



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

Novembre / November 2021



Dear colleagues and members of the SMRC community,

With this edition of the newsletter, we place the spotlight on two clinical teams from St-Mary's community who have decided to integrate scientific advancement to the daily care they provide two patients. You'll find out about the expanding portfolio of clinical trials that make St-Mary's Oncology an increasingly important partner in the Montreal cancer research landscape. You'll also learn about innovative, patient-centered research led by the orthopedics team at St-Mary's. These and other clinically-driven research initiatives that we'll be reporting on in the coming months reflect the increasing importance given to academic development across St-Mary's, something that we can be proud of.

The November newsletter also highlights initiatives recently launched to ensure staff wellness. Specialized research professionals are the SMRC's most important asset. Over the past 20 months, a number of measures were taken to support our teams. With the relaxing of public health measures, the SMRC was finally able to have its first in-person Wellness Day. In addition, we have recently signed an agreement with Lift, an innovative online platform that provides a number of personalized individual and group initiatives promoting health and wellness. Of course, this would not be possible without the support of our most important ally, the St-Mary's Hospital Foundation.

Enjoy your read and stay safe!

Ari Meguerditchian
Scientific Director, SMRC

Our employee health – At the heart of a new partnership with LIFT

The SMRC has partnered up with LIFT to offer a program for mental and physical health to our teams. Working remotely or in hybrid mode for the last 20 months, it was important to find ways to connect, recharge and take care of each other. This is just the first part in a series of steps taken in our employee wellness program. The customized wellness program that was developed in partnership with LIFT specifically for members of the SMRC community includes:

- Access personalized programs created by experts to reach your goals

- Chat with a coach for guidance every step of the way
- Get the motivation and supervision from coaches in live small group classes
- Reduce stress and feel restored in weekly broadcast Mindfulness classes

On Friday October 22, after 19 months of pandemic, a Wellness Day was organized. SMRC staff came together for breakfast, mindfulness session, walk and lunch on the Mont-Royal. The SMRC wishes to thank all its staff for their dedication, resilience and team spirit.



Lunch at Lac aux castors.

Left to right - Front row: Isabelle Crépeau, Cindy Ibberson, Maddie Leggatt

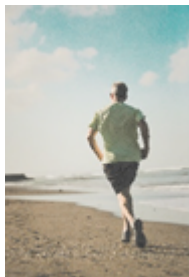
Middle row: Lisa Starr, Vanessa Giggs, Manon de Raad, Krisen Jean-Julien

Ariana Lazaris, Sandhya Baskaran, Ilja Ormel

Last row: Eric Belzile

Research program highlights:

Dr. Anthony Albers and the orthopaedic day surgery pilot program



The Pilot Orthopaedic *Day Surgery Program* under the lead of [Dr. Anthony Albers](#), (hip and knee arthroplasty; arthroscopic knee surgery), has met its first milestone - *One year mark* in June 2021. The overall objective of this program is to improve outcomes for eligible patients by decreasing the length of stay in hospital, speeding up early recovery and improving pain control.

The program is supported by funds from the St-Mary's Hospital Foundation and brings together employees from surgical planning, surgical day centre, recovery, orthopaedic surgeons from SMHC and the outpatient coordinator for patient follow –up. There have been 146 outpatient joint replacements, both hip and knee between June 2020 and June 2021). Patients have been receiving telephone follow-up after their surgeries and pre-operative preparation from the team at SMHC.

The program has showed reduced hospital readmission rates, reduced overall costs and low complication rates while receiving positive feedback from patients. The pilot will soon be transitioned to standard practice and is continuing with day surgeries joint replacements for eligible patients.

Part of the St. Mary's Orthopaedic team composed of Dr. Ronald Dimentberg, Dr. Anthony Albers, Dr. Jennifer Mutch and Dr. Moreno Morelli is also collaborating with the JGH, Verdun and Sacré-Coeur hospitals:

- Arthroscopic Shoulder Surgery, JGH (PI:Dr. Ana Velly, local investigator: Dr. Moreno Morelli)
- Percutaneous distal metatarsal osteotomy, Verdun Hospital (PI: Dr. Marie Gdalevitch, Local investigator, Dr. Jennifer Mutch)
- Personalized Instrument in Total Shoulder Arthroplasty, Sacré-Coeur Hospital (PI: Dr. Dominique M. Rouleau, Local investigator: Dr. Jennifer Mutch)

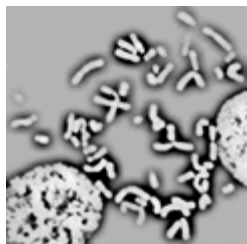
Heritage project

As the SMRC embark on its next phase of growth, it is important to document the successes and accomplishments of researchers at St-Mary's Hospital. The goal of the Heritage Project, which was announced by Dr Meguerditchian in May 2021 is to ensure that this heritage is preserve and celebrate this heritage within the identity of the Research Centre as it continues to grow.

Gina Costanzo, SMRC Manager, is proud to count on strong partnerships, specifically with Cind Aikman, Manager, Communications and Culture at the St. Mary's Foundation (SMF) as well as the priceless support of Pierre Dubois and his team from the CIUSSS Communications and Gayath Devi-Tirou from the CIUSSS Project's Office. Interviews of key figures in the history of research at St. Mary's Hospital Center (SMHC) are underway.

If you or anyone you know would like to contribute stories, photos or other documents for the Heritage project, please reach out to Gina at gina.costanzo@ssss.gouv.qc.ca. Keep your eyes in this section starting in the next edition to learn about the history of research at SMHC.

Oncology - Research.



The following clinical trials at the SMRC-SMH are currently open for patient recruitment:

Lung cancer

A phase III, randomized, double-blind trial of platinum doublet chemotherapy +/- Pembrolizumab (MK-3475) as neoadjuvant/adjuvant therapy for participants with resectable stage II, IIIA, and resectable IIIB (T3-4N2) non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) (KEYNOTE-671). [MK-3475-671]

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 phase III, randomized, double-blind trial of platinum doublet chemotherapy +/- Pembrolizumab (MK-3475) as neoadjuvant/adjuvant therapy for participants with resectable stage II, IIIA, an resectable IIIB (T3-4N2) non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) (KEYNOTE-671). [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]

The following clinical trials at the SMRC-SMH are currently have now closed for patient recruitment:

Lung cancer

A 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 nonsquamous non-small-cell lung cancer. [MK-7339-006]

A phase 3 study of Pembrolizumab in combination with carboplatin/taxane (Paclitaxel or Navelox) followed by Pembrolizumab with or without maintenance Olaparib in the first-line treatment of metastatic squamous non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC). [MK-7339-008]

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 nonsquamous non-small cell lung cancer (LEAP-006). [MK-7902-006]

Recently published



[La Récidive: le cancer à travers les yeux d'une patiente et de son médecin.](#)

(Editions La Presse)

Marie-Ève Morasse and Dr Ari Meguerditchian

In a very different way, the patient and physician live with cancer on a daily basis. One is affected by it, the other treats it: “two solitudes moving in parallel”. In this book, Morasse and Meguerditchian discuss about life with cancer from their own perspective. How does the doctor announce bad news? What does the patient think of when she is lying in the massive CT scan that will tell if the cancer has returned? How does she discuss the

diagnosis with her child? What goes on in the operating room? “La récursive”: a dialogue between a cancer patient and her doctor.



Lambert S, Grover S, Laizner AM, **McCusker J**, **Belzile E**, Moodie EEM, Kayse JW, Lowensteyn I, Vallis M, Da Costa D, Pilote L, **Ibberson C**, **Sabetti J**, **de Raaij M**. [Adaptive web-based stress management programs among adults with cardiovascular disease: A pilot Sequential Multiple Assignment Randomized Trial \(SMART\)](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pec.2021.10.020). *Patient Education and Counseling*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pec.2021.10.020>

Grants

Isabelle Crépeau, SMRC Scientific Information Officer, now offers valuable administrative grant support to all our research teams who require it. Requests are centralized with the SMRC manager [Gina Costanzo](#), for more details.

- [RI-MUHC new grant to improve career development for graduate students announcement](#)

| PROJECT GRANT | LOI DEADLINE | APPLICATION DEADLINE | FUNDING AGENCY |
|--|--------------|----------------------|---|
| SPOR Primary Care Network | N/A | 2021-12-07 | CIHR (Research Net) |
| Project Grant: Project Grant : Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 | 2022-02-09 | 2022-03-09 | CIHR (Research Net) |
| Research in Clinical Assessment | N/A | 2022-02-01 | Medical Council of Canada |

Intellectual activities in November at SMRC

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Manuscripts under review | 2 |
| Manuscript accepted | 1 |
| Grants under review | 2 |



New faces at SMRC

Placida Kabunyoma - Administrative Officer



Placida is an Administrative officer with more than 15 years of experience in clerical support including 10 years in the health sector. She has worked with senior executives at the National School of Public Administration (ENAP) and the CEGEP Rosemont. She spent 13 years at the Douglas Hospital in various departments. During the last year, she contributed to the pandemic effort and worked as préposée au bénéficiaires at Royan Noranda hospital (CIUSSS Abitibi Temiscamingue) and in a CHSLD Bergeronnes Ciusss Cote Nord. Placida Kabunyoma can be reached at placida.kabunyoma.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca

Jean-Daniel Beauchesne - Financial Management Officer



Jean-Daniel Beauchesne is an entrepreneur bringing several years of experience in the public and private sector, in the health and social services and academic environments. He worked in project management, human, financial, material and information resources. Jean-Daniel graduated in management from the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) and McGill University. He will be acting as the main support to all finance related files at the SMRC. Jean-Daniel Beauchesne can be reached at jean-daniel.beauchesne.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca

Chanelle Lefebvre - Research Coordinator



Chanelle Lefebvre joined SMRC in November 2021 as a Research Coordinator. She will be working on the e-IMPAQc project under the supervision of Dr. Sylvie Lambert and Mona Magalhaes. Chanelle will help coordinate different parts of the project such as the After Treatment study and the Lung study. Before joining the e-IMPAQc team, she worked as a research coordinator at l'Institut en santé mentale de Montréal under the supervision of Dr. Tania Lecomte. Chanelle has been interested in different research topics such

as parenting sense of competence, victims of violent crime and patients with psychotic disorders. She recently graduated from l'Université du Québec à Montréal and she has a Ph.D. in psychology. Her thesis focused on the parenting sense of competence of parents of children with autism spectrum disorders.

João Vitor de Camargo - Research Assistant



João Vitor de Camargo obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from McGill University in 2019. He possesses experience working as a research assistant and lab manager in diverse psychology and psychiatry labs at institutions such as McGill University, the Douglas Mental Health Institute, and Concordia University. He also has experience working in virtual mental health services and is currently a Team Lead in Case Management at Dialogue.João (who goes by JV) will be working with the PanDirect team (PI Mark Yaffe) to complete two scoping reviews of the literature on how primary care physicians manage depression and anxiety in their patients during the pandemic.

Taylor Wasserman - Research Assistant



Taylor Wasserman recently graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in the Architecture program at the Peter Guo-hua Fu School of Architecture at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. The combination of her aptitude for creativity and her experience in the field has contributed to her skills in visual communication. She has honed these skills so that she may adapt to various audiences and provide new dimensions of comprehension and sophistication to her work. In her position as a Research Assistant on the Communications team of the SMRC, she will utilize these skills to support the effective communication of research material and results and promote community engagement and participant recruitment. Taylor has joined Sylvie Lambert's team to support communication and knowledge translation activities on the e-IMPAQc, Copping Together and TEMPO projects.

Recruitment



[Clinical Research Coordinator](#)

Department of Oncology Research



NOVEMBER HAPPENINGS

Lunch & Learn ~ 12pm-1pm

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

November 18, 2021,

Lung health in Nunavik

Dr.Faiz Ahmed Khan, McGill University

November 25, 2021

Engaging clinical teams in active participation in research projects

Gina Costanzo, SMRC

Lift sessions ~ November 17 and 24, 2021

12:15pm

<https://www.liftsession.com/>

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Bacteria: National Cancer Institute

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November Newsletter

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