

EMD Serono Canada Gives Canadians a Deeper Look into Life with Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

New technology allows users to view a day-in-the-life of someone living with MS

TORONTO, ON, May 31 2017— EMD Serono, Canada, a biopharmaceutical business of Merck KGaA Darmstadt, Germany, is using cutting-edge virtual reality (VR) technology to educate Canadians about Multiple Sclerosis (MS) just in time for World MS Day on May 31st. *MS from the Inside Out* is a ten minute, interactive VR experience which immerses viewers in an engaging simulated sensory journey, allowing them to better understand the symptoms of MS. Shedding light on symptoms is especially important in Canada, as it has one of the highest rates of MS in the world.¹

“This is a big first step for technology integration in the MS space and we’re excited about the possibilities it may provide the 100,000 Canadians currently living with the disease,” says Gaby Murphy, President and Managing Director, EMD Serono, Canada. “EMD Serono, Canada is committed to furthering education about MS for both people with the disease and their loved ones. This groundbreaking technology has potential to help increase our understanding of MS and further raise awareness of the impact of the disease.”

VR is changing the way we understand and communicate issues around the world, and this innovation has become especially important within healthcare. *MS from the Inside Out* seeks to break down barriers of the invisible aspects of the disease and its complex symptoms.

“The effects of MS can be physical and emotional, and because its symptoms are often invisible, the experiences of those suffering from MS can be difficult for caregivers, family and friends to understand,” says Dr. Daniel Selchen, Director, MS Clinic, St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto. “Knowing that, raising awareness of MS is critical, and gaining insight into the journey a person living with MS faces allows us to further understand this complex disease.”

To coincide with World MS Day, EMD Serono, Canada held an event at the MaRS Discovery District in Toronto, during which people were able to immerse themselves in the MS VR experience, gaining deeper insights into the impact of the disease. EMD Serono has captured people’s experiences with this technology in a video you can view [here](#).

EMD Serono encourages Canadians to help spread the word and raise awareness of MS by viewing and sharing the [YouTube video](#).

About Multiple Sclerosis

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a degenerative auto-immune disease in which the myelin sheath around the nerves in the brain and spinal cord are inflamed and often damaged.² It is estimated that approximately 2.3 million people have MS worldwide.³ Canada has one of the highest prevalence rates of MS in the world.⁴ Currently, there are an estimated 100,000 Canadians living with MS.⁴ Symptoms of MS can include extreme fatigue, lack of coordination, weakness, tingling, impaired sensation, vision problems, bladder problems, cognitive impairment and mood changes.⁵ Currently there is no cure, but each day researchers are learning more about what causes MS and are zeroing in on ways to prevent it.⁶

About EMD Serono, Canada

EMD Serono, Canada, is the Canadian biopharmaceutical business of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. EMD Serono, Canada has integrated cutting-edge science, innovative products and devices, and industry-leading patient support and access programs. EMD Serono, Canada has deep expertise in neurology, fertility and endocrinology, as well as a robust pipeline of potential therapies in neurology, oncology, immunology and immuno-oncology. Today, EMD Serono, Canada has more than 100 employees across Canada with headquarters in Mississauga, Ontario.

About Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany

Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany is a leading science and technology company in healthcare, life science and performance materials. Around 50,000 employees work to further develop technologies that improve and enhance life – from biopharmaceutical therapies to treat cancer or multiple sclerosis, cutting-edge systems for scientific research and production, to liquid crystals for smartphones and LCD televisions. In 2016, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany generated sales of € 15.0 billion in 66 countries.

Founded in 1668, Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company. The founding family remains the majority owner of the publicly listed corporate group. Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, holds the global rights to the Merck name and brand. The only exceptions are the United States and Canada, where the company operates as EMD Serono, Millipore Sigma and EMD Performance Materials.

References

¹ MS Society of Canada. What is MS. Accessed May 16, 2017. Available at <https://mssociety.ca/about-ms/what-is-ms>

² Ibid.

³ National MS Society. What is MS. Accessed May 16, 2017. Available at <http://www.nationalmssociety.org/What-is-MS/MS-FAQ-s>

⁴ MS Society of Canada. What is MS. Accessed April 24, 2017. Available at <https://mssociety.ca/about-ms/what-is-ms>

⁵ MS Society of Canada. What is MS. Accessed May 16, 2017. Available at <https://mssociety.ca/about-ms/what-is-ms>

⁶ Ibid.