

St. Mary's Research Centre

FEBRUARY 2023



FROM THE SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR

Dear members of the SMRC community,

In September 2022, I presented the SMRC's priorities for 2022-23. Having now almost reached the six-month mark, with this edition of the newsletter I'd like to provide updates on the progress of the first five priorities that were announced.

Despite many challenges, a lot has been accomplished; I'm proud of our team for having rapidly adopted so many changes to bring us in line with best practices in both research management and scientific development. In addition to managing our resources in a more efficient and responsible manner, we've initiated the research strategic planning exercise that will define the SMRC's next decade of scientific productivity.

Workgroups in all key research areas have been scheduled this month, I encourage you to get in touch with the Research Centre if you haven't already registered to participate in one. I take advantage of this opportunity to thank the St. Mary's Hospital Foundation and CIUSSS leadership for their support in moving forward on these fronts.

This newsletter will also introduce you to Dr Isabelle Leblanc, a clinician-researcher from the Family Medicine Department at St. Mary's. Dr Leblanc will develop and validate a tool to educate clinicians on understanding pain in ethnocultural communities experiencing linguistic barriers. Supported by a CARE grant, her research aligns with a priority area for the SMRC: optimizing care for vulnerable and high risk patients.

I hope you enjoy reading on these and other updates from the SMRC. Please keep an eye out for next month's edition, to get updates on the remainder of our 2022-23 priorities.

Ari Meguerditchian, MD
Scientific Director

IN THIS ISSUE

Research Strategic
Exercise and Update - 2

Researcher's
Portrait - 7

Scientific Events - 7

SMRC News - 8

Academic Output - 8

Internship - 8

Job offer - 8

Oncology
Clinical Trials - 9

Social Event - 11

SMRC STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2023

Dear members of the SMRC community,

Last September, I presented the Research Centre's priorities for the 2022-23 academic year. Since then, significant effort has been invested toward achieving these goals. With the March and April editions of the newsletter, I'd like to provide an update on the work accomplished. This would not have been possible without the team in place at the SMRC. My sincere thanks to everyone!



1) Establish an Effective Management Team: (90% completed)

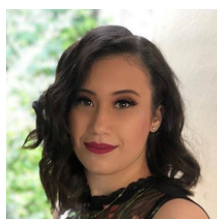
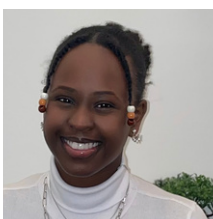
The right team is essential to successfully complete changes that will support the SMRC's next phase of growth. Since September, we have been able recruit a number of talented people to the Research Centre's core team. The composition of the team is as follows:



Christina Raneburger, Associate Director. Christina is responsible for strategic development opportunities, Faculty of Medicine relations and inter-institutional partnerships with the academic and health network.



Jean-Daniel Beauchesne, General Manager. Jean-Daniel is responsible for the optimal management and growth of financial, human, material and the information technology capital.



Kelly Ingabire & Ranime Hassan, Administrative Technicians, Research. Kelly and Ranime support the development and implementation of administrative tools that ensure effective management compliant to institutional requirements.

SMRC STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2023



Marc-André Bélisle, Scientific Documentation Manager. Marc-André is responsible for the development and implementation of print and digital document archiving processes, compliant to ethical and legal requirements. He also develops and optimizes administrative procedures at the SMRC.



Amaryllis Kaneza, Administrative Assistant. Amaryllis supports the management team with administrative and organizational tasks. She is also invested in ensuring seamless processing of payroll for the SMRC's 60+ employees.



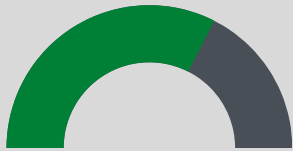
Isabelle Crépeau, Scientific Information Officer. Isabelle supports scientific productivity, by managing the SMRC's CV roster, supporting grant and manuscript production and maintaining the Research Centre's scientific output database.

The new management team reinforces SMRC's capacity to navigate the increasingly complex environment of the CIUSSS and McGill University.

Expansions to the team were delivered within the SMRC's current budget and will allow us to have the right skills in place to grow.

We may further expand the team in the coming months, based on the outcome of the strategic planning exercise.

SMRC STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2023



2) Optimize Financial Resource Management: (65% completed)

Under the leadership of the General Manager, the SMRC has completed the deployment of the financial dashboard for each researcher. This tool summarizes key information for each of the researcher's grant, and reports information on balances spent, encumbered, and remaining. In addition to helping researchers' structure their statutory meetings, it provides the most accurate snapshot of financial resources and allows them to plan research work accordingly. Since November, the SMRC has been mandated to streamline clinical trials finances. We started this work optimizing the invoicing process, to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of transactions with industry sponsors and collaborative groups. The SMRC continues its collaboration with the CIUSSS Finance Directorate in reviewing each research cost center and simplifying coding, documentation and audit-proofing financial operations.



3) Optimize Human Resource Management: (75% completed)

Following an internal survey conducted last spring, the SMRC completed benchmarking of research professional titles and salary scales across the Montreal life sciences research network.

A proposal specific to the realities of the SMRC and, based on best practices in the industry, has been submitted to the CIUSSS HR Directorate. In addition, the streamlined posting to on-boarding process has been finalized and deployed.

Researchers receive personalized support in the process of recruiting research professionals, in addition to a hiring toolkit and centralization of the administrative processes (payroll, ID card, email, etc.). The SMRC has also updated its employee manual with key information on policies and processes in place.



4) Establish a Researcher Affiliation Process: (75% completed)

In response to a ministerial obligation, the SMRC has developed a process to formalize the affiliation of persons conducting research at St. Mary's. Synchronized to career progression and academic productivity milestones, and flexible enough to accommodate clinical / non-clinical, McGill / non-McGill profiles, this process defines privileges and responsibilities of each individual.

SMRC STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2023

An initial roster of active researchers has been established, based on information from CIUSSS-Finance, the REB office and the DAUER. This will allow the SMRC to accomplish its role more effectively in overseeing research on campus. It also addresses a key requirement for formal designation by the University and FRQ. Next steps include working with the CIUSSS leadership to integrate the process to physician credentialing.

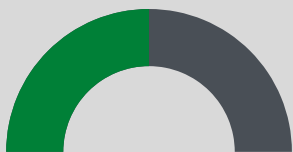


5) Attract a Critical Mass of Research Faculty: (75% completed)

The SMRC put in place a mechanism to integrate clinicians on campus who hold grants and are actively involved in research. Scientific productivity services as well as administrative support in resource management are now available to health care professionals that contribute to research advancement at St. Mary's.

During the fall, the SMRC provided scientific mentorship and administrative support for an FRQ clinicien-chercheur application. In November, Dr. Kashayar Esfahani was selected as the inaugural recipient of the Career Development Award in Oncology. Developed in collaboration with St. Mary's Hospital Foundation and the Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology (McGill), this program aims to support the academic career development of oncology specialists that are recruited to practice at St. Mary's.

The Research Centre also completed the positing of a non-clinical CAS-Research Professor in Cancer Epidemiology focusing on the impact of COVID on the cancer care continuum. Finally, the Community Oncology Research Chair was updated and posted; we are hopeful that negotiations underway will lead to the announcement of the inaugural chairholder in the near future.



6) Scientific Strategic Planning: (50% completed)

In partnership with Intellia Consulting, an external firm with expertise in accompanying academic institutions through growth, the SMRC initiated its strategic planning process in the fall. The initial step consisting of a survey took place in November, followed by targeted interviews with key stakeholders.

We are currently activating workgroups that will provide insight into areas of excellence, perceived challenges and opportunities for scientific growth and leadership. This first phase will be concluded with a half-day retreat in the spring, where we'll collectively work on a vision and mission statement and a draft proposal of research priorities.

UPDATE ON THE RESEARCH STRATEGY EXERCISE

Our research strategy exercise is moving forward and I wish to thank all of you who have replied to the discussion group invitations. It is extremely important for us to meet with as many St Mary's Research Centre affiliated scientists and internal, external and international stakeholders as possible.



Your feedback will help us shape the future of our research centre.

At this stage of the research strategy exercise, we have been able to schedule 9 discussion groups organized by research focus or stakeholder. The workshops per research focus are as follows:



TOPIC	DATE	TIME
Cancer Care Continuum	Feb 14	8am-9am
Surgical Sciences	Feb 14	1pm-2pm
Cancer Care Continuum	Feb 15	8am-9am
Surgical Sciences	Feb 21	4pm-6pm
Cancer Care Continuum	Feb 23	1pm-2pm
Healthy ageing	Mar 8	8am-9am
Primary care		10am-12pm
DAUER-CIUSSS		1pm-2pm
Primary care		3pm-4pm

For any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to: Christina Raneburger.

We thank you deeply for actively participating in this very important exercise.

Sincerely,

Christina

Christina Raneburger, MSc, MGP, MBA
Associate Director / Directrice Adjointe
christina.raneburger.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca

RESEARCHER PORTRAIT: DR. ISABELLE LEBLANC



Since the beginning of her academic career, Dr. Isabelle Leblanc has been interested in the crossroads and power dynamics between communities. She focuses on issues of equity, accessibility, social and medical vulnerability, and advocacy, particularly in the context of family medicine within Montreal's multiethnic Côte-des-Neiges neighbourhood. Dr. Leblanc's background as a qualitative researcher in social sciences applied to medicine is an important asset to better understanding underserved populations.

Dr. Leblanc followed an academic path rarely seen among physicians. After completing a Master's degree in anthropology and a PhD in comparative literature, she turned to health sciences and completed her medical doctorate. She came to St. Mary's during her residency in the mid 2000s, and has practiced in the SMHC Family Medicine Unit since then.

Dr. Isabelle Leblanc is a generalist with varied research interests including care within culturally diverse settings, global health, gender issues, organization of care and medical education.

EVENTS

THURSDAYS
SMRC SCIENTIFIC SERIES
12PM-1PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/409644888>

Let's Talk Conflict*

Miriam Carver
Tamara Carver

February 16, 2023

We all experience differences of opinion and conflicts every single day in both our work and home lives. Yet for the most part we are not educated in how to talk to each other in these situations. We either avoid them all together because we're afraid to make things worse, or perhaps we jump right in and create the outcomes we most fear. The reality is that however good or bad we are at dealing with conflict we can learn to be better.



Miriam Carver MEd, President of Carver Institute Inc., an organizational development firm providing learning and consulting services to a wide variety of clients across North America and globally. She is an expert in the field of conflict resolution and is a certified international workplace mediator.



Tamara Carver PhD, Director of the Office of Ed-TECH (Education Technology and E-learning Collaboration for Health) for the McGill University Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. She is an Associate Professor at the Institute of Health Sciences Education and an Associate Member of the Department of Surgery.

*This presentation can be credited to clinical staff (continuing medical education)

Contact: christina.raneburger.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca

SMRC NEWS

AWARD



Nina Morena received funding from l'Unité de soutien SSA Québec to attend the SSO conference in Boston on March 22-25, 2023. Nina will present the poster "Are YouTube videos a reliable information source for young women with metastatic breast cancer? "

NEW STAFF



Helen Alder is a Research Assistant in the e-IMPAQc team under the supervision of Mona Magalhaes & Dr. Sylvie Lambert. Helen is responsible for preparing documents for the Health Equity project and working on the education factsheets. She will be graduating from McGill University in Psychology in the Spring of 2023. [LinkedIn](#)



Shant Donabedian is a Coordinator at Lakeshore Hospital for the e-IMPAQc program under the supervision of Dr. Sylvie Lambert. His job involves recruiting and guiding patients through the e-IMPAQc study program. Shant graduated from McGill University with a B.A. in Psychology, and has worked as a Study Coordinator for the SCNLab. [LinkedIn](#)

ACADEMIC OUTPUT

Grants

Lambert SD, Duncan LR, Moodie E, McCusker J, et al. Using a SMART design to optimize the delivery of TEMPO – a Tailored, wEb-based psychosocial and physical activity self- Management PrOgram for men with prostate cancer and their caregivers. Canadian Institutes of Health Research; \$100,000 CAD, 1 year.

Publications

Marrah Nicolas-Joseph, Lydia Ould Brahim, Mara Ioana Boureanu, Francesca Y.E. Frati, Lydia Rosa Bourdache, Eric Belzile, Sylvie D. Lambert, [An evaluation of the suitability, readability, quality, and usefulness of online resources for management of immunotherapy for patients with cancer.](#)

Patient Education and Counseling, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pec.2023.107640>

INTERNSHIP

The IDOH+ (Infectious Diseases and One Health) program is a two-year Master program entirely taught in English and jointly organized by three European universities: l'Université de Tours (as Coordinator), the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) and the Hannover Medical School (MHH). Information available [here](#).

JOB OFFER

Project Coordinator

Manage project streams of the e-IMPAQc research and implementation program, ensuring the deliverables are completed on time. Information available [here](#).

ROSTER OF ONCOLOGY CLINICAL TRIALS

Bladder cancer

A Phase 3, randomized, study of neoadjuvant chemotherapy alone versus neoadjuvant, chemotherapy plus Nivolumab or Nivolumab and BMS-986205, followed by continued post-surgery therapy with Nivolumab and BMS-986205 in participants with muscle-invasive bladder cancer. [CA017-078]

Breast cancer

"A Clinical Trial to Determine the Efficacy of Five Years of Letrozole Compared to Placebo in Patients Completing Five Years of Hormonal Therapy Consisting of an Aromatase Inhibitor (AI) or Tamoxifen Followed by an AI in Prolonging Disease-Free Survival in Postmenopausal Woman with Hormone Receptor Positive Breast Cancer" [NSABP-42]

A Randomized Phase 3 Trial of Adjuvant Therapy Comparing Chemotherapy Alone (Six Cycles of Docetaxel Plus Cyclophosphamide or Four Cycles of Doxorubicin Plus Cyclophosphamide Followed by Weekly Paclitaxel) to Chemotherapy Plus Trastuzumab in Woman With Node-Positive or High-Risk Node-Negative HER2-Low Invasive Breast Cancer [NSABP-47]

A Phase 3 Study of Trastuzumab Deruxtecan (T-DXd) with or without Pertuzumab vs Taxane, Trastuzumab and pertuzumab in HERs-Positive, first-line Metastatic Breast Cancer [Destiny]

A Phase 3, Randomized Open-Label Multicenter Study Evaluating the Efficacy and Safety of Adjuvant Giredestrant compared with Physicians Choice of Adjuvant Endocrine Monotherapy in patients with Estrogen Receptor-Positive HER-Negative Early Breast Cancer [TRIO045]

Identification and evaluation of patients at risk of developing cardiotoxicity after receiving chemotherapy for breast cancer, leukemia or lymphoma [CarChem]

Lung cancer

A Phase 3 Study of Pembrolizumab in Combination with Pemetrexed/Platinum (Carboplatin or Cisplatin) Followed by Pembrolizumab and Maintenance Olaparib vs Maintenance Pemetrexed in the First-Line Treatment of Participants with Metastatic Non squamous Non-Small-Cell Lung Cancer [MK7339-006]

A Phase 3 Study of Pembrolizumab in Combination with Carboplatin/Taxane (Paclitaxel or Nab-paclitaxel) Followed by Pembrolizumab with or without Maintenance Olaparib in the First-line Treatment of Metastatic Squamous Non-small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC) [MK7339-008]

A Phase 3 Randomized, Placebo-controlled Study to Evaluate the Safety and Efficacy of Pemetrexed + Platinum Chemotherapy + Pembrolizumab (MK-3475) with or without Lenvatinib (E7080/MK-7902) as First-line Intervention in Participants with Metastatic Non squamous Non-small Cell Lung Cancer [MK7902-006]



ROSTER OF ONCOLOGY CLINICAL TRIALS

Lung cancer - continued

A Phase 3, Multicenter, randomized, open-label trial to compare the efficacy and safety of pembrolizumab (MK-3475) in combination with Lenvatinib (E7080/MK-7902) versus docetaxel in previously treated participants with metastatic Non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) and progressive disease (PD) after platinum doublet chemotherapy and immunotherapy [MK7902-008]

A phase 3 study of Pembrolizumab (MK-3475) in combination with concurrent chemoradiation therapy followed by Pembrolizumab with or without Olaparib vs concurrent chemoradiation therapy followed by Durvalumab in participants with unresectable, locally advanced, stage III non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC). [MK 7339-012]

A randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled phase 3 study of Pembrolizumab (MK-3475) in combination with concurrent chemoradiation therapy followed by Pembrolizumab with or without Olaparib (MK-7339), compared to concurrent chemoradiation therapy alone in participants with newly diagnosed treatment-naïve limited-stage small cell lung cancer (LS-SCLC). [MK 7339-013]

A Phase 1b/2 Study to evaluate the efficacy and safety of Pembrolizumab in Combination with Investigational Agents for the treatment of Participants With PD-1/L1-refractory Extension-Stage Small Cell Lung Cancer in need of Secondary-Line Therapy [MK3475-B98]

A Phase 2 Study to Evaluate the Efficacy and Safety of Pembrolizumab plus Investigational Agents in Combination with Etoposide and Cisplatin or Carboplatin for the first line Treatment of Participants with Extensive Stage Small Cell Lung Cancer [MK3475-B99]

A Randomized Open Label Phase 3 Study of SAR408701 vs Docetaxel in Previously treated Metastatic Non-Squamous Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer patients with CEACAM5 Positive Tumors [EFC15858]



Information:
Franca Cantini
Program Manager, Oncology Clinical Trials
franca.cantini.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca

CELEBRATING THE NEW YEAR

On February 2nd, 2023, the SMRC community celebrated the incoming year in the fourth floor conference room of the Hayes Pavilion. This was the first social event at the research centre in 3 years!

The Social Committee organized a 5 à 7 tea party for this occasion.



Awaref Shehab-el-Deen (left), Isabelle Crépeau (right) and Jean-Daniel Beauchesne (back)



Dr. Jeannie Haggerty and Jean-Daniel Beauchesne



Hors d'oeuvres and sweets accompanied a variety of hot and iced teas