



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**March 1, 2023**

## **Fighting Blindness Canada Continues to Call for Coverage of Sight-Saving Treatment after Ontario Becomes Fourth Province to Sign Agreement**

**TORONTO, ON** —Fighting Blindness Canada is pleased to hear Ontario has approved public coverage of Luxturna® (generic name: voretigene neparvovec-rzyl)<sup>1</sup>. This gene therapy treatment slows and may even restore some vision loss due to inherited retinal diseases retinitis pigmentosa and Leber congenital amaurosis, caused by mutations in the RPE65 gene.

“This is a significant milestone for the vision loss community because having access to a treatment that can help slow or stop progressive vision loss is life-transforming,” said Dr. Larissa Moniz, Director of Research and Mission Programs, Fighting Blindness Canada. “Canadians who have already received Luxturna® have reported colours appearing more vivid and brighter, and improvements in night vision that give them independence.”

Fighting Blindness Canada has been advocating for access to provincial public coverage for Luxturna for years. This is the only treatment currently available for individuals with RPE65 gene mutations and is the first gene therapy for any inherited retinal disease.

“While we are very pleased to hear Ontario is moving forward with public coverage, we continue to call on other provincial and territorial governments to immediately sign the agreement to cover the cost of this treatment to save sight,” Moniz added. “Retinitis pigmentosa and Leber congenital amaurosis are conditions that lead to a loss of photoreceptor cells in the eye. The treatment’s success depends on how many healthy cells are left in a person’s eye. The more time those living with these conditions wait, the more sight is lost.”

Ontario becomes the fourth province in Canada to approve public funding of Luxturna®, following Quebec, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. More than 40 Canadians can benefit from the one-time injection treatment.

**Fighting Blindness Canada is urging all Canadians to visit [ApproveLuxturna.ca](https://www.approveluxturna.ca) to send an email to their Premier and Health Minister to expedite equal access to Luxturna.**

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### **About Fighting Blindness Canada:**

Fighting Blindness Canada (FBC) is the largest charitable funder of vision research in Canada. Over our 49-year history, FBC has contributed over \$40 million in funding for the development



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of sight-saving treatments and cures for blinding eye diseases. Thanks to our supporters, FBC is helping drive forward research to understand why vision loss occurs, how it can be slowed, and how sight can be restored. To learn more, visit [fightingblindness.ca](http://fightingblindness.ca).

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<sup>1</sup> Luxturna is a registered trademark of Spark Therapeutics Inc., used under license by Novartis Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc.