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Contact:

Dr. Quincy Almeida, Director
Movement Disorders Research & Rehabilitation Centre
519-884-1970 ext. 3924 or qalmeida@wlu.ca

Kevin Crowley, Associate Director: News & Editorial
Wilfrid Laurier University
519-884-1970 ext. 3070 or kcrowley@wlu.ca

Sun Life Financial donates \$250,000 to Laurier's innovative movement disorders research

WATERLOO – For hundreds of patients suffering from the degeneration caused by Parkinson's disease, Wilfrid Laurier University's Movement Disorders Research & Rehabilitation Centre is a haven of hope. The first of its kind in Canada, the centre has quickly become a leading authority on recommendations related to exercise rehabilitation for those affected by movement disorders in Canada.

Sun Life Financial has championed this important research through its generous donation of \$250,000 to the newly named Sun Life Financial Movement Disorders Research & Rehabilitation Centre (MDRC). To pay tribute to Sun Life Financial for its substantial gift, a celebration event will be held Monday, Sept. 21 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the front lawn of the MDRC, located at 66 Hickory St. W., Waterloo.

The event will include a talk from the centre's award-winning director, Dr. Quincy Almeida, who will highlight some of the MDRC's ongoing successes. As well, Connie Gilbert, one of the centre's patients, will speak of the critical role the centre has played in her battle against Parkinson's disease. Dean Connor, president, Sun Life Financial Canada, will present a cheque for \$250,000.

"Sun Life Financial has a long history in Waterloo and many of our employees live and work in the city and surrounding area," said Connor. "Our donation to the MDRC is an important investment in the health and well-being of those suffering from this disease not only in our community, but across Canada and around the world."

Focused on finding ways to slow the progression of Parkinson's disease – along with conducting vital research relating to other movement disorders – the MDRC's team examines top exercise recommendations and determines which ones prove to benefit a patient's balance, gait and coordination.

"The work being done within the MDRC has already helped hundreds of individuals fighting to regain their mobility, dignity and hope," said Dr. Max Blouw, president and vice-chancellor of Wilfrid Laurier University. "Sun Life Financial's generosity and support will ensure that the centre can continue to make a real difference in the lives of those who are struggling with the cruel realities of Parkinson's disease."