

St. Mary's Research Centre

FEBRUARY 2022

FROM THE SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR



Dear members of the SMRC community,

February 4th is World Cancer Day. In addition to remembering loved ones lost to this disease, this day provides an opportunity to look forward to what is being so that we're able to put an end to cancer. St-Mary's Research Centre is an important contributor in this fight.

St-Mary's Research Centre is an important contributor in this fight. In past issues of the newsletter, we've showcased the impressive patient-centered research agenda lead by Dr Sylvie Lambert, who's work gives a voice to cancer patients. With the current issue, we shine the spotlight on the oncology clinical trials program.

With support from St-Mary's Foundation, the cancer care team led by Dr Adrian Langleben has demonstrated that hospital size is not an obstacle to making cutting edge therapeutics available to cancer patients. The recruitment of Franca Cantini, a highly experienced clinical trial program manager, will accelerate growth and allow the SMRC to leverage network partnerships in bringing more life-saving treatment options supported by research.

I take advantage of this opportunity to express my gratitude to the clinical trials personnel, doctors, nurses and pharmacists who have been able to maintain access to treatments available through research despite significant obstacles over the past 2 years, thank you for your dedication!

Stay safe, stay strong.

Ari Meguerditchian

IN THIS ISSUE

Highlighting Oncology Research - 2

Oncology Clinical Trials - 3

Nomination Oncology Research - 3

SMRC News - 4

Academic Output - 4

Staff News - 5

Lunch & Learn Calendar - 5

Employment, Funding Opportunities - 6

Call for papers - 6

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Clinical Trials at St. Mary's Hospital Centre :

more that 25 years of advancing cancer treatments for patients

For World Cancer Day, we met with Dr. Adrian Langleben, Head of the Oncology Department at St. Mary's Hospital Center (SMHC) to learn more about the history and future of cancer trials at our hospital

When did the clinical trials program start?

Clinical trials are studies in which people help doctors find ways to develop new treatments and medications for diseases and conditions. 25 years ago, SMHC joined McGill University in a cancer clinical trials program. When the CIUSSS structure developed in 2015, the dynamic changed and SMHC had to rebuild the program within the new structure. There is now a team of seven physicians leading protocols in the area of lung, pancreatic, colon, breast and bladder cancers.

What are the challenges of doing a trial in a smaller hospital?

The culture of clinical trials is usually not as developed in smaller hospitals. In the past three years, SMHC rapidly upgraded nursing skills, and pharmacy data entry and quality control systems. With the Research and Ethic Committee, SMHC is a very competent institution for clinical trials. Despite the difficulties, we were able to show that it was possible to conduct clinical trials in a smaller hospital. This is in large part because everyone on the team believed that it was important to make research trials available for St-Mary's cancer patients. Nurses, doctors, pharmacists, and trial personnel came together towards a common goal.

”

The impact of
the results of several studies
was so important,
that these became the new
standard of care
for patients.

”

Why is it important to conduct these trials at SMH?

Clinical trials bring significant advantages for patients. Patients are able to receive comprehensive care and advanced treatment in the same institution. They interact with healthcare staff they know and who knows them. They have access to modern therapy, innovative treatment approaches, and new drugs that often or not yet approved by Health Canada for general use.

Often these new therapies can prove to be very effective, which is a significant advantage in cancer treatment and survivorship. For SMHC, clinical trials allow its physicians to stay ahead in cancer care, a rapidly evolving medical field. Access to cutting edge therapy makes a difference in survival.

Can you tell us a bit about your successes: how many trials, how many patients?

By the end of 2022, we hope to have up to 20 active trials. We have approximately 35 patients enrolled on the studies so far and the target is 60 per year. Over the years, the impact of the results of several studies was so important, that these results became the new standard of care for patients.

What about partnerships with other hospitals or collaborative groups?

Partnerships are very important so studies can be done in a collaborative way with other institutions. They allow the health care team to plan the cancer care trajectory ahead of time and ensure that the treatment is coordinated according to the patients' needs (special surgery, radiotherapy, etc.) and to provide continuous monitoring. For instance, last year, St-Mary's joined the McPeak-Sirois collaborative trials group. In addition to the recognition that comes with this membership, we'll be able to share knowledge and experience in addition to making more trials available to cancer patients treated at SMHC.

On February 4, 2022, World Cancer Day recognized the power of knowledge. For 25 years, SMHC clinical trial team is dedicated to reducing the global impact of cancer. It aims to effectively transform discoveries into new knowledge and treatments for our patients and our community. Thank you Dr. Langleben and team!

Oncology Research

Dr. Adrian Langleben, Head of Oncology
Dr. Richard Dalfen
Dr. Khashayar Esfahani
Dr. Nicholas Meti
Dr. Laura Habib
Dr. Carolyne Elbaz
Dr. Jaroslav Prchal

Franca Cantini, Program Manager, Clinical Trial Operations for Oncology
Marisa Cantini, Clinical Regulatory Coordinator
Rachelle Dumas, Clinical Research Coordinator
Daniel Small, Clinical Research Coordinator
Mohamed-Amine Senhaji, Clinical Regulatory Coordinator
Yaminee Patel, Administrative Agent

ONCOLOGY CLINICAL TRIALS

Lung cancer

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 oncurrent chemoradiation therapy alone in participants with newly diagnosed treatment-naïve limited-stage small cell lung cancer (LS-SCLC). [MK 7339-013]

A phase 2 precision oncology study of biomarker-directed, Pembrolizumab- (MK-3475, SCH 900457) based combination therapy for advanced non-Small cell lung cancer (KEYNOTE-495; KeyImPaCT). [MK-3475-495]

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]

Contact information: franca.cantini.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca

FRANCA CANTINI JOINS THE CLINICAL TRIALS TEAM



The Research Centre is happy to announce the nomination of Franca Cantini as Program Manager, Clinical Trials Operations. Franca brings with her over 25 years of experience in clinical research, ranging from operations, patient recruitment and advocacy, research ethics, regulatory affairs to interactions with industry. She has held strategic positions in clinical trials development across the McGill network, including the Jewish General Hospital and the McGill University Health Centre, where her contributions have allowed to consolidate trials operations, streamline processes and ensure that more patients benefit from innovative therapeutics in a safe and efficient manner.

Franca is also a sought-after educator. As a Faculty Lecturer, she has taught McGill medical and nursing students on the ethics of research. In addition, she played a critical role in developing training modules for Research and Ethic Bureau members across the province through the MSSS- Ethics Unit. Her addition to the SMRC team will allow the oncology clinical trials program to have a strong base for sustained growth.

SMRC NEWS

ANNE-SOPHIE GIGNAC AWARDED A PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL PRIZE!

Anne-Sophie Gignac won the 2021 Council on Anthropology and Reproduction Award, affiliated with the American Anthropological Association. Anne-Sophie is one of the few Canadians to have been awarded a prize last December and the only one from a Quebec university. Her article based on her masters thesis on the medical experience of women in Quebec who choose to undergo voluntary sterilization. She is now working on a manuscript for publication.

More on the [UdeM Nouvelles](#)

Anne-Sophie joined the SMRC in April 2021 as a Research Assistant. She is part of the e-IMPAQc team for the project led by Dr Sylvie Lambert and Mona Magalhaes. Anne-Sophie holds a bachelor's degree in Anthropology and is completing her master's degree in Medical Anthropology at University of Montreal.

THE WAY FORWARD: THE HERITAGE PROJECT

The Heritage Project is finalizing its first phase: interviews. If you would like to contribute your view on the evolution of the SMRC or the History of Research at St.Mary's Hospital, please email us. We want to hear from you!

ACADEMIC OUTPUT

Belval JR, **Lambert SD**, Miller C-A, Boudreault P, Grosse, J. An ID card allowing access to municipal services for migrants with precarious status in Montreal and its influence on social inclusion: A Mixed methods study [e-poster presentation]. Consortium of Universities for Global Health's 13th Annual Conference: Health People, Health Planet, Social Justice, Washington, DC, USA. March 21-25, 2022. <https://www.cugh2022.org>

Belval JR, **Lambert SD**, Miller C-A, Boudreault P, Grosse, J. An ID card allowing access to municipal services for migrants with precarious status in Montreal and its influence on social inclusion: A Mixed methods study [Panel discussion]. International Union for Health Promotion and Education: Promoting Policies for Health, Well-being, and Equity, Montreal, Qc, Canada. May 15-19, 2022) <https://iuhpe2022.com>

Lambert SD, Duncan LR, Culos-Reed SN, Hallward L, Higano CS, **Loban E**, Katz A, **de Raad M**, Ellis J, Korman MB, Sears C, Ibberson C, Walker L, **Belzile E**, Saha-Chaudhuri P, McTaggart-Cowan H, Peacock S. [Feasibility, acceptability, and clinical significance of a dyadic, web-based, psychosocial and physical activity self-management program \(TEMPO\) tailored to the needs of men with prostate cancer and their caregivers: A multi-center randomized pilot trial](#). Current Oncology. 2022;29(2):785-804.

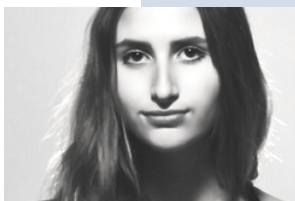
Academic output in January at SMRC

Manuscripts under review

STAFF NEWS



Dr. Laura Tatiana Rodriguez Torres joined the e-IMPAQc team as a site research assistant under the supervision of Dr. Sylvie Lambert. She will be working on the implementation and evaluation of e-IMPAQc at MUHC. Before joining the e-IMPAQc team, Laura obtained her medical degree from Universidad de Los Andes (Colombia), where she participated in several research projects focused on pediatric and migrant populations.



Sydney Wasserman BSc(N), RN, is working on the e-IMPAQc project as well as the Coping Together Advanced project under the supervision of Dr. Sylvie Lambert. She is currently working on the creation and integration of edits for the factsheets on e-IMPAQc, supporting the symptom tracking and management program to improve cancer care. e-IMPAQc stands for the Electronic Implementation of Patient- and caregiver-reported outcomes Across cancer centres in Quebec. She is also working on qualitative interview data collection with patients with cancer and their caregivers. Sydney graduated from McGill University in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing, where she has continued to study for her current Master's degree in Advanced Practice Nursing. [LinkedIn](#)



Jennifer De Blois, B. Comm., RN, s'est jointe à l'équipe d'e-IMPAQc dirigée par Dr Sylvie Lambert. Elle travaille conjointement avec les cliniciens des centres hospitaliers afin d'assurer le recrutement et le suivi des patients lors des phases d'implantation et d'expérimentation du projet. Jennifer détient une expérience clinique en soins critiques et poursuit ses études en Sciences infirmières à l'Université McGill. Elle possède un baccalauréat en Communication ainsi qu'un diplôme d'études collégiales en Soins infirmiers. [LinkedIn](#)

Dr. Nadjib Mokraoui

Dr. Nadjib Mokraoui MD, MSc will be working with Dr. Jeannie Haggerty on the IMPACT and Pre-consent projects. Nadjib will be responsible for ethical aspects for the IMPACT project and will do an environmental scan of Quebec initiatives related to the pre-consent of patients to be contacted for research projects. Nadjib is also the coordinator of the [McGill's Practice Based Research Network](#) (PBRN) in the McGill Department of Family Medicine. He worked at the SMRC as a research assistant for Dr. Haggerty's team during his master studies. Nadjib holds a doctorate in medicine from the Faculty of Medicine of Algiers and a master's degree in clinical sciences from the Université de Sherbrooke.

March 24

[Helen-Maria Vasiliadis PhD,](#)

Faculté de médecine et des sciences de la santé
Université de Sherbrooke

April 21

Rebecca MacDonald & Team
Direction de l'Enseignement et de la recherche
Montreal West Island CIUSSS

May 19

[Dr. Hannah Schwartz](#)

Department of Psychiatry
St. Mary's Hospital Center

June 16

[Marie-Pierre Gagnon PhD](#)

Faculté des sciences infirmières
Université Laval

COMING UP!
LUNCH &
LEARN

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

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

[IT Consultant](#)

[Research Assistant - Qualitative Analyst](#)

[Research Assistants \(4 positions\)](#)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

[C.A.R.E. Grants](#)

[Project Grants Spring 2022 - CIHR](#)

February 15, 2022
letter of intent

February 16, 2022
letter of intent

April 29, 2022
full application

March 16, 2022
full application



FONDATION DE
L'HÔPITAL
ST. MARY

ST. MARY'S
HOSPITAL
FOUNDATION



NEW CIHR INSTITUTE ON AGING

A session will provide an overview of key research priorities for the coming years and engage in a discussion on your thoughts and needs for the future of research on aging in Canada.

You can [register](#) by selecting one of four date options: CIHR Institute of Aging Research Community Engagement Session. Note that the session on March 17, 2022 is a bilingual session with simultaneous interpretation provided.

CALL FOR PAPERS & POSTERS

The Canadian Organization for Gender and Sex Research was founded in 2020 to the forge a transformative, transdisciplinary field of Sex & Gender Science. This year's conference will be held May 29-31 in Montreal, QC, Canada and is entitled: "Bringing Gender and Sex Together:

Transdisciplinary Theories and Methodologies." We are currently seeking symposia and poster submission from trainees and faculty conducting sex and gender research. To learn more about this organisation and the conference, please visit: <https://cogsresearch.ca/meetings/2022-about-the-meeting/>. Deadline: March 5, 2022



research.stmary@ssss.gouv.qc.ca
514.345.3511 ext. 5060
© St Mary's Research Centre, 2022