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St. Mary's Research Centre

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# SMRC Research Support Hub

## 1. Introduction/Mission

St. Mary's Research Centre (SMRC) is committed to advancing healthcare through research excellence. To bring its mission to life and fulfill the vision of becoming an officially recognized institution within Quebec's clinical and university research network, SMRC recognize the need for structured, dynamic, and efficient research support.

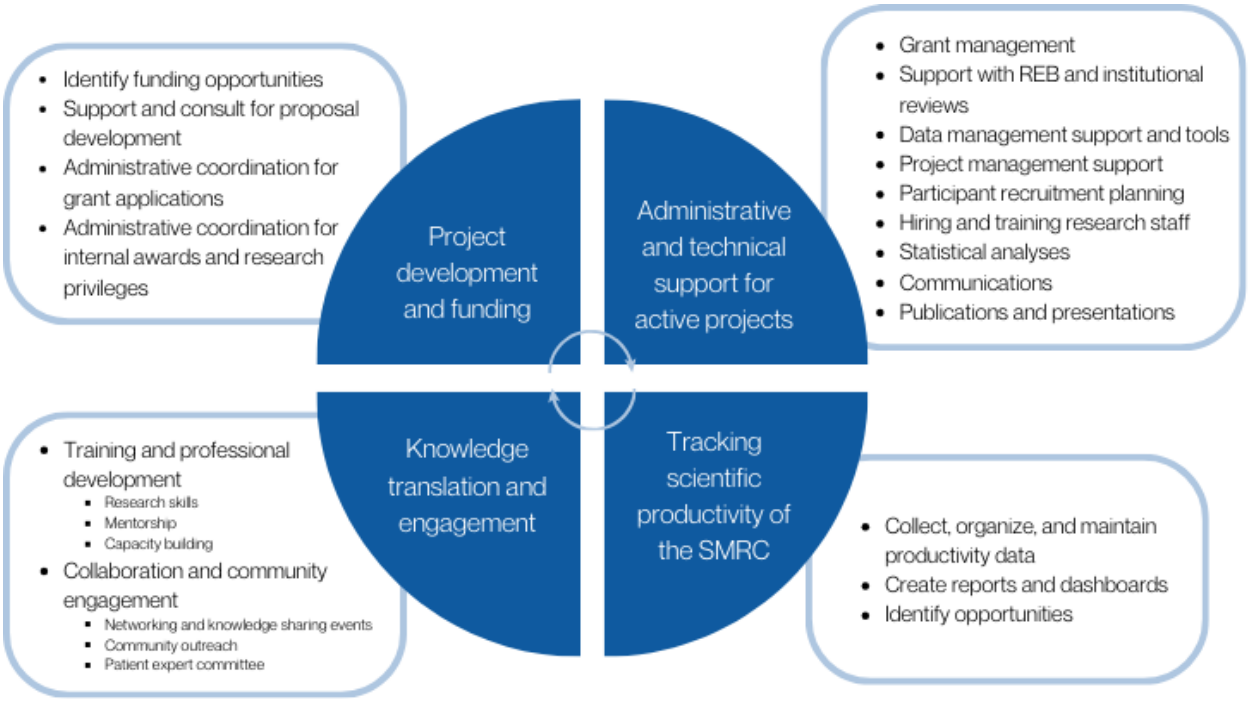
In line with its strategic priorities, SMRC introduced its *Research Support Hub (RSH)* in January 2024. This office serves as a catalyst for fostering patient-centered research by optimizing the operational and administrative aspects of research processes. It provides comprehensive support to researchers at every stage of their projects, from conception to completion. By offering a range of pre- and post-award services, scientific productivity tracking, and knowledge translation, the RSH aims to streamline research processes and empower SMRC researchers to focus on the essence of their work.

To help bridge the gap between research and clinical realities, the RSH takes a proactive role in engaging with clinician researchers. It serves as a resource for them to identify and address the pressing needs and challenges within healthcare delivery that can be resolved through innovative research. By fostering strong partnerships with SMRC clinical and research experts, this office facilitates the translation of experts' insights into projects that directly benefit patients and healthcare practices.

The RSH is committed to upholding a culture of curiosity, collaboration, and knowledge sharing which nurtures a diverse and thriving research community. Its aim is to provide the best tools, training, and support to researchers, enhancing research transparency, accessibility, and the impact of their work.

## 2. Service offer

The Research Support Hub is structured along four **functions** representing the research life-cycle, each with its offer of services, and each connected to internal and external stakeholders.




| Office specific | Internal | CIUSSS | McGill and other external |
|---|---|---|---|
| •Senior research officer<br>•Scientific information officer<br>•Community engagement officer<br>•*Data expert (tbc)*<br>•SMRC leadership | •Statistical consultation services<br>•Admin services (HR, Finance, Contracts)<br>•Communication specialist<br>•Domain leaders<br>•Researchers<br>•Research administrators and other research team members | •DAUER<br>•UETMISSS<br>•REB<br>•Legal<br>•Perfocentre<br>•User committees<br>•... | •R&I<br>•Faculties and Departments (in alignment with domains)<br>•SPOR SUPPORT units<br>•Funders<br>•... |

Functions and services are provided by the RSH office to support researchers at different stages of their projects.

## 1. Project development and funding applications

- **Identify funding opportunities:** Monitor and identify relevant funding opportunities based on researchers' interests and expertise, in alignment with the SMRC research domains.
- **Rapid reviews and needs assessments:** Support domain leaders and researchers to explore knowledge gaps and clinical needs; support development of clinically relevant research questions.
- **Support and consultation for proposal development:**
    - Project scoping
    - Methodological assistance, including statistical consultations and review of study outcome measures
    - Support with budget creation
    - Support with team building: identifying relevant stakeholders and co-applicants
- **Administrative coordination for grant applications:**
    - Checklists and timelines
    - Shared document management
    - CV updates (in accordance with formatting requirements, CCV set up as needed), review and formatting of “significant contribution” type attachments
    - Letters of support: templates, support with drafts and follow-up
    - Signatures
    - Translation services
    - Editing and text revision
    - Formatting
    - Online submission processes: file uploads etc
- **Administrative support for coordination of internal awards and research privileges:**
    - Coordinate CARE/Oncology Career Award application and selection processes
    - Coordinate administrative aspects of the affiliation processes

## 2. Administrative and technical support for active projects

- **Grant management:** Provide support for grant management, including assistance with financial reporting, billing, budget monitoring, research agreements (through the office of the Associate Director)
- **Ethics and institutional review:** Facilitate the ethics review process by reviewing submissions, assisting with documentation, and ensuring compliance with institutional and regulatory requirements. Support with use of REB submission platforms and completion of institutional review forms.
- **Data management:** Offer consultation to prepare data management protocols and review required accesses for institutional (i.e. hospital) data. Support planning for

data collection, storage, and security, ensuring that projects adhere to ethical and legal standards. Assist with the development of:
    - Study logs
    - Data capture forms (using tools like Qualtrics, REDCap etc)
- **Project management:** Recommend project management tools and processes tailored to the specific needs of each project, including timelines, task coordination plans, study manual templates and planning for coordination of interdisciplinary teams.
- **Patient/participant recruitment planning and process-mapping:** Collaborate with research teams to plan and map out recruitment strategies, including plans for approaching target populations, scripts, and other materials.
- **Hiring and training research staff:** Support the research assistant hiring process by identifying the skills and expertise required, contributing to job descriptions, and assisting in interviewing and onboarding new research staff.
- **Statistical analysis:** Support researchers in statistical analysis, offering guidance on data analysis and interpretation.
- **Dissemination and project specific communication:** Assist researchers in academic publishing, submission of conference abstracts, and other knowledge translation activities.
    - Identifying journals, providing manuscript submission support
    - Support with preparation of conference presentations and posters
    - Support with press releases or other media communications planning

### 3. Scientific productivity tracking

- **Data compilation:** Collect, organize, and maintain data related to funding (requested and received), active projects, publications, scientific impact, student supervision, formal collaborations, and researcher profile information.
- **Report generation:** Generate reports that showcase the scientific endeavors of SMRC investigators, providing insights into their productivity and impact

To achieve this, the RSH will use existing databases, repositories, and adopt emerging technologies in research management:

a. **Publication Databases:** Utilize academic publication databases like PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar to track publications, citations, and the impact factor of journals where research is published.
b. **Researcher Profiles:** Encourage and support researchers in maintaining and regularly updating their profiles on academic platforms such as ORCID, ResearchGate, and Google Scholar Profiles.
c. **Bibliometric Analysis Tools:** Employ bibliometric analysis tools and software, such as SciVal, VOSviewer or CiteSpace, to visualize collaboration networks, identify research trends, and track the impact of research publications.
d. **Institutional Repositories:** Facilitate use of institutional repositories and digital archives where researchers can deposit their research outputs, including preprints, reports, and datasets, making them accessible and citable.
e. **Altmetrics:** Use altmetrics tools like Altmetric or PlumX to track online mentions and discussions of research outputs on social media, news outlets, blogs, and policy documents.

### 4. Knowledge translation and engagement

**Collaboration and community engagement:**

- **Networking and knowledge sharing events:** Organize networking events, seminars/scientific series, workshops, and conferences to foster collaboration among researchers within and outside the SMRC community, aligning with the strategic priority of building connections and engagement.
- **Community outreach:** Engage with community stakeholders, including government agencies, industry partners, and those clinical and community contexts, to ensure that research activities align with local healthcare needs and promote community-based research.
- **Committee of patient experts:** Establish and support a patient expert committee by facilitating the recruitment, onboarding, and ongoing engagement of individuals with lived experience. The RSH coordinates committee activities, ensuring patient experts are effectively integrated into the research process, providing valuable insights, and promoting a patient-centered approach to research endeavors. The engagement officer within the hub works closely with the committee, fostering a collaborative environment that enriches research projects with diverse perspectives and ensures their relevance to end users.

**Training and professional development:**

- **Research skills development:** Develop training modules and workshops to enhance researchers' and research staff skills, including research methods, project management tools, data analysis, and effective scientific communication and tracking.
- **Mentorship programs:** Establish mentorship programs to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and expertise from senior researchers to more junior scientists, promoting collaboration and knowledge sharing.
- **Capacity building:** Through the research administrators' committee and other structures, the Hub offers ongoing opportunities for training and development of research assistants and coordinators.

## 3. Identifying and Managing Service Requests

Researchers are encouraged to contact the RSH at research.stmary@ssss.gouv.qc.ca for more information, and to discuss needs. A service request form may be completed as needed.

More details on management of requests and billing for specific services will be added in the future.