and more are being developed all the time. These include innovative tests using human cells and tissues, advanced computer modelling techniques, population studies, micro dosing and clinical studies with human volunteers. These methods have greater validity than the use of animal models as they are actually relevant to the human being.

Your sponsorship of the CIBC Run for the Cure is a vital public service demonstrating your willingness to help in important practical terms, not only those whose lives are cut short by cancer and their families who have suffered along with them, but also in promoting a healthy lifestyle, as demonstrated by those engaging physically in the Run. We respectfully request that you stipulate that your generous donations only be directed toward patient services or research that does not involve the inherent cruelty of animal use. That way, you can be assured of helping humans without harming animals.

## Points to keep in mind:

1. Scientific Validity: Many animal experiments fail to translate to human outcomes due to fundamental differences between species. This leads to misleading results and wasted resources.
2. Ethical Concerns: Animal experimentation raises serious ethical questions about the suffering inflicted on sentient beings in the name of human health.
3. Advancing Human-Relevant Research: There are numerous innovative, human-relevant research methods available today, including organoids, organ-on-a-chip technology, and advanced computer modeling. These methods often provide more accurate and applicable results for human health.
4. Cost-Effectiveness: Human-relevant research methods are often more cost-effective and efficient than animal experiments, potentially leading to faster breakthroughs in cancer treatment.
5. Public Opinion: There is growing public concern about the use of animals in medical research, and many people would prefer their donations to support only non-animal methods.

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A long-time supporter has asked if we would share her story with you:

*“I am a breast cancer survivor for over 10 years now. There is nothing more scary than receiving that initial diagnosis. In my case, I only had a mammogram, the first in my life, because so many of my friends at the time seemed to be getting cancer. Because it was caught early, a simply excision of the lump was performed. Just as I was going into the operating room, I was asked to sign a form donating my cancer to research. I agreed, as long as they could guarantee it would not be used in animals. They did not give this assurance, so I did not sign. Afterwards, I was asked if I would like to volunteer to be a research subject, so since I had a choice, which animals do not, I agreed. It was to see if more intensive radiation over a shorted period of time would be feasible. I was followed up for 10 years.*”

*And that is the point of my letter. Please ensure that all the money, so generously raised, is not used on the same old animal model methodologies that have produced so few results. In no other industry would people keep investing money for such dismal returns over and over again without asking exactly what the money is actually used for! Anyone following up just on the published experiments would be appalled at what is done to the animals. That is not research, that is sheer torture. And it is totally unnecessary, especially in view of the advanced technologies that are now available. These are not only humane, but more accurate, targeted, less time consuming, and less expensive. There is a new way to speed up real cures.*

*Please ensure your sponsorship money is going to be used to fund and develop sophisticated alternatives to the hit-and-miss methods of the past. Inflicting a trapped animal with cancer and then throwing whatever comes to mind at the poor creature is not 21st century science. We can do better and you can make it happen by showing the way of the future. To make the future even brighter and the promise s of a cure greater , please consider a different, but more bold approach . “*

*Maidie Hilmo Ph.D.  
Victoria, B.C.*

By redirecting funds towards human-relevant research methods, we believe we can accelerate progress in cancer research while also addressing ethical concerns. Your influence as a sponsor can play a crucial role in promoting this shift towards more effective and humane research practices.

We would be happy to provide further information or discuss this matter in more detail. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

With kind regards,

Anne Birthistle,  
On behalf of the Advisory Board  
Animal Defence and Anti-Vivisection Society of British Columbia

You don't have to  
be cruel to be kind



Support only  
non-animal research

The ADAV Society of BC  
[humanecharities.ca](http://humanecharities.ca)