

In this section, the membership will find updates on news and developments about the Foundation.

Sous cette rubrique, vous trouverez des nouvelles et développements à jour concernant la Fondation.



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An open letter to fellow members of the Canadian Orthopaedic Association from Dr. Robert B. Salter



Dear Fellow Members:

I am delighted to have been invited by Dr. Paul Wright, our esteemed President of the Canadian Orthopaedic Foundation, to serve as the first Patron of the newly created Canadian Orthopaedic Research Legacy (CORL) which is an imaginative outgrowth of the Foundation for the primary purpose of significantly increasing the sustained funding of orthopaedic research across Canada.

From a distillation of various definitions of medical research in any of the medical and surgical specialties, I offer the following definition: “an investigation or experimental study of some phenomenon directed to the discovery and interpretation of new data through the critical approach of the scientific method.”

As an orthopaedic clinician/scientist for 50 years, I am well aware that the difference between a good orthopaedic division and a truly great orthopaedic division is the presence in the latter of a strong and effective programme of original research—both clinical and experimental.

During the past 50 years much excellent research has been conducted by members of the Canadian Orthopaedic Association. Furthermore, the funding of orthopaedic research from granting agencies such as the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and The Arthritis Society is more realistic now than in earlier times. Nevertheless, it is still not sufficient to meet the financial needs of an expanded nation-wide programme of orthopaedic research.

We can and must do better. It is for this very reason that the LEGACY has been created.

As Baron von Rothschild has said: “Hats off to the past – Coats off to the future!”

We owe it to our patients to continue improving our methods of diagnosis and treatment through exciting research and thereby producing a significant legacy for the entire specialty of orthopaedics.

To those of you who are potential or recently graduated orthopaedic surgeon-scientists, I would say that the most difficult grant application to be funded is your first one. Consequently, at this early stage of your career you would be wise to seek the guidance of an experienced grant writer and scientist.

For many years I have taught that guidance can be obtained by following what I have called “The Cycle of Medical Research” (Figure 1). This cycle, which consists of a series of 16 steps, starts with patients and comes back full circle to patients, i.e., from bedside to research lab and back to bedside.

Thus, this cycle exemplifies clinically relevant research that is designed to find the solution to an unsolved clinical problem and, when appropriate, to apply the new knowledge to the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of the original problem.

Each and every one of us who is privileged to practice orthopaedic surgery in Canada has a moral obligation to support this farsighted LEGACY as generously as possible to significantly increase the extent of orthopaedic research that will emanate from increased numbers of orthopaedic surgeon-scientists in Canada.

In the final analysis, the success of any orthopaedic research project will depend upon the inquisitiveness and intelligence of the individual scientist whose goal should not be to follow the established path of clinical empiricism but rather, thorough research, to explore where there is no path and leave a trail that leads to the future.

For all of these reasons I support—with enthusiasm—the exciting concept of the Canadian Orthopaedic Research Legacy and I optimistically anticipate that each of you will share my enthusiasm!

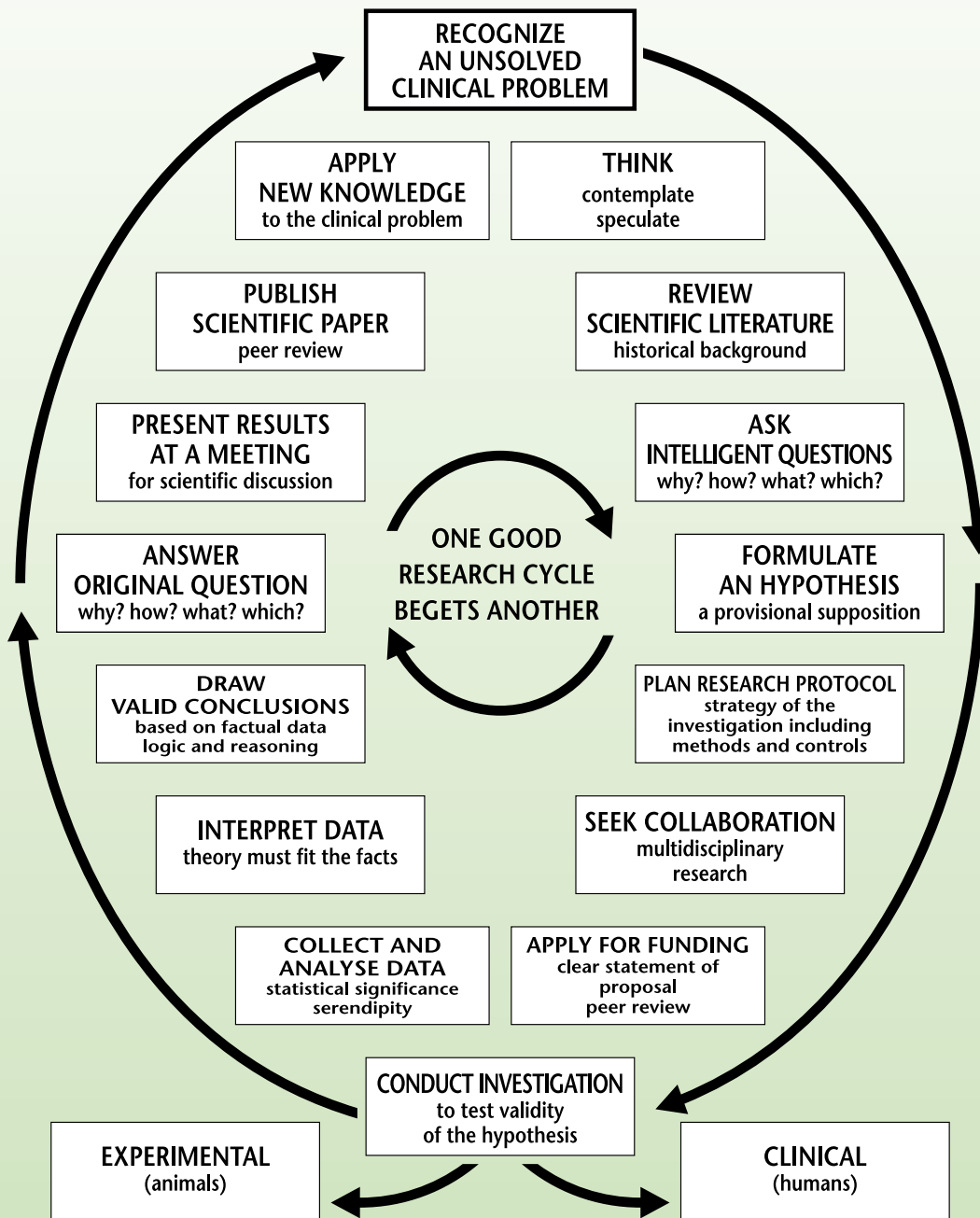
Collegially yours,

Robert B. Salter

Figure 1

DR. ROBERT SALTER'S CYCLE OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

TO FIND THE SOLUTION TO AN UNSOLVED CLINICAL PROBLEM



From Textbook of Disorders and Injuries of the Musculoskeletal System by Robert B. Salter