

Study to improve understanding of juvenile arthritis in Canada



Juvenile idiopathic arthritis is a chronic, often debilitating childhood illness. While estimates suggest that five to 10 in every 100,000 children in Canada suffer from this illness, there are no national surveillance data to support these numbers. A new study by the Canadian Paediatric Surveillance Program, which is funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, will be the first to generate data from the whole country.

“This study is an entirely unique opportunity to do this,” said Dr. Lori Tucker, a rheumatologist at B.C Children’s Hospital and one of the study’s principal investigators. “Many papers have tried to determine the incidence of this illness, but almost all have been done by rheumatology

subspecialty centres, which don’t take in the whole picture. We recognize that rheumatologists are not seeing all children with arthritis. So this is the first step toward identifying those patients.”

The study, which began in October, will build on work underway by the Canadian Pediatric Rheumatology Research Group in paediatric rheumatology centres across Canada. Geographic data from the CPSP study will be an important part of identifying current gaps in care, particularly in rural parts of the country.

“While this is just the first step, it isn’t just about collecting data. I think this will lead to some direct improvement in care for our

patients,” said Dr. Tucker. “This is a really exciting project. I am really in awe of CPSP, because I think it is unique and I think we can do things that we can’t do in other places because of it.”



Dr. Lori Tucker

For study details, contact Louise Painchaud, Senior CPSP Coordinator, at louisep@cps.ca or visit www.cps.ca and follow the links to CPSP. ✨