

# **An In-Depth Analysis of the “Summary Report - CIHR and MS Society of Canada Joint Invitational Meeting on Multiple Sclerosis Research**

**Dr. Ashton Embry, Direct-MS,  
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## **Executive Summary**

A detailed analysis of the recently released CIHR/MSSOC Report on CCSVI and Multiple Sclerosis (Beaudet Report) has found that the report contains many scientific errors and unsupported opinions. The serious scientific failings which permeate the Beaudet Report are painstakingly documented in over nine pages of text in the In-Depth Analysis.

An even larger and more serious problem with the Beaudet Report are the overt and most disconcerting ethical breeches. These ethical breeches include:

1. The committee organizers used an incredibly biased committee member selection process such that that no scientists or practitioners with expertise, knowledge and/or experience with CCSVI and MS were allowed on the Beaudet Committee
2. The majority of the Committee members (13/23) have an obvious conflict of interest when it comes to evaluating the need for a clinical trial to test the efficacy of a non-drug therapy for MS such as CCSVI treatment. Such a conflict of interest takes the form of close ties, often financial, with the pharmaceutical companies that manufacture and market the drugs that are currently used for MS. Such ties are meticulously documented in the Appendix of the In-Depth Analysis.
3. The conflicts of interest were not declared or even alluded to in the Beaudet Report
4. The committee members with a conflict of interest did not recuse themselves when it became obvious that CCSVI and the question of a CCSVI treatment clinical trial were going to dominate the discussions by the Committee. In fact, the compromised individuals strongly influenced the final recommendations of the committee.

The highly flawed science, in combination with the serious ethical breeches of the Beaudet Report, completely invalidates its recommendations. Given the above the Federal Health Ministry needs to:

1. Convene a new expert committee to examine and make recommendations on the need for a clinical trial to test the efficacy of CCSVI treatment for MS. The committee should be populated by both scientists and practitioners with expertise and experience with CCSVI and MS and scientists with experience in related topics such as venous angioplasty in other conditions, the neurovascular system, neuro-imaging and MS disease pathogenesis. Every effort should be made to exclude individuals with a clear conflict of interest related to past and/or present relationships with the pharmaceutical industry.
2. Launch an investigation into the ethical breeches of the Beaudet Report and determine how such a scientifically inappropriate and ethically challenged committee came into existence in the first place.
3. Review the appropriateness of having Alain Beaudet lead the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Canadians need to have confidence in their health leaders and Beaudet's credibility has been destroyed by the scientific failings and the ethical breeches of the committee he formed and the report he wrote on a most important health issue.