

## Women & Infants, Bradley Receive \$1.5M to Support Phase II of Rhode Island Consortium For Autism Research and Treatment

*Grant will enable further recruitment and development of statewide partnership to support population-based research on autism spectrum disorder*

The Rhode Island Consortium for Autism Research and Treatment (RI-CART), a group of the state's leading experts on autism research, education, health and services, has received a \$1.5 million renewal grant from the Simons Foundation Autism Research Initiative. The three-year grant, awarded to Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island, and with a subcontract to Bradley Hospital, will enable RI-CART to continue recruitment and development of a statewide, population-based autism patient registry.

The first grant from Simons Foundation was received in August 2013. Since then, RI-CART has recruited more than 1,000 individuals and their families to participate in the registry. The goal for phase II of this effort is to recruit an additional 1,000 participants into a study that includes a brief clinical assessment, collection of biological samples for genetic analysis, and referrals to other research studies. Participants' families are active in the management and function of RI-CART. The long-term goal is to enroll all individuals with autism in Rhode Island in this unique research network.

"Autism is a poorly understood family of related conditions. Unfortunately, there is no specific medical treatment for autism, underscoring the importance for additional research," said **STEPHEN SHEINKOPF, PhD**, a clinical researcher at Women & Infants Hospital's Brown Center for the Study of Children at Risk, assistant professor at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, and co-director and principal investigator of RI-CART. "What makes RI-CART truly unique is that this statewide collaboration is building an infrastructure for clinical and translational research on autism spectrum disorders."

A unique aspect of RI-CART is that families actively participate in the management and function of the project. RI-CART has partnered with The Autism Project, an organization that offers support and programming for individuals with autism. "RI-CART is an exciting opportunity for collaboration between clinicians and researchers, as well as the individuals and families impacted by autism," said Joanne Quinn, executive director of The Autism Project and a member of the RI-CART leadership team.

RI-CART has also been supported by funds from the Brown University Institute for Brain Science, the Norman Prince Neuroscience Institute, and the Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University.

For more information about RI-CART, visit [www.AutismRI.org](http://www.AutismRI.org).

### About RI-CART

The Rhode Island Consortium for Autism Research and Treatment (RI-CART) is comprised of clinicians, researchers and community members with the shared mission of accelerating research on the causes of and treatments for Autism Spectrum Disorders. RI-CART is a unique collaboration among partner organizations across Rhode Island – the state's leading hospitals including Bradley Hospital, Hasbro Children's Hospital, Women & Infants Hospital, Butler Hospital, Memorial Hospital and Rhode Island Hospital; institutions of higher education including Brown University, the University of Rhode Island and Rhode Island College; service agencies including the Groden Center and Perspectives Corporation; state agencies including the Rhode Island departments of Health and Education; and community programs and parent advocacy groups including The Autism Project. RI-CART is based at Bradley Hospital in East Providence, RI. Learn more by contacting [RICART@lifespan.org](mailto:RICART@lifespan.org) or on the web at [www.AutismRI.org](http://www.AutismRI.org). ❖



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