

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

Octobre / October 2021



Dear colleagues and members of the SMRC community,

It's my pleasure to present the October 2021 edition of our newsletter. October is breast cancer awareness month. For us at the SMRC, breast cancer awareness isn't limited to wearing a pink ribbon this month. It's a year-round objective to push the boundaries of scientific knowledge on what is the most common cancer in women.

In the coming weeks, the oncology clinical trials group will be opening 6 new cutting-edge studies in the management of advanced breast cancer. I'd like to congratulate Dr Langleben and his team as well as oncology physicians, nurses and pharmacists for making this possible despite the chronically difficult context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Treating breast cancer goes beyond eradicating the tumor; patients experience debilitating symptoms and treatment side effects that must be addressed.

Dr Lambert and her team will expand the innovative and patient-centered e-IMPAQc research program to tackle these challenges, through a grant from Rethink Breast Cancer and Pfizer Canada. You'll also find out about Diana Nguyen's work in understanding uptake of fertility preservation treatments in younger women with breast cancer.

Finally, PhD student Nina Morena shares about her research in patterns of misinformation from Youtube in guiding treatment choices of younger women with advanced breast cancer. Nina, whom I'm proud to co-supervise, was recently awarded the Aaron Foundation graduate scholarship for her work.

I hope you'll agree that we can be proud of contributions made by SMRC

researchers to improve how we manage this terrible disease.

Ari Meguerditchian
Scientific Director, SMRC

The YouTube project on metastatic breast cancer



Women under 40 with advanced metastatic breast cancer (MBC) are an underserved and understudied population. As a result, they turn to social media spaces to learn about their disease and find community, where they might also come across misleading or inaccurate information.

The research team seeks to evaluate the understandability, actionability, and reliability of YouTube videos about young women with MBC. In addition to scoring these characteristics, themes presented in the videos (treatment, reconstruction, fertility, motherhood, the experience of diagnosis, mental health, family relationships, and research) are documented to build a collection of concerns felt by women with MBC.

This work contributes to the knowledge of the experience of living with MBC. It also strengthens our understanding of the social media role – specifically YouTube videos – in disease management and community building.

Research team

Nina Morena	PhD (c) Communication Studies, McGill University
Dr. Ari Meguerditchian	Scientific Director, SMRC
Diana Nguyen	Research Assistant, McGill University
Yitzchok Ahisar	Medical Student, McGill University
Xena Wang	Medical Student, McGill University

Fertility preservation in young breast cancer patients



Fertility and family planning are important concerns in the population of young women with breast cancer (YWBC), however, optimization of fertility preservation (FP) access and use remains a challenge. FP has been shown to be safe and effective and is fully reimbursed by the Quebec universal health care program (RAMQ) for all cancer patients.

The objective of this study aims to quantify the rate of FP service use in YWBC and assess patient, disease, and treatment characteristics associated with accessing FP services; the retrospective study uses Quebec's universal health insurance administrative database (RAMQ) between the years 2012 and 2018.

Our results show less than a quarter of young women with breast cancer saw an FP expert at the time of diagnosis and less than 10% eligible decided to move forward. Although it is unclear what the optimal rates are, we feel with the availability

of services and the importance of reproductive health in the scheme of cancer, there's much room for improvement.

Research team

Diana Nguyen	Research Assistant, McGill University
Dr. Ari Meguerditchian	Scientific Director, SMRC
Ghader Jamjoun	Surgical Oncology, Fellow, McGill University

The team presented Fertility preservation in young breast cancer patients: A population-based study at the:

- Canadian Surgery Forum (CSF) Virtual Conference. Sept 21-24, 2021.
- American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Quality Care Symposium. Boston, MA. September 24-25, 2021. (Poster).
- Canadian Breast Cancer Symposium, Toronto, ON. June 18, 2021. (Poster)
- Canadian Society of Surgical Oncology, Toronto, ON. May 6, 2021
- An abstract is accepted in Current Oncology

e-IMPAQc and breast cancer



The e-IMPAQc team is excited to extend their patient-reported outcome symptom screening and management program to women with metastatic breast cancer with the support of a Quality Improvement Grant from Pfizer Canada and Rethink Breast Cancer. Systematic screening of patients' symptoms and challenges is a cornerstone of high-quality cancer care, and this project will allow the team to tailor the program for women with metastatic breast cancer. The project, launched on August 27, 2021, aims to recruit 100 patients at St. Mary's and Lakeshore Hospitals, where the oncology teams are led by Joséphine Lémy-Dantica et Maya Jeanty. "We are very pleased and excited to be part of this project. It's an opportunity to really explore the symptoms and needs of metastatic breast cancer patients, especially during the period of the pandemic, [when] their challenges must be heightened." - *Maya Jeanty, Manager of Oncology Clinic Services, SMHC and Lakeshore General Hospital.*

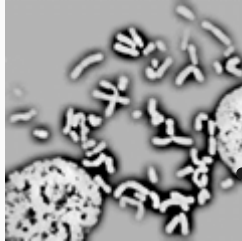
Research Team

Sylvie D. Lambert	Project and Scientific Lead, SMRC
Rosana Faria	Clinical Lead, SMHC
Dr. Adrian Langleben	Director Department of Oncology, SMHC
Dr. Khashayar Esfahani	Medical Oncologist, SMHC
Joséphine Lémy-Dantica	Interim Coordinator, Kidney Health & Cancer Programs; Nursing Department, SMHC
Maya Jeanty	Clinical Unit Director for Oncology, SMHC
Dr. Shereen Ghali	Hematologist / Oncologist, Lakeshore General Hospital
Dr. Najwa Buhlaiga	Medical Oncologist, Lakeshore General Hospital

Alison Quinn
Mona Magalhaes
Tracy Jordan

Nurse, Community Partner, CLSC Benny Farm
Research Program Manager, SMRC
Patient Partner

Oncology Research



Six upcoming breast cancer trials under Oncology Research at SMHC

- A phase III, randomized, open-label, multicenter study evaluating the efficacy and safety of adjuvant giredestrant compared with physician's choice of adjuvant endocrine monotherapy in patient with estrogen receptor positive, HER2-negative early breast cancer (Roche GO42784)
- A phase I dose escalation and dose expansion and Phase II monotherapy open-label, first-in-human, multicenter study of OP-1250 in adult subjects with advanced and/or metastatic hormone receptor (HR)-positive, HER2-negative breast cancer (Olema OP-1250-001)
- Phase III study of Trastuzumab Deruxtecan (T-DXd) with or without Pertuzumab versus Taxane, Trastuzumab and Pertuzumab in HER2-positive, First-line metastatic breast cancer (DESTINY-Breast09)
- An open-label randomized Phase II study of ARV-471 or fulvestrant in post-menopausal women with ER+ HER2- breast cancer in the neoadjuvant setting (Arvinas (Trio-048))
- TNBC, 1L, phase III, class of drug: antibody-drug conjugate (Tropion 02)
- A randomized, multicenter, double-blind, placebo-controlled phase III study of Nivolumab versus placebo in combination with neoadjuvant chemotherapy and adjuvant endocrine therapy in patients with high-risk, estrogen receptor-positive (ER+), human epidermal growth factor receptor 2-negative (HER2-) primary breast cancer (CA209-7FL)

Research team

Dr. Khashayar Esfahani
Dr. Adrian Langleben
Dr. Richard Dalfen
Elmira Roshanafshar
Marisa Cantini
Tatiana Volvakh
Natalia Gonzalez
Rachelle Dumas:

PI, Breast trials, SMHC
Sub-I, Breast trials, SMHC
Sub-I, Breast trials, SMHC
Site Manager, SMHC
Regulatory Coordinator, SMHC
Regulatory Coordinator, SMHC
Clinical Research Coordinator, SMHC
Clinical Research Coordinator, SMHC

New grant



Understanding and mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children, youth and families in Canada. Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). 1 year. \$143,721 CAD

This research aims to study the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on cancer care and survival in children and adolescents.

We will use health insurance medical claims, hospital records, and death registry data from Québec to assess temporal changes in childhood and adolescent cancer diagnoses, survival, and treatment patterns attributable to the pandemic. A literature review of the psychological, social, and financial impacts of the pandemic on child and adolescent cancer patients and their families will also be performed.

Research team

Dr. Eduardo Franco	PI, Oncology, McGill University
Dr. Ronald Barr	PI, Hemato-Oncology, McMaster University
Talia Céleste Malagon	Co-PI, Epidemiology (cancer), McGill University
Mariem El-Zein	Co-PI, Epidemiology (cancer), McGill University
Donald C. Sheppard	Co-PI, Microbiology * Immunology, McGill University
Dr. Ari Meguerditchian	Co-PI, Oncology, SMRC

Recently published



Dr. Mark Yaffe was one of 15 funded Co-RIG project teams of the College of Family Physicians of Canada which developed or tested high-impact innovations that focused on critical challenges directly related to the pandemic. The St. Mary's based team evaluated the effectiveness of an adapted self-care tool for the management of depressed mood. Conducted as an RCT it presented older adults use of the tool with or without telephone

coaching from trained non-health care personnel. Its long term goal is to support family physicians in their care of older adult patients with mental health problems. A [summary](#) of the project is available on the College of Family Physicians of Canada web site.

Research team

Dr. Mark Yaffe	PI, SMHC
Dr. Jane McCusker	Co-PI, Principal Scientist, SMRC
Sylvie D. Lambert	Co-PI, Scientist, SMRC
Jeannie Haggerty	Co-PI, Principal Scientist, SMRC
Dr. Ari Meguerditchian	Co-PI, Scientific Director, SMRC
Marc Pineault	Co-PI, CIUSSS, West Island of Montreal

Invitation to Katya Loban Oral PhD Defense



On behalf of Dr. Tibor Schuster, Graduate Program Director (PhD and Postdoctoral) of the Department of Family Medicine, you are cordially

invited to the Oral PhD Defense for Katya Loban

Multi-stakeholder Partnerships to
Promote Access to Primary Health Care for Vulnerable Populations:
A Mixed Methods Study

Thursday November 4th, 2021
9:30pm – 12:30pm EDT

[https://mcgill.zoom.us/j/83806679482?
pwd=aGNzeU8zV0RrWkFXSmtzc0VCVS92QT09](https://mcgill.zoom.us/j/83806679482?pwd=aGNzeU8zV0RrWkFXSmtzc0VCVS92QT09)

Katya is jointly supervised by Dr. Jeannie Haggerty (McGill University) and Dr. Cathie Scott (University of Calgary). Her thesis committee also includes Dr. Susan Law (McGill University and University of Toronto) and Dr. Virginia Lewis (La Trobe University). Her research is supported by several funds, including a doctoral stipend through the IMPACT research program (2015-2018), and the following awards to disseminate research findings: the McGill Family Medicine Department travel awards, McGill University's Post-Graduate Student Society travel award, and the Institute Community Support (ICS) travel award with the CIHR Institute of Health Services and Policy Research.

Recruitment



[Post-doc position](#) available with e-IMPAQc

OCTOBER HAPPENINGS

Lunch & Learn ~ October 28, 2021
12pm-1pm

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

Associations between use of depression self-care tools and depression outcomes

Photographic credit

YouTube Logo: Alexander Shatov

Hands : Liv Bruce

Bacteria: National Cancer Institute

Child with mask: Jan Kopřiva

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October Newsletter

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