



FROM THE SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR



Dear members of the SMRC community,

In this issue, we continue our overview of the SMRC research domains and turn our focus towards the Older Adult Care area of expertise. SMRC has a solid foundation in this field and our researchers have made meaningful contributions to the field over the past decades, notably by studying how emergency departments can better serve this vulnerable population.

As we look towards the future, Older Adult Care researchers are focusing on innovative technology to offer non-pharmacological solutions for maintaining physical and cognitive health in the target population. Dr. Julia Chabot, an SMH geriatrician, recently received a CARE grant to study a virtual reality-based music intervention to improve older adults' mental health in acute inpatient settings. Turn to page 4 to learn more about this important work.

Dr. Jennifer Mutch, from the SMHC Division of Orthopaedic Surgery, also received a CARE grant for her work on treatments that can improve outcomes for patients receiving total hip and/or knee arthroplasty. While Dr. Mutch's work falls more under the Surgery research domain (which we will highlight in our January newsletter), her research also directly benefits older patients and is a good example of the interdisciplinarity and complementarity that exists in the four SMRC research domains. SMRC is proud to support both of the recently funded CARE projects and we encourage researchers to consider this funding opportunity for their work at St. Mary's Hospital.

With this being our last issue before the end of year holiday period, I would like to take the opportunity to extend my best wishes for health and happiness to our community. We look forward to connecting again in 2024, when we will formally launch our Research Support Hub and publish our annual Blue Report. Exciting things ahead, stay tuned!

Ari N. Meguerditchian, MD
Scientific Director

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Older Adults Research at SMRC



Exploring the unique medical, social, and psychological needs of older individuals, SMRC's Older Adult Care research domain delves into innovative solutions for maintaining physical and cognitive health, managing chronic conditions, and addressing social isolation in the target population.

SMRC's legacy in this field of research includes the development and validation of tools to identify older adults at increased risk of adverse functional outcomes after an emergency department visit. The Identification of Seniors at Risk ([ISAR](#)) screening tool, developed by Dr. Jane McCusker, continues to be used in emergency rooms around to world and is supported by a large body of evidence demonstrating its useful properties.

Ongoing work to improve geriatric emergency department care

Another important contribution of SMRC researchers in the field includes the work done to improve the care and services provided for older patients in emergency departments (EDs). Various tools, including the [Elder-Friendly ED Self-Assessment tool](#) allow clinicians and managers to identify areas where improving services for older patients is desirable.

Dr. Rick Mah, emergency physician at St. Mary's Hospital, is conducting research into how older adults use EDs in Quebec. In particular, he is looking at patients who visit the ED frequently over a short period of time to see if different patterns exist and what factors may predict these patterns. The goal is to gain insight into what interventions may reduce repeat visits to the ED and improve care for our geriatric patients.

Future directions

SMRC scientists in this domain are now expanding research initiatives towards:

- Technological interventions enhancing mental health, cognition, and quality of life, as well as supporting aging in the community and decreasing length of stay for patients admitted to hospital.
- Real-world solutions (e.g. care processes and training) for multidisciplinary teams, including geriatrics clinical healthcare team, older adult and caregiver representatives, community organizations, industry partners, and long-term care facilities.
- Validation and implementation of non-pharmacological therapies.

SMRC-affiliated scientists in this domain include:

- Dr. Julia Chabot (Geriatrics)
- Dr. Shek Fung (Geriatrics)
- Dr. Sofia Nene (Geriatrics)
- Dr. Rick Mah (Emergency Services)
- Dr. Mark Yaffe (Family Medicine, see his work on [Elder Abuse](#))
- Dr. Maryse Larouche (Urogynecology)

Older Adults Research at SMRC



Examples of recent projects:

Using non-pharmacological interventions to address insomnia

Researchers have conducted assessments of noise load for patients admitted to geriatric care units. Excessive noise load can lead to decreased sleep quality, which can impact cognitive function and lead to physical and emotional distress. Additionally, noise levels can be distracting to health-care professionals as well, potentially leading to decreased productivity and an increased incidence of errors. When the intensity of ambient noise in hospitals exceeds recommended standards, interventions and real-world solutions are needed.

A potential solution involves the use of music interventions. Dr. Julia Chabot and her team have completed a study exploring the impact of a musical intervention on sleep on the geriatric unit at SMH.

Dr. Chabot recently received a CARE grant in order to perform a feasibility study to assess a novel Virtual Reality based music intervention to improve older adults' mental health in acute inpatient settings. A feasibility, open-label randomized controlled trial will be launched shortly.

Understanding health care professionals' needs

Several projects have also evaluated implemented clinical and care practices to determine their impact on health care professionals and to explore and propose possible directions for future research. In one recent project, researchers evaluated the "communauté de pratique des médecins en CHSLD (CPMC)" model. The model was created during the pandemic when health-care professionals working in isolation at long-term care centres applied new strategies allowing them to connect remotely with teams across regions to share lessons learned. This model for multidisciplinary, multi-site learning and interaction has proven to be beneficial for stakeholders and recommendations for future evolutions of the model have been presented at relevant forums.

Upcoming work

During SMRC's recent strategic review, research leaders in the Older Adults domain identified priorities for the coming years. Plans include:

- A feasibility trial on robotics for Behavioral and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia
- Exploring technology for patient reported outcome screening
- Leveraging telemedicine for post-discharge continuity of care

In the pursuit of healthier aging, SMRC's Older Adults research domain not only addresses current challenges but also envisions a future where technology and innovation play pivotal roles in enhancing the well-being of older individuals.

2023 CARE Grant Recipients Announced

This year, two research recipients were awarded the St. Mary's Research Centre's **Competition Attracting Research Excellence (CARE) Grant**. The CARE Grant research program began in 2008 with the overarching goal of empowering the clinical and research community at St. Mary's Hospital. The program supports projects for up to 2 years with objectives of developing and improving services delivered to SMH's patients and families.

Care Grant Recipients

Dr. Julia Chabot and Dr. Harmehr Sekhon received CARE funding for an open-label feasibility trial examining music intervention in a clinical setting to improve cognitive function amongst older adults. The use of Virtual Reality-based musical interventions has been found to be tolerable, comfortable, and safe for geriatric patients and can improve mental health and shorten hospital stays. This study assesses tolerability and acceptability factors in addition to the effects of musical VR on positive emotions, pain, and mental health in older adult inpatients.

Dr. Jennifer Mutch and her team also received funding for their project investigating the increased use of tranexamic acid (TXA) for total knee arthroplasty (TKA) and total hip arthroplasty (THA). Despite the physical toll TKA and THA surgeries take on patients, the procedures can often be conducted during the day with increasingly shortened lengths of stay. TXA can be safely used to reduce blood loss and lower recovery time. At St. Mary's Hospital, the current standard of care for TXA is 1 gram, but this randomized control trial examines the benefits of increasing this post-operative dosage.

2024 CARE Grant Applications

Researchers interested in applying for the 2024 CARE Grant program can contact research.stmary@ssss.gouv.qc.ca for more information on the application process.

Dr. Malagón receives recognition from the CCRA and CPAC

Dr. Talia Malagón received a special commendation from the Canadian Cancer Research Alliance and the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer for her involvement with the Patient Involvement in Cancer Research Program (PIP). PIP provides patient partners with an opportunity to learn about leading-edge science from Canada's cancer researchers and trainees. PIP's science partners help patient partners build their knowledge of cancer research by interpreting terminology, concepts, and explaining research methodology. Dr. Malagón was recognized for her contribution to supporting patient engagement in cancer research.

Recruitment Updates

Scientific Information Officer

St. Mary's Research Centre is currently in the process of recruiting a Scientific Information Officer to support the activities of the recently announced Research Support Hub. The Scientific Information Officer will fulfill our goal of shaping a healthier future through scientific excellence by working alongside SMRC researchers and tracking productivity data through all stages of the research cycle.

More information about the job posting can be found [here](#).

Assistant Professor (Research), Older Adult Care

St. Mary's Research Centre is in the final stages of appointing a new Assistant Professor to McGill University's Division of Geriatric Medicine within the Department of Medicine. The chosen candidate will be based at SMRC. Not only will they contribute to our mission of advancing patient-centred care; they will also hold a specific focus on the use of digital technology in the older adult population.

Qualified candidates were interviewed by our Selection Committee and the final candidate has been selected. The Selection Committee is currently sending our recommendations for the selected candidate to the Department Chair & Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for final reviews. An official announcement will come in the New Year.

Selection Committee:

- Dr. Julia Chabot, Geriatric medicine
- Dr. Sofia Nene, Geriatric medicine
- Dr. Jose Morais, Geriatric medicine
- Dr. Ari Meguerditchian, General Surgery
- Najia Hachimi-Idrissi, CIUSSS
- Dr. Anthony Albers, Orthopedic Surgery

Academic Output

Peer reviewed publications

Special issue of *Healthcare Policy*

Dr. Jeannie Haggerty and her team published the results of an ambitious pan-Canadian status report regarding health and social services connections for patients with complex care needs. Several papers are available in the issue. This work was supported by St. Mary's Hospital Foundation via Dr. Haggerty's research chair and discretionary funding.

See the full issue at: <https://www.longwoods.com/publications/healthcare-policy/27172>

Dionne, É., Haggerty, J., Scott, C. M., Doucet, S., Stewart, T., Quesnel-Vallée, A., . . . Couturier, Y. (2023). Toward Comprehensive Care Integration in Canada: Delphi Process Findings from Researchers, Clinicians, Patients and Decision Makers. *Healthcare Policy*, 19(Special Issue), 24-38.

Dionne, É., Oelke, N. D., Doucet, S., Scott, C. M., Montelpare, W., Charlton, P., . . . Haggerty, J. (2023). Innovative Programs with Multi-Service Integration for Children and Youth with High Functional Health Needs. *Healthcare Policy*, 19(Special Issue), 65-77.

Haggerty, J., & Scott, C. M. (2023). Patient Partners Respond to High-Level Findings on the Connectedness of Health and Social Services across Canada. *Healthcare Policy*, 19(Special Issue), 99-104.

Haggerty, J., Scott, C. M., Quesnel-Vallée, A., Stewart, T., Dionne, É., Farmanara, N., & Couturier, Y. (2023). Have Primary Care Renewal Initiatives in Canada Increased Comprehensive Care for Patients with Complex Care Needs? Yes and No. *Healthcare Policy*, 19(Special Issue), 53-64.

Scott, C. M., Haggerty, J., Couturier, Y., Quesnel-Vallée, A., Stewart, T., & Dionne, É. (2023). Inconsistent Governance Structures for Health and Social Services Limit Service Integration for Patients with Complex Care Needs. *Healthcare Policy*, 19(Special Issue), 39-52.

Stewart, T., Dionne, É., Urquhart, R., Oelke, N. D., Couturier, Y., Scott, C. M., & Haggerty, J. (2023). Integrating Health and Social Care for Community-Dwelling Older Adults: A Description of 16 Canadian Programs. *Healthcare Policy*, 19(Special Issue), 78-87.

Stewart, T., Dionne, É., Urquhart, R., Oelke, N. D., McIsaac, J. L., Scott, C. M., & Haggerty, J. (2023). Lack of Publicly Available Documentation Limits Spread of Integrated Care Innovations in Canada. *Healthcare Policy*, 19(Special Issue), 88-98.

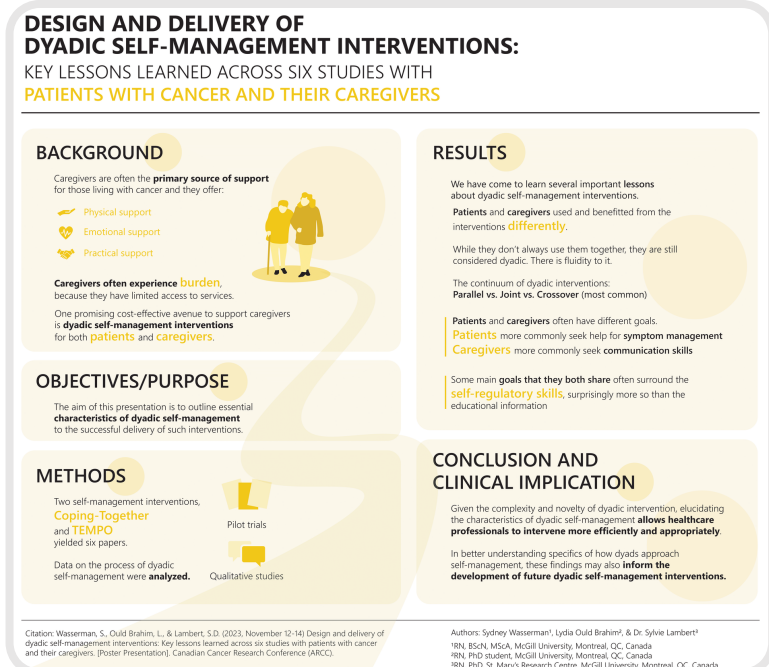
Academic Output

Conference presentations and posters

Lambert, S., Nugus, P., Haggerty, J., Yaffe, M., Hijal, T., Kildea, J. Rosberger, Z., Tremblay, D., Magalhaes, M., Jean Julien, K., Dantica, J. L. (2023, October 20-23). Real-world implementation barriers and facilitators of electronic patient-reported outcomes (PROs) in oncology in Quebec: A qualitative study [Poster Presentation]. Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology 35th Annual Conference 2023, Niagara Falls, Canada.

Wasserman, S., Ould Brahim, L., & Lambert, S.D. (2023, November 12-14) Design and delivery of dyadic self-management interventions: Key lessons learned across six studies with patients with cancer and their caregivers [Poster Presentation]. Canadian Cancer Research Conference (CCRA).

Photo: Student Sydney Wasserman presented this poster on dyadic self-management interventions at the Canadian Cancer Research Conference.



Other SMRC researchers (Dr. Malagón, Dr. Meguerditchian, and Nina Morena) also presented at the Canadian Cancer Research Conference. See [previous issues of our newsletter](#) for more information on their presentations.

St. Mary's Research Centre Scientific Series



Scientific Series Recap: Thursday, December 7th, 2023

Integration of digital health and data to achieve patient-centered care

Dr. Sara Ahmed, PT, PhD



Incorporating digital health and data feedback into healthcare methodologies is integral to improving the quality of care for patients. On December 7th, 2023, Dr. Sara Ahmed shared her expertise and research into the BRILLIANT learning health community project, a system that uses a variety of multidisciplinary data-driven tactics to achieve patient-centred care.

Key takeaways from the presentation included:

- Integrating rehabilitation into patient-centred care specifically refers to healthcare systems addressing the needs of individuals, enabling them to return to their maximum levels of function in regular life.
- Using evaluation methods or tools rooted in data and digital solutions are accessible and effective in gaining feedback from patients. This data should then be shared and solutions integrated into daily practice, with the goal of tailoring care to each patient.
- The continuity of collaborative spirit makes Learning Health Systems unique. Having a community that is willing to work together, understand and embrace uncertainty regarding the end result, and leverage shared services infrastructure allows the focus to remain on patients and their experiences.

Dr. Ahmed's work on the BRILLIANT learning health community project resonates deeply with SMRC's overarching mission as a research centre. We aim to align efforts across various disciplines to improve patient care standards and positively impact the communities we serve.

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

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Form: <https://forms.office.com/r/G55ZuLS11Q>

Past Events



McPeak-Sirois Event Recap

The McPeak-Sirois Group and the CIUSSS de l'Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal



On November 20th 2023, the McPeak-Sirois Group acknowledged the commitment of CIUSSS de l'Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal – St. Mary's Hospital as an affiliate member of the Group at a plaque unveiling ceremony.

St. Mary's Hospital's senior management, represented by Mrs. Najia Hachimi-Idrissi, President

and Assistant General Manager, and Dr. Ari Meguerditchian, Scientific Director of St. Mary's Research Centre, welcomed St. Mary's Hospital's participation in the Group.

As Dr. Meguerditchian pointed out, "Clinical research is essential. It enables us to offer patients innovative alternatives to traditional treatments. By taking part in this research consortium, we are giving our patients better access to breast cancer research protocols."

Dr. Meguerditchian also highlighted the involvement of the Group's scientific committee of Dr. Khashayar Esfahani and Dr. Nick Meti, both medical oncologists at SMHC. Dr Adrian Langleben, medical oncologist, also took part in the ceremony, which was attended by several other collaborators from the research center.

Co-founders Susan McPeak and Charles Sirois took the opportunity to reiterate that the Group, by joining forces with its eleven member hospitals, brings real benefits to breast cancer patients in Quebec.

From left to right: Dr. Ari Meguerditchian, Scientific Director, St. Mary's Research Center; Dr. Nick Meti, Medical Oncologist, St. Mary's Hospital Center; Ms.

Susan McPeak, Co-Founder, McPeak-Sirois Group; Dr. Adrian Langleben, Medical Oncologist and Head, Department of Oncology, St. Mary's Hospital Center; Mr. Charles Sirois, Co-Founder, McPeak-Sirois Group; Dr. Khashayar Esfahani, Medical Oncologist, St. Mary's Hospital Center; Ms. Najia Hachimi-Idrissi, Deputy CEO, CIUSSS de l'Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal; Fabienne Germail, Assistant Director, Access to Hospital Care and Director, Cancer Program



Upcoming Events



Thursday, December 14th Scientific Series: Dr. Elena Parvez



Centre de recherche de St. Mary
St. Mary's Research Centre

INNOVATION SOCIALE: DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DE SERVICES DE PROXIMITÉ AU CHANGEMENT DE SYSTÈMES



Dr. Elena Parvez
MD FRCSC

Dr. Elena Parvez is a Surgical Oncologist at the Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Center in Hamilton, Ontario and Assistant Professor of Surgery at McMaster University. The focus of her clinical practice is in breast cancer surgery.

**At the end
of the session,
participants will:**

- Understand the differences that exist in quality of care measures between immigrant and non-immigrant women in Ontario.
- Understand the limitations of the data available on immigrant populations and avenues for future research.



12PM
14.12.2023



*SMRC Scientific Series presentations are Continuing Professional Development activities
recognized by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada*

2023 Retrospective



Dear SMRC Community,

As we near the end of another transformative year, St. Mary's Research Centre would like to extend a heartfelt thank you for all your collaborative efforts and unwavering dedication towards fulfilling our goals both as a research institution and as an organization serving the community.

We've celebrated numerous achievements across the centre this year, including these key cornerstones:

- Completion of the Strategic Plan outline for the next 5 years, including identifying four critical research domains of expertise and aligning our strategic priorities to embody our values of inclusivity, collaboration, transparency, and driving impactful outcomes.
- Recruitment of 2 researchers within our community: Dr. Talía Malagón with McGill University's Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology; and Dr. Anita Koushik, inaugural holder of the Research Chair in Community Oncology at SMRC.
- Consolidation of leadership portfolios (Associate Director of Strategic Partnerships and Associate Director of Administration) to better suit the needs of the research community and the wider CDN community.

Our comprehensive annual report will be available in the New Year with more insights on our impacts and progress from the past year.

As we look forward to the New Year, our vision remains steadfast: to further integrate our SMRC research community within Quebec's wider clinical and university research network, and to connect deeply with our community through our commitments to scientific progress and academic excellence. Thank you for your continued support of SMRC's mission to cater to our community and elicit positive change in healthcare practices; we are incredibly proud of everything we've accomplished together thus far. A particular note of thanks to St. Mary's Hospital Foundation, our partner in advancing academic excellence at St. Mary's.

Here's to a new year filled with endless possibilities of shaping a healthier, brighter future.

With gratitude,
St. Mary's Research Centre