

St. Mary's Research Centre

JANUARY 2023



FROM THE SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR

Dear members of the SMRC community,

Happy new year!

May the new year bring health, happiness, and success in your personal and professional goals.

2023 will be a very busy year for the SMRC. We have many ambitious objectives to achieve, starting with the strategic planning process. The first step of this important exercise consisted of interviews with key stakeholders and a survey of the SMRC community. Despite the multiple deadlines associated with the end of the year, we were able to complete this in November – December 2022, thanks to the dedication of our Associate Director, Christina Raneburger. This edition of the newsletter provides details on the next phase of the strategic planning process. I would like to thank everyone for participating to the survey and encourage you to actively take part in the upcoming workgroups.

The newsletter will also introduce you to Dr Khashayar Esfahani, the inaugural recipient of the Oncology Career Development Award. Established in partnership with the Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology (McGill University) and generously funded by St. Mary's Hospital Foundation, this award will allow Dr Esfahani to develop within the Department of Oncology a research focus on adverse events associated to systemic therapy. Under his leadership, St. Mary's will be able to join the MIRAE multicentric research collaborative.

Finally, in response to requests from the clinical community, I'm happy to report that the SMRC is now fully accredited to deliver CME credits through the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada for participants to its lectures and seminars.

I hope you enjoy reading about the successes of our Research Centre,

Ari Meguerditchian, MD
Scientific Director

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UPDATE ON THE RESEARCH STRATEGY EXERCISE

Following the closing of the on-line survey, I wish to update you on the progress of the research strategy formulation exercise. We thank all of you who took the time from their busy schedule to respond to our survey.

You provided us with important and useful information that were necessary to prepare the next steps of this strategic reflection: the strategic workshop discussion ateliers.

Based on your answers we were able to draft the first version of our research pillars and transversal themes.

CANCER CARE CONTINUUM	SURGICAL SCIENCES	HEALTHY AGING	PRIMARY & COMMUNITY MEDICINE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oncology trials • Health services organization • Prevention, / high risk populations & profiles • Patient support • Health professionals' skill enhancement • Innovative treatments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical innovations • Minimally invasive approaches • Seniors • Patient support • Skill enhancement / education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe transitions of care • Psychological wellness • Cognitive disfunction • Caregivers needs • Acute care challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary care • Proximity & community care; where the patient's natural environment is • Nurse practitioners • Vulnerable populations • Psychosocial health

Health services organization: trajectories of care, data and informatics innovations, learning systems
Vulnerable populations: high-risk, marginalized, immigrant / refugee patients
Patient-centered / patient-empowering interventions
Community partnerships for better health
Proximity care
Women's health

In the coming days, researchers, will be invited to participate in one of the workgroups identified by the research pillars.

The focus of the working groups will be to:

1. Clarify our research strengths and scientific ambitions, by defining goals and specific directions we should head for.
2. Target the critical capabilities required to achieve excellence in research (resources, expertise, etc.).

Each working group session will be a time investment of approximately 2 hours. We hope that many of you will contribute to this invaluable exercise that will shape the future strategic orientations of our Research Centre.

Once again, many thanks for your participation in this important process that will shape the future of the SMRC.

Christina Raneburger, Msc; MGP, MBA
Associate Director

C.A.R.E. COMPETITION ATTRACTING RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

We are proud to announce that **Dr Isabelle Leblanc** is the recipient of CARE Grant 2022 for the project: Too much pain doctor!

In the GMFU-St Mary, over 35% of its patients are not Canadian-born. Studies show that ethnoculturally diverse patients experience higher rates of undiagnosed mental health conditions. The presentation of their psychological issues can differ from what is taught in western medical schools.



The title "Too much pain, Doctor" stems from Dr Leblanc's observation that psychosocial suffering is often initially expressed as bodily pain. Discussions with other clinicians serving multicultural patients revealed a repertoire of cultural cues to detect psychological distress along with specific communication strategies to elicit them.

There is no formal mechanism for conveying this acquired knowledge to future family physicians. Dr Leblanc and her team propose to develop and test a training module that integrates the acquired knowledge of experienced clinicians about ethnocultural cues and communication strategies for detection and management of psychological distress into existing training on the patient-centered clinical method.

Project title: Too much pain doctor!": Training clinicians to detect expressions of psychological distress in patients of diverse ethnocultural groups

Amount awarded: \$30,000

Duration: 2 years

ABOUT C.A.R.E. GRANTS

The development of high-quality research is one of St. Mary Hospital Center top priorities, in light of its affiliation with McGill University.

In 2008, St. Mary's Research Centre and St. Mary's Hospital Foundation created the C.A.R.E. (Competition Attracting Research Excellence) Program to support projects that contribute towards the development of clinical and health services research capacity and have the potential to result in increased external research funding and peer-reviewed publications.

In particular, the aim of the C.A.R.E. program is to help clinical staff members interested in research gain valuable experience in designing and leading a research project that is attuned to the needs and priorities of the Hospital.



FONDATION DE
L'HÔPITAL
ST. MARY

ST. MARY'S
HOSPITAL
FOUNDATION

ONCOLOGY CAREER DEVELOPMENT AWARD



The St. Mary's Hospital Foundation, McGill University Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology, St. Mary's Research Centre (SMHC) and St. Mary's Oncology Department are proud to announce the inaugural recipient of the Oncology Career Development Award 2022: **Dr Khashayar Esfahani**.

Dr Esfahani is a well-established oncologist at the SMHC. He has founded one of Canada's largest collaborative efforts to study immune-related adverse events (irAEs).

This award will enable further study of irAEs through the iMmunotherapy and Immune-Related Adverse Events (MIRAE) project. This study aims at personalizing Immune checkpoint inhibitors (ICI) to each patient and exploring novel biomarkers and treatments.

It will allow the creation of:

- A biobank,
- A dedicated province-wide immunotherapy tumor board,
- A Canadian-wide application platform to discuss cases and exchange ideas between specialists.

The final goal is the integration SMHC under the umbrella of MIRAE, thus allowing cancer patients treated at our institution to benefit from these novel tools.



Dr. Esfahani completed his oncology training at McGill, following which he decided to pursue further research in the field of immune oncology.

His expertise is in the treatment of skin, head and neck, and renal cancers with a research focus on immune-related adverse events.

He co-leads one the largest Canadian multidisciplinary initiatives to study immune-related adverse events and has numerous key publications in this field. Source: McPeak-Sirois Group for Clinical Research in Breast Cancer Research

ACADEMIC OUTPUT

Grants

Geddes, M., & Yaffe, M. Addressing gender selection bias in aging research. McGill University - Healthy Brains, Healthy Lives - Discovery Fund for Interdisciplinary Research Program Theme 3. Amount received: \$25,000 CAD. December 2022 - June 2023.

Wilchesky M, Couture M, Yaffe MJ, Soulières M, et al. Piloting the Elder Abuse Suspicion Index-long-term care (EASI-ltc): A mixed methods implementation feasibility study. Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Amount received: \$202,725 CAD. October 2022-December 2023.

Publications

Bourdache LR, Ould Brahim L, Wasserman S, Nicolas Joseph M, Frati FYE, Belzile E, Lambert SD. [Evaluation of quality, readability, suitability, and usefulness](#) of online resources available to cancer survivors. Journal of Cancer Survivorship. 2023; doi: 10.1007/s11764-022-01318-5

Karami, V., Yaffe, MJ., & Rahimi, S. Early Detection of Alzheimer's Disease Assisted by AI Empowered Human-Robot Communication. In T. Shaikh, S. Hakak, T. Rasool, & M. Wasid (Eds.), Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare Systems: CRC Press, Taylor & Francis. 2023. [Book chapter]

McCusker J, Warburton RN, Lambert SD, Belzile E, de Raad M. [The Revised Identification of Seniors At Risk screening tool predicts readmission in older hospitalized patients: a cohort study](#). BMC Geriatr. 2022;22:888. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-1318480/v1> [Journal article]

Policy Statement / Guidelines

Beaulieu M, St-Martin K, Yaffe MJ. [Statement of the Société québécoise de gériatrie on elder abuse](#). 2022.

Online Educational Material

Yaffe MJ. Elder Abuse Suspicion Index. The Review Course in Family Medicine of CFPC www.youtube.com/@thereviewcourse

Trainees

Nina Morena, PhD candidate, was invited to participate at the SSO 2023 International Conference on Surgical Cancer Care.

Title: Are YouTube videos a reliable information source for young women with metastatic breast cancer?

Authors: Nina Morena, Yitzchok Ahisar, Xena Wang, Diana Nguyen, Carrie A. Rentschler, Ari N. Meguerditchian.

Conference: SO 2023 International Conference on Surgical Cancer Care, March 22 – 25, 2023, Boston, MA

Nina will present a poster about the information for young women with metastatic breast cancer and YouTube videos. She was invited after winning first place e-poster presentation at CSF in September 2022. The poster will be part of the Global Partner Poster Presentations.

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 III 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 III 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 III, 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 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]

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:
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SPECIAL EVENTS

In collaboration with McGill University, special lectures presented this month*

<https://mcgill.zoom.us/j/88577307205>

**Towards excellence in
cancer control
research**

Anita Koushik PhD

January 12, 2023



Dr Anita Koushik will present her research on cancer in females.

- Influence of modifiable lifestyle factors on cancer risk and survivorship
- Biological factors considerations
- Secular trends in lifestyle and other behaviours

Dr Koushik is a full professor at the University of Montreal (Department of Social and Preventive Medicine) and a researcher at the CHUM Research Center (CRCHUM) in the Health Risks axis.

**Leveraging the power
of the community
to improve cancer
survivorship**

**Sheila N. Garland PhD,
R Psych**

January 19, 2023



Dr Garland will describe how her partnerships with people with lived experience and community cancer organizations has helped to:

1. build the evidence base for the effectiveness of interventions to improve sleep health and other symptoms in cancer survivors;
2. understand and advocate for the needs of young adults with cancer; and
3. increase access to research opportunities and evidence-based treatments through virtual and mobile technologies.

Dr. Sheila Garland is a registered clinical psychologist and associate professor of psychology and oncology at Memorial University and Senior Scientist with the Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute.

**Where are the missing
cancer?
How the pandemic will
keep impacting cancer
prevention and care**

Talía Malagón PhD

February 2, 2023



This presentation will focus on how decision modeling can help predict and prepare for changes in the future, how decisions made today can influence cancer tomorrow, and what are the data gaps that still exist for assessing and improving future trends in cancer, especially in more vulnerable populations.

Dr Talía Malagón is an epidemiologist, mathematical modeller, and academic associate in the Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology at McGill University.

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

THURSDAYS
SMRC SCIENTIFIC SERIES
12PM-1PM

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



**Implementing Strengths-Based
Nursing and healthcare
in our CIUSSS*
John William Kayser PhD**

January 26, 2023

John William Kayser, RN, PhD, CPMHN(C)® is a Senior Nursing Advisor in the Nursing Directorate of the Montréal West Island CIUSSS, a member of the SBNH Clinical Partnership Group, and a lecturer at the Ingram School of Nursing, McGill University.

Strengths-Based Nursing and Healthcare Leadership (SBNH-L) provides a value-driven philosophy intending to humanize our fragmented healthcare system. This approach is founded upon a unique partnership across three health networks and their academic centre, the Ingram School of Nursing, McGill that shares a common goal and commitment to a culture of lifelong learning and excellence in nursing.

The challenge is how to translate this philosophy into nursing leadership and clinical practice, which targets behaviours, beliefs and attitudes of care among diverse stakeholders at all levels of our healthcare system.

The objective of this presentation is to describe the strategic approach to implementation of SBNH at the Montréal West Island CIUSSS and across three University Health Networks in Montreal.

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

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