Canadian Chiropractic Researcher Awarded Prestigious Fellowship

Jean-Sébastien Blouin
DC, MSc

In the past year, Jean-Sébastien Blouin, DC, MSc, from Québec has been awarded a prestigious three-year fellowship at Laval University. In order to be eligible for this award, Dr. Blouin had to meet the criteria of excellence utilized by the CIHR which include academic excellence, research publication and research environment. This new research training position is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and by the Fondation chiropratique du Québec (FCQ). The FCQ/CIHR partnership program was made possible, last year, under the leadership of Drs. Guy Beauchamp (current FCQ president) and Jacques Parent. CIHR is one of the largest health financing institutes in Canada with an annual budget of $500 million dollars and this partnership with FCQ contributes to public financing of chiropractic science. Jean-Sébastien Blouin is one of a number of Canadian chiropractic researchers to benefit from this new partnership and this will help him complete his doctoral studies while having the support needed to attend several international meetings in his research field. Indeed, Dr. Blouin has already participated in a presentation on eye-head coordination and space updating under the direction of Dr. Jean Blouin in Marseille (France) and assisted in a course on neural control of motor behaviour in Umea (Sweden) which was conducted by world-wide recognized researchers.

FCQ and the CIHR, with this new partnership, are participating in the development of Canadian chiropractic research and are encouraging young chiropractors interested in research to possibly attain a full-time research career. Partnership programs with public institutes will ensure that talented chiropractic investigators have access to the best training opportunities and resources to address the health challenges faced by Canadians and particularly chiropractic patients. The support of chiropractic research and chiropractic researchers by CIHR will obviously help to increase our credibility with the government, academic researchers and the public. Also, this partnership as well as others (CCA-CIHR) are the first steps in public financing of chiropractic research which should help develop chiropractic and chiropractic care within the health care system and the university system.

Dr. Blouin is a full-time doctoral student at Laval university. He graduated from Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières in 1999. He completed a master's degree in "neural control of motor synchronization" in 2001 at Laval University under the direction of Dr. Chantal Bard. His master's degree focused on PET neuroimaging technique which was performed at the McConnell Brain Imaging Center in Montreal where he collaborated with Drs. Jacques Paillard (Marseille, France) and Julien Doyon (Université de Montréal). Jean-Sébastien Blouin presented the results from his experiment at the Human Brain Mapping conference held in June 2001 in Brighton, UK.

As part of his PhD training at Laval University, Dr. Blouin's research project will focus on the vestibular and cervical proprioceptive consequences of whiplash injuries. Jean-Sébastien Blouin is under the direction of Dr. Normand Teasdale who is an internationally recognized researcher in the field of motor control. Another chiropractor, Dr. Martin Descarreaux who also received a scholarship from FCQ is completing a doctoral degree as a part of their team. This recently formed team has already obtained access to a list of whiplash-injured patients from the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ). The GRAME laboratory, directed by Dr. Teasdale, regroups students and researchers from different backgrounds such as kinesiology, engineering, psychology and chiropractic and is dedicated to the study of motor control in different populations. The project conducted by Dr. Blouin will describe specifically the motor deficits experienced by whiplash patients. This project is a first step in global understanding of the whiplash population and eventually identifying appropriate treatments for this particular population.