

**Joint press release by the University of Oxford and the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation**

Oxford and Zug, 23 November 2016

**University of Oxford team receives research grant from Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation to improve health and development of preterm infants**

**A global research project that aims to improve the health, nutritional status and development of preterm infants has been awarded a \$2.8million grant from the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation (FLRF).**

The Swiss based foundation promotes research in human milk and lactation, and formed the new partnership with the University of Oxford by supporting the work of the INTERGROWTH-21<sup>st</sup> Project.

The FLRF partnership is aimed at improving the overall health, nutritional status and development of high-risk infants, as well as training the next generation of neonatologists and paediatricians in evidence-based feeding and monitoring practices for preterm infants.

The partnership has three main objectives: 1) to establish an online community of health professionals to apply the INTERGROWTH-21<sup>st</sup> Project's feeding protocol and international Preterm Postnatal Growth Standards (PPGS) for monitoring growth; 2) the implementation of the feeding protocol and PPGS into selected, influential neonatal units around the world, and 3) to gain high-level health policy support for implementing the feeding protocol and PPGS.

Professor Stephen Kennedy, co-leader of the project, explained: "We are very proud of this project because PPGS are the first postnatal growth standards for preterm infants and are valid for use in all populations around the world. Global adoption of these standards is a vital tool for promoting breastfeeding in neonatal units and infant clinics around the world so as to improve the survival and health of preterm infants."

Michael Larsson, Chairman of the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation, said: "Children should have the best possible nutritional start in life. This is even more important for preterm infants with their special needs and heightened risks.

"Our foundation is dedicated to promoting projects which focus on increasing research-based evidence on human milk and to ensure it is considered a matter of course worldwide. Therefore, we are delighted to partner with the University of Oxford by supporting the INTERGROWTH-21<sup>st</sup> Consortium in their implementation efforts."



Led by Professors Stephen Kennedy and José Villar, INTERGROWTH-21<sup>st</sup> is one of the largest collaborative projects to-date in the field of maternal and perinatal health research, involving more than 300 doctors, scientists and healthcare workers from 27 institutions in 18 countries worldwide.

The project has developed a package of clinical tools to standardise how the growth, nutritional status and neurodevelopment of preterm infants are assessed and monitored, to enhance human milk feeding for preterm infants, avoid overfeeding, reduce the risk of childhood overweight and obesity, and improve early detection of infants with sub-optimal growth.

Professor José Villar said: “We are delighted to receive the generous donation from the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation and are grateful for the opportunity, as part of this ground-breaking project, to improve the overall health, nutritional status and development of preterm infants.

“With the Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation’s support we will be able to implement the feeding protocol and PPGS for monitoring growth around the world and contribute to long-term improvements in the health of preterm infants.”



### **Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation**

The Family Larsson-Rosenquist Foundation is the first foundation in the world with a prime focus on promoting and supporting human milk nutrition and breastfeeding. Based in Zug/Switzerland, it was founded in 2013 with the aim to promote the scientific and public recognition of human milk as - given the current state of science - the best nutrition for newborns and infants. It considers itself as an instigator and promoter of new knowledge about human milk nutrition and breastfeeding. The Foundation invests globally in projects and scientific activities in human milk research and breastfeeding promotion. It places high value on inter-disciplinarity and sustainable impact for the well-being of mother and child. <http://www.larsson-rosenquist.org/>

### **INTERGROWTH-21<sup>st</sup>**

The INTERGROWTH-21<sup>st</sup> Project was carried out by the International Fetal and Newborn Growth Consortium for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, a multidisciplinary network of more than 300 doctors, scientists and healthcare workers from 27 institutions in 18 countries worldwide. Coordinated by the University of Oxford, it is the largest collaborative venture to-date in the field of maternal and perinatal health research. <http://intergrowth21.org.uk/>

### **Oxford University's Medical Sciences Division**

The Division is one of the largest biomedical research centres in Europe, with over 2,500 people involved in research and more than 2,800 students. The University is rated the best in the world for medicine, and it is home to the UK's top-ranked medical school. From the genetic and molecular basis of disease to the latest advances in neuroscience, Oxford is at the forefront of medical research. It has one of the largest clinical trial portfolios in the UK and great expertise in taking discoveries from the lab into the clinic. Partnerships with the local NHS Trusts enable patients to benefit from close links between medical research and healthcare delivery. A great strength of Oxford medicine is its long-standing network of clinical research units in Asia and Africa, enabling world-leading research on the most pressing global health challenges such as malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS and flu. Oxford is also renowned for its large-scale studies which examine the role of factors such as smoking, alcohol and diet on cancer, heart disease and other conditions. <https://www.medsci.ox.ac.uk/>

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