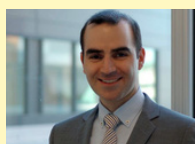


St. Mary's Research Centre

DECEMBER 2022

FROM THE SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR



Dear members of the SMRC community,

As you know, after 30 years of distinguished service, Dr McCusker has retired from the Research Centre.

In addition to a prolific career dedicated to advancing the science of better, safer care for high-risk patients, Dr McCusker's accomplishments include founding St. Mary's Research Centre. Thanks to the clarity of her vision, her tenacity and hard work, the SMRC rapidly grew to a multi-million dollar academic unit, employing over 60 research professionals and hosting 2 research chairs.

St-Mary's Board of Governors, St. Mary's Hospital Foundation, CIUSSS-ODIM, the Faculty of Medicine (McGill University) and the Research Centre leadership have joined to honor her contributions. Dr McCusker's work will be recognized in many ways over the next few months:

- St. Mary's Hospital Foundation has decided to rename the SMRC conference room "the Dr Jane McCusker Conference Room",
- Dr McCusker will receive the CIUSSS-ODIM Lifetime Achievement Luminas Award,
- St. Mary's Board of Governors will be honoring Dr McCusker at a "St. Mary's Legends" dinner.

The Research Centre will be hosting its own celebratory gathering with old and new members of the Research Centre community. Per Dr McCusker's request, these events will take place in the spring.

Please join me in thanking Dr McCusker for her invaluable contribution to St. Mary's.

Ari Meguerditchian, MD
Scientific Director

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THE LEGACY OF DR JANE MCCUSKER

Dr Jane McCusker, senior scientist at St. Mary's Research Centre (RC), retired at the end of October 2022. Since 1993, she has been at the heart of the RC, instrumental in initiating the Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Community Studies (DCECS) which later became St. Mary's Research Centre (SMRC). She led the Department for 18 years, planting the seeds of research, leading its growth to an internationally-recognized centre, and overseeing its impact on the scientific community.

From England to North America

Dr Jane McCusker was born in London, England. She came to Canada with her family, and graduated from McGill University in 1967 with an MD,CM degree. After her marriage, she spent 30 years in the US, where she pursued further education in public health and epidemiology.

She worked at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, the University of Rochester NY, and the University of Massachusetts before being recruited to McGill in 1993.

The seeds of SMRC: early years, 1993-1999

Dr Jane McCusker founded and led a new Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Community Studies at St. Mary's Hospital. Her primary goals were to create an administrative structure and develop a scientific research framework. Consultation services in biostatistics and research methods for clinicians were provided, and a program of small internal grants (now known as CARE grants) was established to allow preliminary data to be collected.

Through collaborations with clinicians based at the hospital, two main research areas emerged: geriatric psychiatry (Dr Martin Cole), family medicine (Dr Mark Yaffe) as well as the intersection of the two. These became the initial pillars of the centre's research, with funding from FRQ and CIHR.

2000 - 2011: Consolidation of targeted research in geriatric and mental health services and clinical outreach

Further funding from CIHR Canadian Institutes for Health Research, FRQ, Canadian Patient Safety Institution, and Alzheimer Society of Canada, allowed for consolidation of the SMH research program on health services for older adults for depression and delirium, and on ED care.

The delirium research program at the SMRC expanded to focus on occurrence in nursing homes across Quebec. A large FRQ team grant allowed to expand the depression research program to include a focus on depression self-care in primary care patients with chronic physical conditions.

Dr McCusker became Director of the Quality Assessment Unit which helped reinforce ties between the research centre and the hospital's clinical departments.

- 1967 - McGill University Medical School, Montreal, Quebec. M.D., C.M
- 1974 - Columbia University School of Public Health and Administrative Medicine, New York City, New York. M.P.H. (1969), Dr.P.H. in Epidemiology

- 
- Establishment of an infrastructure for research code of conduct and Research Ethics Committee
 - Identification of main applied clinical research areas
 - Implementation of a small internal grants program to enable collecting preliminary data
 - Outreach to clinicians through support for quality assessment projects and methodological consultation
 - Organization of yearly "Research and Quality of Care" symposia



Research covers a wide spectrum from large, externally funded project to small quality assessment studies to inform how quality improvement can take place.



2012-2022: A culture of research, the first step for care improvement.

During her final 10-year tenure at the RC, Dr McCusker continued to support a culture of research at St Mary's, through methodological consultation for clinicians and CARE grants.

As new scientists (Drs Law, Haggerty, Lambert) were recruited, Dr McCusker began collaborating in new research areas that contribute to better health care. Mental health self-care was one such area, that resulted in the development of an innovative model for mental health self-care using trained lay coaches.

Trials of this new care model have now been conducted in 6 clinical populations, in collaboration with Dr Sylvie Lambert and clinicians from SMHC Psychiatry (Cole, Schwartz) and Family Medicine (Yaffe), with very promising results.

Clinical tools developed

- The Identification of Seniors At Risk (ISAR) tool was developed and has since been adopted in emergency departments over the world.
- Delirium Index and Delirium Risk Screening are cornerstones of delirium prevention services.
- Mental health self-care support: an innovative care model using trained lay coaches.

Contribution to research

- 106 Research grants received
- 254 Peer reviewed articles
- 3 Books
- 23 book chapters and technical reports
- 295 presentations at scientific meetings
- 111 invited presentations and short courses

Knowledge transfer teaching activities abroad

- Malawi
- Saudi Arabia
- Tanzania
- United Kingdom
- United States



I've always enjoyed working with clinicians, helping them to answer clinical questions with appropriate research designs.



EXCERPTS OF LETTERS RECEIVED ON THE OCCASION OF DR MCCUSKER'S RETREAT



“ By bringing notions of scientific assessment to St. Mary's, you proved that a community health care facility can also be a university hospital. The partnerships you built with clinicians were based on St. Mary's core values which you elevated to research priorities: primary and proximity care, and the needs of vulnerable and marginalized populations. ”

David H. Eidelman MDCM
Vice-Principal, Health Affairs
Dean
Faculty of Medicine
McGill University



“ Care for the people and close to the people has always been at the heart of St. Mary's identity; you elevated those principles to a multi-faceted scientific program. ”

Cynda Heward, CFRE
President & CEO, SMHF

Arthur Weschsler, Chair
SMHF Board of Directors

Donald Bastien, President
SMHF Board of Directors



“ Thirty years ago, you set the foundations of what grew and matured into a full-fledged research centre that focuses on those typically forgotten: vulnerable patients. Thanks to your leadership, St. Mary's Research Centre became a hub of excellence in research on health issues that matter. We are grateful for your vision and determination. ”

Najia Hachimi-Idrissi
Interim President and CEO

TESTIMONIALS FROM MEMBERS OF THE SMRC

For over 10 years I have been a proud member of Jane's team. My working association continued until very recently, interrupted by circumstances beyond my control. But, like diamonds, the friendship is forever!

Jane is the ideal leader of a research group: she combines a deep respect for others with a strong ability to impart a firm direction to her group.

Year after year, I have appreciated her disarming sincerity both when she praised and when she expressed criticism, which were always constructive. I don't know if my years at St. Mary's have made me a better person, but if they have, Jane has a great deal to do with it.

Dr Antonio Ciampi
Statistician



When I arrived at the SMRC in 2016, I was assigned to assist Dr McCusker in various supporting tasks such as submitting manuscript to scientific journals, maintaining her digital library and updating her impressive cv.

Jane's organization and rigor became my point of reference. I am very grateful that she kept me "at her service". Her "school" is certainly one of the best. She is a model that we seldom meet in one's professional life.

Thank you Dr McCusker for your legacy! It accompanies me every day.

Isabelle Crépeau
Scientific Information Officer

I have been extremely lucky to be mentored by Jane for the past 8 years. I have been humbled by her expertise and inspired by her leadership.

It is unfortunately rare in academia to be blessed by the level of mentorship I have received from Jane, which only speaks to her generosity.

If I have been able to achieve as much as I have it is by "standing on the shoulders of giants". I feel a bit at lost without my giant, but I know it is not the end, but simply the beginning of another era.

Lots of love and admiration,

Dr Sylvie Lambert
Scientist



It has been a great privilege to work alongside Dr McCusker and learn from her experience and expertise.

A highlight for me would definitely be our in-person team meetings back in the day, it was always productive for all concerned!

I am thankful to have been part of her team, thanks for everything Jane!

Sandhya Baskaran
Research Coordinator



Jane's commitment to research excellence and collaboration has provided meaningful learning and working opportunities for countless research assistants, coordinators and students like myself.

We have benefited greatly from her generous mentorship and we continue to be inspired by her focus, integrity and authenticity.

Manon de Raad
Project Coordinator

To have been at the heart of the founding of the research center is surely a major accomplishment in Jane's career.

This center will have had a major impact on the lives of employees, clinicians, students and patients. But it will also be necessary to remember that this center has grown and moved to another level, with a larger team and links with several collaborators from outside.

Mentoring, Persistence, Rigor and Openness are words that resonate when I think of the past 30 years.

Eric Belzile
Statistician



My appreciation of Jane goes back to her initial recruitment to St. Mary's when, as part of the search team, I learned that she would actually consider leaving one of my favorite areas of Massachusetts in order to return to Montreal.

I recall that I also wondered how someone heavily engaged in HIV research would fit into our Hospital that was attempting to re-direct its research agenda from bench-type research into that directed towards primary care, family medicine, and community outreach.

I observed from her early days with us, and over the following many years, that some epidemiologists, while having a specialty, could also be generalists in their capacity to study diverse topics and work with others from a broad range of professional backgrounds.

As such I have benefited and appreciated the opportunity to be part of a number of research teams that Jane led. In these I have likely learned more than I gave, and I remain grateful to Jane for these opportunities.

Dr Mark Yaffe
Department of Family Medicine

Extraordinary mentorship, immense scientific knowledge, exceptional academic integrity, and unique friendship! While working together, there is absolutely no day without learning something new, no e-mail that is unanswered on the same day, or no quest that does not receive timely and appropriate guidance towards success..., for which we are very grateful!

Dr Deniz-Cetin-Sahin
Researcher and PhD candidate



I remember a day 13 years ago when Jane came into the RC lunch room and found me having tea and cookies with one of her study participants. I introduced them and saw the pleasure on both their faces as they exchanged a few words. I was touched by the mutual respect, sincere interest, and positive regard each seemed to show the other: researcher and study participant, the flip side of the same coin.

Afterward, I made a point during Jane's team meetings to share participants' stories and comments, because I knew Jane was genuinely interested.

Since that time, hundreds of Jane's study participants have told her team members in interviews and surveys how her interventions (self-care materials and one-on-one coaching) have helped improve their quality of life, including their ability to better manage challenging health conditions like depression and cancer. Participants have also shared how much they have appreciated feeling supported and heard during their participation in her studies.

For me, Jane is a Master Gardener who has cultivated and nurtured her St. Mary's studies and teams with rigorous scientific methodology and a keen desire to improve their capacity to grow and thrive. Now we get to keep tending this rich lovely garden, while still enjoying tea and cookies as our RC family grows.

Thank you so much, Jane!

Cindy Ibberson
Patient recruitment

ROSTER OF ACHIEVEMENT 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 ACHIEVEMENT 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]

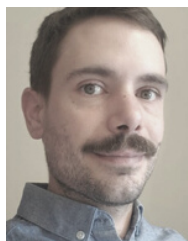
A Phase 2 Study to Evaluate the Efficacy and Safety of Pembrolizumab plus Investigational Agents in Combination with Etoposide and Cisplatin or Carboplatin for the first line Treatment of Participants with Extensive Stage Small Cell Lung Cancer [MK3475-B99]

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:
Franca Cantini
Program Manager, Oncology Clinical Trials
franca.cantini.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca

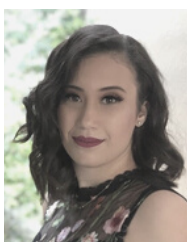
STAFF NEWS



Marc-André Bélisle has been appointed Scientific Documentation Manager. Marc-André is the record manager of SMRC, focusing on records management and archiving. He also develops and optimizes all the admin procedures of the research centre. Marc-André's interest in record management led him to enroll in information sciences studies. He will be undertaking a master at the École de bibliothéconomie et sciences de l'information (EBSI) at Université de Montréal next fall. Way to go Marc-André!



Nardin Farag is a fourth-year medical student at McGill University. Her research interests relate to patient-centred care, global health and gender disparity. During her upcoming elective, she will work with Dr Meguerditchian on a scoping review focusing on treatment for breast cancer in women over 85. This project aims to bridge the gap in knowledge for best practices for this vulnerable population. [LinkedIn](#)



Ranime Hassan joined the administrative team as Administrative Technician. Her main responsibilities consist in providing support in the development and optimization of administrative and financial processes, to implement various simple and effective mechanisms with the manager, ensuring the quality and integrity of the processes and to collaborate with all members of the team. Ranime graduated in Management and Administration from Saint-Joseph University in Beirut. She is currently completing a master's degree in economics at the Université de Montréal. [LinkedIn](#)

ACADEMIC
OUTPUT

Lambert S, Bartlett S, McCusker J, Yaffe MJ, Ciampi A, Belzile E, de Raad M. [Development and psychometric evaluation of the CanSmart questionnaire to measure frequency of chronic disease self-management tasks](#). BMC Psychology. 10(1):293

Mihalcioiu C, Rozza N, Gazzé G,... Meguerditchian A.N. et al. Treatment outcomes in melanoma patients with brain metastases: Single institution results. Poster presentation at the McGill University Health Centre, Cedars Cancer Centre: Surgery Medical Rounds; Montreal, Qc, Canada. October, 2022

Meguerditchian AN. Approche chirurgicale pour le mélanome cutané. Oral presentation at the Symposium de Montréal en cancer du sein, 7e édition organisé par le Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CHUM) Montreal, Quebec, Canada November 23-25, 2022

THURSDAYS
KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER EVENTS
12PM-1PM

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

December

[Guillaume Fontaine, PhD](#)

An introduction to implementation science and an overview of key considerations for successful implementation efforts

January

[John William Kayser, PhD](#)

Topic: Strengths-Based Nursing and Health Care

Wishing you
happy, restful,
and peaceful,
Holidays!

Take note of our statutory
holidays:

December 23- 26-30, 2022

and

January 2nd, 2023