

The Migraine and Pain Fund

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September 10, 2007

Dr. Robert E. Shapiro
Associate Professor of Neurology
Medical Director, UVM Office of Clinical Trials Research
Given Building C219B
Department of Neurology, College of Medicine
University of Vermont
89 Beaumont Avenue
Burlington, VT 05405

Dear Dr. Shapiro:

The Migraine and Pain Fund is pleased to endorse this year's Headache on the Hill initiative on September 25 and 26 in Washington, D.C. The mission of The Migraine and Pain Fund is to fund research into the causes and treatments of Migraine and chronic pain, encourage and support multi-disciplinary dedicated treatment programs for those requiring hospitalization and disseminate information about Migraine and chronic pain.

Migraine places both an enormous economic and social burden on the U.S. It afflicts about 10 % of Americans. Of them, over one-third -- or 12 million people -- experience attacks on a near-daily basis. Every 10 seconds, someone in the United States goes to the emergency room with a headache or Migraine. Migraine and headache account for nine percent of our nation's productivity losses.

Despite its prevalence and impact, Migraine remains poorly understood and frequently mistreated. Researchers still do not understand many things about the causes of Migraine, the role of genetics, the nature of pain, and the reasons why medications work only on some people and in some situations. As a result, sufferers often endure a lengthy process of trial and error to discover an effective treatment. Once a treatment is determined, it may not alleviate every attack, and it may prove ineffective over time. Some people suffer from several different types of Migraine, making diagnosis and treatment that much more difficult.

Current federal levels of funding for Migraine research are woefully inadequate to meet the societal burden of the disease. According to recent statistics, the annual federal funding for Migraine research is about \$13 million, while the US loses more than \$20 *billion* in indirect costs to the disease.

The Migraine and Pain Fund is providing seed money grants for projects that it hopes will ultimately lead to better treatment and quality of life for Migraine sufferers. By the end of 2007, we believe that The Migraine and Pain Fund will be the largest donor-supported funder of Migraine research. But Migraine is an *enormous* public health problem that has an impact on society, business, families, and, most importantly, the individual sufferer. A *substantial* increase in government research funds is needed to address this devastating disease. It is time to understand the causes and mechanisms of Migraine, to develop improvements in treatment, and to find the cure.

The Migraine and Pain Fund applauds this year's Headache on the Hill participants for drawing attention to the enormous impact of Migraine and the need for substantially more federal funding.

Yours sincerely,



Cathy Glaser
President