

MEDIA RELEASE

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**MANITOBA MEDICAL SERVICE
FOUNDATION**

Manitoba Medical Service Foundation to Contribute Nearly \$25,000 in Funding for Coronavirus Treatment Study <Others called on to contribute>

The Manitoba Medical Service Foundation (MMSF) is providing \$24,988 in funding to Manitoba physician Dr. Ryan Zarychanski, who is leading the team that started Manitoba's first COVID-19 clinical trial. The trial is a collaboration between physician-scientists in the United States, Quebec and Alberta.

The randomized trial will investigate whether hydroxychloroquine, a common malaria and rheumatologic treatment, is effective in treating COVID-19 in ambulatory COVID-19 positive patients, or preventing disease in household contacts of confirmed patients or in health care workers exposed to COVID-19 positive patients.

Dr. Ryan Zarychanski, a past MMSF awardee, is the Manitoba Principal Investigator who leads a committed study team that includes Nicole Marten, Sylvain Lother, Glen Drobot, Lauren MacKenzie, Lauren Kelly and Zina Zaslowski. After medical school classes were suspended, two medical students, Izabella Supel and Carmen Tse, quickly stepped up to help.

"When the MMSF saw the need for support, we responded quickly to ensure start-up funds were available," said MMSF Executive Director Dr. Greg Hammond.

The MMSF, primarily supported by Manitoba Blue Cross, provides funding to new Manitoba researchers and to students, for health research and education, to improve the health and well-being of Manitobans. The MMSF provided support through its Contingency Fund in an exceptional situation, such as this coronavirus pandemic.

"We thank the MMSF for reaching out to support vital research," Dr. Zarychanski said. "This investigation is providing Manitoba researchers the opportunity to join forces with others across North America to urgently study potential therapies to help combat COVID-19 illness."

Dr. Zarychanski and the expanding COVID-19 research team are frantically planning and launching several more clinical trials of experimental COVID-19 therapies in the upcoming weeks. "For a disease with no known treatments, clinical trials are urgently needed. Our goal is to provide therapeutic options to Manitobans regardless of how sick they get", said Dr. Zarychanski. The upcoming clinical trials planned by Dr. Zarychanski and the team will cost several million dollars. He is hopeful that other organizations and even private donors will reach out to support these urgently needed treatment trials.

As with other MMSF initiatives, funds will stay in Manitoba to support local researchers to benefit the health and well-being of those across the province, while aiming to improve health outcomes across the globe.

If you test positive for COVID-19, live with a COVID-19 positive person or are a healthcare worker who has been exposed to COVID-19 positive patients, please visit: <https://www.covid-19research.ca> to see if you are eligible for the trial. Share this information with others so they are aware of clinical trial options available to them.

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For more information contact:

Trenton Burton
Corporate Communications Representative
Manitoba Blue Cross
trenton.burton@mb.bluecross.ca
204.781.1923

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