



Science in the Service of Autism

AUTISM SPEAKS IN THE U.K. ANNOUNCES A CHANGE IN NAME TO AUTISTICA

Autistica Will Continue to Collaborate with Autism Speaks U.S. on Autism Research and Other Issues of Mutual Interest

UK charity Autism Speaks and charity of the same name in the United States are pleased to announce that the former will be renamed Autistica with effect from 1 January 2010. The UK charity has adopted as its positioning statement "Science in the Service of Autism".

The two charities are linked by a common interest in raising funds for and funding biomedical research into the causes and treatment of autism, and have been fully separate and independent entities since March 2007. The American charity is as well known both domestically and internationally for the advocacy work that its name implies as for the biomedical research it funds. The British charity continues to be focussed entirely upon biomedical research and so its new identity is one which better reflects this core purpose. The change takes place at the end of 2009 and is effective from 1 January 2010. The two organisations will continue to collaborate as now in areas of shared interest, which include a number of collaborative international research projects in the fields of autism genetics, the study of baby siblings of children with autism and brain studies.

Hilary Gilfoy, chief executive of Autistica said, "We are grateful to our American colleagues in Autism Speaks for the support which they have given us during our first five years. This arrangement allowed us to benefit from their robust research template and funding experience. The change of name acknowledges that, with their help, we are now a mature organisation able to stand on our own two feet and establish our own identity. We are looking forward to continuing our shared interest in research."

Mark Roithmayr, President of Autism Speaks, said, "We are delighted that the UK charity has become a recognised funder of autism research in its own right, and fully agree that the time has come when its independent status and separate identity should be reflected in its name. Progress in research relies on international collaboration between researchers and funders and we will continue jointly to encourage and develop this. We wish Autistica every success."

Founder and now president of the UK charity, Dame Stephanie Shirley, said, "I am delighted that we have been able to increase funding for autism research in the UK by following the example of the pioneering families in the United States who first inspired me and then supported me in creating the UK charity. I am sure Autistica will continue to go from strength to strength and I am proud that my own Shirley Foundation will be supporting the charity under its new name by meeting its core costs until 2012."