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

Newsletter

Vol. VII, No. 2, December 2024

FROM THE SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR

Dear members of the SMRC community,

As 2024 comes to a close, I'd like to reflect on some of our accomplishments over the past year. I am incredibly grateful that we have such a devoted, innovation-driven team at SMRC.

During the past 12 months, we made significant progress in many of our strategic priorities, marking key accomplishments across our domains and administrative structures. Highlights include the recruitment of Dr. Harmehr Sekhon, who has expanded our Older Adult Care domain with her expertise in digital innovations research. In collaboration with Dr Julia Chabot and the team of geriatric specialists at St. Mary's, Dr Sekhon has already initiated a study to evaluate the impact of virtual reality on older patients admitted to the hospital. Her arrival coincides with the Research Centre's launch of the Older Adult Care research strategy planning process. I'd like to thank those that participated in our survey. Early in 2025 we'll launch the focus groups, input collected from these two initial steps will then lead to our retreat.

On the administrative side, SMRC successfully implemented a hybrid work policy in September 2024. To date, 33% of our staff has taken advantage of this. We also enhanced our conference rooms' audiovisual capabilities to better support collaborative productivity, and launched the Research Support Hub (RSH) to optimize the operational and administrative aspects of research processes. In the past 12 months, the RSH provided 650 hours of scientific expertise in CV maintenance, grant and manuscript support, methodological and data support, translation and an array of other services to ensure that SMRC researchers succeed.

This year we launched our volunteer program which supports members of the SMRC give back to the community by volunteering at CDN community organisations. Our research centre continues to expand its partnerships with community-based organizations. In October, SMRC hosted an education workshop on "Breast Cancer and Clinical Research" in collaboration with the McPeak-Sirois Group. This conference was held at Femmes du monde à Côte-des-Neiges, a women's centre bringing together members from various ethno-cultural communities. We also participated to St. Mary's Hospital Foundation's Movember initiatives, raising awareness for men's mental health, prostate, and testicular cancer throughout the month of November. Our Associate Director, Jean-Daniel Beauchesne, made SMRC proud by growing out his moustache all month (more on page 7).

IN THIS ISSUE

3 - SMRC News
8 - Academic Output
9 - Roster of Oncology Trials
12 - Community Engagement
13 - Scientific Series
19 - From the CIUSSS
20 - Year-End Farewell

FROM THE SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR

I've had the opportunity to present our goals for 2025 and the Annual Scientific Director's presentation on September. These include: the renewal of the McGill Research Chair in Family Medicine; the deployment of our community engagement and EDI programs; and a collaboration with the MUHC-RI to address micro-aggressions in the scientific community. SMRC's full list of key priorities for the upcoming year is included in our Year-End Farewell on page 20. We will have another busy year of growth in 2025; I'm confident that we'll successfully deliver on all our objectives, thanks to our dedicated team of researchers, scientific professionals and students.

I extend my sincere gratitude to everyone that makes the SMRC community, and particularly St. Mary's Hospital Foundation for their continued trust, which has been instrumental in our research centre's accomplishments. My gratitude also goes ot the leadership of CIUSSS de l'Ouest de l'île; their support in growing our academic ambitions has been unwavering, despite very turbulent times for the health care system.

As we enter the holiday season, I wish everyone a restful next couple weeks. May we start the new year refreshed, with a renewed sense of purpose.

Ari N. Meguerditchian, MD
Scientific Director

SMRC News

Dr. Ari Meguerditchian appointed President-Elect of the Canadian Society of Surgical Oncology

Congratulations to Dr. Ari Meguerditchian, SMRC's Scientific Director, on recently being appointed President-Elect of the Canadian Society of Surgical Oncology (CSSO). Dr. Meguerditchian will serve as President-Elect of the CSSO for the 2024-2026 term, and will subsequently become President of the CSSO.

The CSSO is a global partner of the Society of Surgical Oncology, and regroups surgical oncologists and general surgeons working towards ameliorating cancer care across Canada. SMRC is incredibly proud to see Dr. Meguerditchian's expertise and dedication to advancing surgical oncology excellence in clinical care and research recognized in this way. We look forward to supporting him in the next steps of this journey as he serves as President-Elect and eventually President of the CSSO.

Dr. Sylvie Lambert leads MSSS workshop on caregiving

SMRC's Dr. Sylvie Lambert recently led a workshop as part of the Ministry of Health and Social Services' *Journée nationale de concertation en proche aidance* (National Day of Consultation on Caregiving). Dr. Lambert focused on the topic of close support in oncology, which aimed to identify best practices to better support PPAs in oncology when announcing the diagnosis and during treatment periods.

This conference will go on to inform the next strategic Government Action Plan for informal caregivers 2026-2031.

SMRC News

Dr. Harmehr Sekhon presents research at the United Nations General Assembly

SMRC's Dr. Harmehr Sekhon was recently invited to present her research on virtual reality at the prestigious 4th Digital Health Symposium, held by the United Nations General Assembly. Dr. Sekhon presented both current and future research, focusing on creating and evaluating virtual reality (VR) applications aimed at improving digital literacy for older adults.

SMRC is incredibly proud that Dr. Sekhon was invited to contribute to these key discussions. Sharing this research at such a high level will help bridge this gap in healthcare access and encourage the development of more inclusive, progressive, and effective healthcare solutions tailored to vulnerable populations.

Dr. Mark Yaffe receives McGill Lifetime Achievement Award

Congratulations to SMRC's Dr. Mark Yaffe on receiving McGill University's Lifetime Achievement Award for Leadership in Learning. This award recognizes sustained excellence in leadership and innovation, as well as the active integration of teaching and learning with inquiry, scholarship, and research.

Dr. Yaffe is an integral part of SMRC's Older Adult Care domain, and has been a part of St. Mary's for over 30 years. SMRC is thrilled that his research accomplishments and devotion to academia are being recognized on this scale. Dr. Yaffe officially receives the award at McGill University's Fall Convocation ceremony on December 2, 2024.

SMRC News

Isabelle Leblanc awarded the McGill University Family Medicine Hero Award

St. Mary's Research Centre congratulates Dr. Isabelle Leblanc on receiving the McGill University Family Medicine Hero Award in Transcultural Medical Care, for her outstanding work in global health and primary care.

As a family physician, educator, and advocate, Dr. Leblanc inspires us all with her dedication to patient care and community outreach both locally and globally. Her current research is a CARE-funded project titled "Too much pain doctor!: Training clinicians to detect expressions of psychological distress in patients of diverse ethnocultural groups". She will also be our featured speaker at the Hirschfield lecture in April, which will be a joint conference with SMRC and McGill's Department of Family Medicine.

SMRC participates in research seminar FMED506

As part of the FMED506 course, "Indigenous perspectives – decolonizing health research," Christina Raneburger and Lisandra Lannes presented the SMRC's vision on how to approach research with Indigenous communities, including by encouraging co-creation and the development of collaborative partnerships.

The development and implementation of the "Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Cultural Security Policy" of the CIUSSS-ODIM was given as an example in the perspective of the future EDI policy of the CRSM to encourage the integration of EDI into all research activities.

St. Mary's Research Centre launches partnership with the CORE RI-MUHC

SMRC is proud to announce a new partnership with the Centre for Outcomes Research and Evaluation (CORE) at the RI-MUHC. This collaboration aims to enhance visibility across our research domains and strengthen knowledge translation efforts. By cross-promoting upcoming events and initiatives, we look forward to expanding partnership opportunities and fostering greater research collaboration.

SMRC News

Dr. Anita Koushik serves as external expert for ULaval's graduate programs in epidemiology

SMRC's Dr. Anita Koushik recently participated as one of two external experts in the periodic evaluation of the Master's and PhD programs in epidemiology offered at Université Laval. She was invited as a researcher and professor specializing in the field of epidemiology. Dr. Koushik visited the Université Laval in Québec for a two-day visit between November 26 and 27, 2024, including meetings with people involved in the programs (faculty management, professors, students), visits to the training facilities, the drafting and presentation of the report.

Jeannie Haggerty leads Family Medicine seminar

SMRC's Dr. Jeannie Haggerty recently gave a seminar lecture titled "Bridging Clinical and Research Worlds in Family Medicine". In her presentation, Dr. Haggerty provided an overview of her work in the field, and insight as to why family medicine creates unique strengths within both clinical and research spheres.

This seminar was hosted by the Department of Family Medicine and the McGill Primary Care Practice Based Research Network, as part of the PRBN's 10-year anniversary. Dr. Haggerty currently serves as the Scientific Director of the PRBN and is the first holder of the McGill Research Chair in Family and Community Medicine.

Nina Morena accepted for Weizenbaum Institute's Open Fellowship program

SMRC PhD student Nina Morena was recently accepted for a one-month fellowship as part of the Open Fellowship program at the Weizenbaum Institute. Nina will join the Institute in Berlin this spring to develop new ideas for her postdoc research and work on her dissertation, "Knowledge making and online literacies of young people with metastatic breast cancer." The purpose of this fellowship is to invite scientists and experts from around the world to share research ideas, gain support for their project, and make new contacts.

SMRC News

SMRC consults with older adults to improve care

As part of the development of its new research strategy to improve elder care, SMRC consulted with community organizations working for the health and well-being of seniors in Côte-des-Neiges. In collaboration with the Centre des Aînés Côte-des-Neiges, SMRC hosted a meeting with seniors from HLM Place Newman (October 29, 2024) to better understand their needs and guide the development of our new research strategy.Fifteen participants (12 women, 3 men), from various ethnocultural communities (India, Iraq, Pakistan, Poland, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Trinidad), emphasized the importance of intervening upstream in the healthcare system, particularly by supporting action on the WHO's social determinants of health in research activities, namely "food insecurity," "social inclusion and non-discrimination," and "access to affordable and quality healthcare services."

SMRC makes a difference for Movember 2024

This year, SMRC proudly joined St. Mary's Hospital Foundation's Movember fundraiser to support the SMH oncology department. Staff enthusiastically backed Jean-Daniel Beauchesne, SMRC's Associate Director, as he grew his moustache for the cause.

Additionally, SMRC hosted a Scientific Series lecture by Dr. Sylvie Lambert on "The TEMPO Canadian Cancer Trial," focusing on how the program addresses the needs of both prostate cancer patients and their caregivers. Read more about this event in our recap on page 15.

Academic Output

Peer-reviewed scientific publications

Geoffroy P.J.C. Noel, Tomas St-Onge, Louis-Martin Boucher, **Jennifer Mutch**. (2024). Minimally invasive denervation of the wrist: A cadaveric feasibility study for a single injection that targets both anterior and posterior interosseous nerves under ultrasound-guidance. *Annals of Anatomy - Anatomischer Anzeiger*, 258-152365. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aanat.2024.152365

Maryse Larouche. (2024). A Commentary on "Effects of Mindfulness Meditation on Patient Experience During Urodynamics: A Prospective Study". *International Urogynecology Journal*, 35. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00192-024-05947-5

Philippe R. Koninckx, **Anita Koushik**, Togas Tulandi. (2024). Truth, Soft Lies, Statistics, and Experience in Managing Endometriosis. *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Canada*, 46(5). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jogc.2024.102421

Pooria Ghadiri, **Mark J. Yaffe**, Alayne M. Adams, Samira Abbasgholizadeh-Rahimi. (2024). Primary care physicians' perceptions of artificial intelligence systems in the care of adolescents' mental health. *BMC Prim. Care*, 25, 215. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12875-024-02417-1

Shawn M Robbins, Harry Brown, Yuri Lopes Lima, **Moreno Morelli**, David J Pearsall, Anouk Lamontagne. (2024). The relationship between executed cut angle and speed with lower extremity joint angles during unanticipated side-step cutting in soccer players. *Gait and Posture*, 11484-89. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gaitpost.2024.09.006

Sylvie D. Lambert, Sara Soldera, Jordana Kazdan, Francesca Frati, Anita Slominska, Melina Boutin, Vanessa Samouelian, Caroline Letendre, Karine Bilodeau, Doris Howell, Karine Le Breton, Michel-Olivier Gratton. (2024). Patient-reported outcomes (PROs) programs for monitoring symptoms among patients treated with immunotherapy: A scoping review. *JNCI Cancer Spectrum*, pkae102, https://doi.org/10.1093/jncics/pkae102

Taylor Morganstein, Mihnea Gangal, **Eric Belzile**, Dorsa Sohaei, Jouhayna Bentaleb, Adi Reuveni-Salzman, Lisa Merovitz, Jens-Erik Walter, **Maryse Larouche**. (2024). vNOTES versus Laparoscopic Uterosacral Ligament Suspension for Apical Pelvic Organ Prolapse: Perioperative and Short-Term Outcomes. *International Urogynecology Journal*, 35(9) 1899-1908. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00192-024-05907-z

Vania Karami, **Mark J. Yaffe**, Genevieve Gore, AJung Moon, Samira Abbasgholizadeh-Rahimi. (2024). Socially Assistive Robots for patients with Alzheimer's Disease: A scoping review. Archives of gerontology and geriatrics, 123, 105409. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.archger.2024.105409

Roster of Oncology Clinical Trials

Bladder cancer

Active Recruitment

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

Active Recruitment

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]

Identification and evaluation of patients at risk of developing cardiotoxicity after receiving chemotherapy for breast cancer, leukemia or lymphoma [CarChem]

Registre cancer du sein métastatoque [Groupe McPeak-Sirois]

Accruement Complete

A Clinical Trial to Determine the Efficacy of Five Years of Letroxole 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 Phase 3, Randomized, Multi-center, Open-label Study of DB-1303 Versus Investigator's Choice Chemotherapy in Human Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor 2 (HER2)-low, Hormone Receptor Positive (HR+) Metastatic Breast Cancer Patients whose Disease has Progressed on Endocrine Therapy (DYNASTY-Breast02)

Roster of Oncology Clinical Trials

Lung cancer

Active Recruitment

A Phase III, Randomised, Open-Label Study of Savolitinib in Combination With Osimertinib Versus Platinum-Based Doublet Chemotherapy in Participants With EGFR Mutated MET-Overexpressed and/or Amplified, Locally Advanced or Metastatic Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer Who Have Progressed on Treatment With Osimertinib [SAFFRON]

An Open-label, Multicenter, Phase 3 Randomized, Active-Comparator-Controlled Clinical Study of Pembrolizumab (MK-3475) in Combination With Sacituzumab Govitecan Versus MK-3475 Monotherapy as First-line Treatment in Participants With PD L1 TPS Greater than or Equal to 50% Metastatic Non-small Cell Lung Cancer [KEYNOTE D46/EVOKE-03]

A Phase 3 Study of Pembrolizumab in Combination With Carboplatin/Taxane (Paclitaxel or Nab-paclitaxel) followed by Pembrolizumab With or Without Maintenance MK-2870 in the First-line Treatment of Metastatic Squamous Non-small Cell Lung Cancer [MK-2870-023]

A Phase 3 Randomized Open-Label Study of Adjuvant Pembrolizumab With or Without MK-2870 in Participants With Resectable Stage II to IIIB (N2) NSCLC not Achieving pCR After Receiving neoadjuvant Pembrolizumab With Platinum-based Doublet Chemotherapy Followed by Surgery [MK-2870-019]

Accruement Complete

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 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]

Roster of Oncology Clinical Trials

Lung cancer - continued

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)

Hematology

Active Recruitment

Statins for Venous Event Reduction in Patients with Venous Thromboembolism [The SAVER Trial]

Early Detection of Lymphoma Relapse Using Plasma ctDNA Sequencing.

A Prospective National MDS Clinical Database (MDS-CAN)

A Phase 3, Multicenter, Randomized, Double-blind, Placebo-controlled Study Comparing the Efficacy and Safety of Golcadomide Plus R-CHOP Chemotherapy vs Placebo Plus R-CHOP Chemotherapy in Participants with Previously Untreated High-risk Large B-cell Lymphoma (CA073-1020 / GOLSEEK-1)

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

Community Engagement

Event Recap: Community Conference on Caregiving

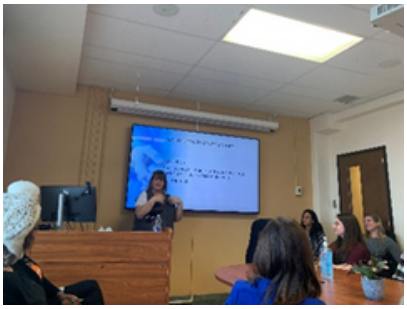
On October 31, 2024, St. Mary's Research Centre hosted a Community Conference titled "Co-Create Solutions to Meet the Needs of Caregivers and Seniors," featuring Alexandra Sabin, founder of Siaana Tech.

Alexandra shared insights on supporting caregivers, emphasizing empathy as the foundation of caregiving and discussing barriers caregivers face when seeking help due to financial, emotional, and social pressures, often rooted in cultural norms. It can be difficult for caregivers to ask for and accept help, particularly when caring for a loved one.

Alexandra also highlighted the importance of providing caregivers with accessible and flexible respite services. Her organization, Sianna Tech, addresses the need for respite services through co-creation techniques that bring key actors and community organisations together to develop practical solutions.

Alexandra also introduced another caregiver, Chantal Tardif, who discussed the role of the caregiver from her own personal experience becoming her husband's primary caregiver who were diagnosed with cancer. She highlighted the importance of having caregiver support groups. Chantal also found that many people often assume the role of caregiver by circumstance, and do not necessarily have previous training or expertise to rely on.

SMRC is honoured to facilitate this discussion on the importance of providing accessible and flexible support to caregivers. Through events like this, we hope to strengthen collaborative ties between our research centre and the community we serve.

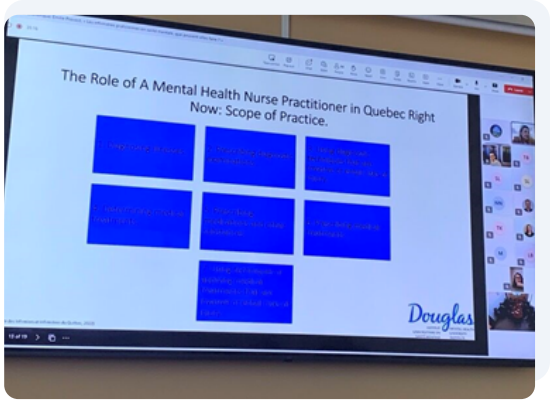


St. Mary's Research Centre Scientific Series

Scientific Series Recap: Thursday, October 24, 2024

Nurse Practitioners in Mental Health, What Exactly Can They Do?

Émilie Provost



Nurse Practitioners play an important role in patients' access to mental health services and care, particularly in Quebec. On October 24th, Émilie Provost shared her expertise on the role of a Nurse Practitioner in treating bipolar disorder, as well as the legal limitations of the position.

Key takeaways from the presentation included:

- Quebec is the only province in Canada where NPs can specialise in mental health.
- NPs take a holistic approach when caring for patients, taking into account biological, psychological, social, spiritual, identity related, determinants of health, and cultural factors.
- NPs can collaborate with psychiatrists to put in a treatment order; the psychiatrist must evaluate patients' abilities to consent to treatment.

Émilie Provost is a Nurse Practitioner in mental health, currently working at the Douglas Mental Health University Institute and in the private sector. She works with clients affected by schizoaffective disorder-bipolar type and bipolar disorder in the public while she sees a general psychiatry clientele in the private sector. She partakes in research regarding the treatment of bipolar disorders. Mme Provost also contractually teaches at the nurse practitioner Master's program at the Université de Montreal and supervises students during their internships.

*This presentation can be credited for clinical staff (continuing medical education)
Contact: christina.raneburger.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca
Form: https://forms.office.com/r/G55ZuLS11Q

St. Mary's Research Centre Scientific Series

Scientific Series Recap: Thursday, November 7, 2024

From Law to Practice: PIAs in Research at COMTL

Marie-Christine Boulianne & Adrian Mares

Bill 5 established a new legal framework for Privacy Impact Assessments (PIAs) in healthcare research at COMTL. On November 7th, Marie-Christine Boulianne and Adrian Mares shared how this new legal framework will impact research authorizations and best practices.

Key takeaways from the presentation included:

- Law 5 establishes a framework for personal information protection in health & social services, ensuring the sector has guidelines tailored & adapted for it specifically.
- PIAs (EFVP in French) are evaluated according to these local laws, not Research Ethics Board criteria; thus, researchers would need to submit to both.
- The goal of PIAs is to identify privacy risks early as well as to support secure and ethical research practices.

Marie-Christine Boulianne is a key professional at the CIUSSS de l'Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal (CIUSSS-ODIM), where she supports research initiatives and ensures compliance with personal data regulations. She brings extensive experience in health services administration and specializes in implementing Privacy Impact Assessments (PIAs) under Quebec's Law 25. Prior to this role, Marie-Christine was a project coordinator in mental health research for the CRISP group at the Douglas Institute. Her work focuses on promoting ethical research practices and robust data governance in the health sector.

Adrian Mares is a professional at the CIUSSS de l'Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal (COMTL), where he works in the field of personal information protection. He focuses on the operational implementation of data protection policies, conducting privacy impact assessments (PIAs, known as EFVPs in French), and managing confidentiality incidents. Adrian actively participates in staff training activities and coordinates the Committee on Access to Information and Protection of Personal Information (CAIPRP). Previously, he was a research professional for the research and information management component at the Health Technology and Intervention Methods Assessment Unit. His approach is grounded in his training and professional experience in document and information management, allowing him to bring a comprehensive perspective to information protection in the health sector.

*This presentation can be credited for clinical staff (continuing medical education)
Contact: christina.raneburger.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca
Form: https://forms.office.com/r/G55ZuLS11Q

St. Mary's Research Centre Scientific Series

Scientific Series Recap: Thursday, November 21, 2024

The TEMPO Canadian Cancer Trial: advancing self-management for men with prostate cancer and their caregivers

Dr. Sylvie Lambert

Providing consistent support for caregivers and addressing some of their unmet needs can allow them to more effectively care for their loved ones. On November 21st, SMRC's Dr. Sylvie Lambert provided an overview of the TEMPO program (Tailored, sElf-Management and Physical activity prOgram).

Key takeaways from this presentation included:

- TEMPO was developed for men with prostate cancer and their caregivers to increase both parties' self-management skills to address key psychosocial challenges; and increase or maintain physical activity.
- Caregivers and partners of patients often experience high levels of anxiety and depression, at clinical levels, and have difficulty recovering.
- Dr. Jane McCusker's team developed a lay guidance model to offer continued support for mental health self-care, based on principles of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT).

Prof. Sylvie Lambert is an Associate Professor and Associate Director of Research at McGill University's Ingram School of Nursing. She also holds a Canada Research Chair (Tier 2) in Illness Self-Management Support Interventions for Patients and Their Family Caregivers. Her research focuses on developing and evaluating sustainable self-management interventions for patients with cancer and other chronic illnesses, as well as their caregivers. Prof. Lambert has been recognized for her contributions to research. In 2024, she received the Canadian Association of Psychosocial Oncology (CAPO) Research Excellence Award. Throughout her career, Prof. Lambert has secured more than $7M in funding. Notably, she was awarded a $300,000 health equity research grant from the Canadian Cancer Society for a project aimed at improving communication between cancer patients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and clinicians. Her presentation today will be focusing on her recent CIHR project grant for $761,000. Prof. Lambert has an extensive publication record, with over 127 peer-reviewed articles and more than 100 conference presentations. Her work has significantly advanced the fields of patient education, caregiver research, and self-management interventions, contributing to improved outcomes for patients and their families.

*This presentation can be credited for clinical staff (continuing medical education)
Contact: christina.raneburger.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca
Form: https://forms.office.com/r/G55ZuLS11Q

St. Mary's Research Centre Scientific Series

Scientific Series: Thursday, November 28, 2024

Working Against the Clock: Night Shift Work as a Potential Carcinogen

Jennifer Ritonja, PhD

Millions of Canadians will work a night shift schedule at some point in their careers, particularly in the healthcare sector, yet the mechanisms by which these shifts may increase cancer risk are not well understood. On November 28th, SMRC's Jennifer Ritonja discussed the links between night shift work and breast cancer risk.

Key takeaways from this presentation included:

- Increasing exposure to night shift work can lead to a higher risk of breast and colorectal cancer (comparatively to other types of cancer).
- Working a night shift schedule is associated with a number of adverse biological and behavioural changes, including: sleep disruptions, hormonal changes, job stress, epigenetic changes, and cardiometabolic changes.
- The lifetime risk for developing cancer is low, but more epidemiologic evidence with high quality exposure measures is needed.

Dr. Jennifer Ritonja is a postdoctoral fellow in the Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology at McGill University and St. Mary's Research Centre. Her area of research specializes in identifying modifiable risk factors for cancer in women. She holds an MSc and PhD in epidemiology from Queen's University where her graduate work focused on investigating the adverse health impacts of working night shifts in women for diseases such as breast cancer and cardiovascular disease. Jennifer's current postdoctoral work examines the impact of body fatness and physical activity on ovarian cancer risk using life course epidemiologic methods.

*This presentation can be credited for clinical staff (continuing medical education)
Contact: christina.raneburger.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca
Form: https://forms.office.com/r/G55ZuLS11Q

St. Mary's Research Centre Scientific Series

Scientific Series: Thursday, December 5, 2024

Melanoma and Skin Cancers: Rising Trends and Implications

Dr. Ivan Litvinov

Melanoma rates in Canada are increasing at rapid rates, yet most Canadians are still unaware of how to properly protect themselves from harmful UV radiation. On December 5th, Dr. Ivan Litvinov discussed the implications of increased UV exposure on Canadians, as well as differing trends across the country.

Key takeaways from this presentation included:

- UV rays have addictive properties, which makes people more inclined to spend excessive time exposed to direct sunlight.
- Incidence of melanoma is increasing in Canada and variations on incidence have been documented at postal code/city levels.
- The environment plays a significant role: annual average temperature, presence of vegetation and UVR increase rates of melanoma; whereas heat/rain events and high annual temperature decrease rates of melanoma.

Dr. Litvinov is an Associate Professor in the Division of Dermatology of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences of McGill University. He earned his Ph.D. degree in cellular and molecular medicine at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland, and his medical degree at McGill, completing dermatology residency training at the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC). Prior to joining the faculty at McGill, Dr Litvinov practiced as an Assistant Professor of dermatology at the University of Ottawa between 2015-2017. He is active in cutaneous research, particularly studying cutaneous lymphomas, keratinocyte carcinomas, and melanoma, and his research is supported by various grants from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR).

*This presentation can be credited for clinical staff (continuing medical education)
Contact: christina.raneburger.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca
Form: https://forms.office.com/r/G55ZuLS11Q

St. Mary's Research Centre Scientific Series

Scientific Series: Thursday, December 12, 2024

More equitable diversity in research through the lens of disability and intersectionality

Muriel Mac-Seing, PhD

Intersectionality helps us understand how diverse social factors and organizations of power can interact and influence each other. On December 12th, Dr. Muriel Mac-Seing shared how to integrate EDI practices and diverse perspectives, specifically disabled perspectives, in research settings.

Key takeaways from this presentation included:

- The Intersectionality-based Policy Analysis (IBPA) is an operational framework on how to prioritise intersectionality, with equity and social justice being the 2 ultimate goals.
- A person's identity (e.g., woman, person of colour, person with disabilities, etc.) is not what makes them vulnerable; it is the interaction with a social, oppressive, and discriminatory structures that marginalizes people.
- Recommendations for including people with disabilities: increase budgeting, more research, collect more data, enforcement measures for disability law & policy, sensitise family & health staff, and empower people with disabilities.

Dr. Muriel Mac-Seing is an Assistant Professor in Global Health at the School of Public Health of the Université de Montréal. Her research areas focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights and inclusive climate action for people with disabilities and population groups living in situations of vulnerability. Her work draws upon the critical lens of intersectionality, disability, health equity, and structural determinants of health (including governance, leadership, and policy). Through mixed methods and the intersectionality-based policy analysis framework, she examined the relationships between legislation, health policy, and the use of sexual and reproductive health services for people with disabilities in post-conflict Northern Uganda. Currently, she is implementing the following research projects: 1) a participatory action-research project on sexual education and sexual and reproductive health rights for youth with disabilities in Uganda and youth living in the slums of Bangladesh; and 2) an exploratory project on the intersection of climate change and access to health services by people with disabilities and their animals, through the approaches of One Health and intersectionality in Québec and the district of Gulu, Uganda.

*This presentation can be credited for clinical staff (continuing medical education)

Contact: christina.raneburger.comtl@ssss.gouv.qc.ca

Form: https://forms.office.com/r/G55ZuLS11Q

New Partnerships Office

CIUSSS West Island's new Partnerships Office (formerly the Citizen Partners Office) has renewed its service offer to help improve health and social services.

Anyone residing in the West Island who deeply cares about the health and well-being of their community, and wants to put their personal experience to good use, can become a partner. The community of partners community includes citizens or patients, users and informal caregivers.

The Partnerships Office is there to support you in your research projects, whether by helping you mobilize partners for research activities or recruit potential participants for studies, through the existing database or by launching an appeal to the community.

For full details of the services offered by the Partnerships Office, visit the intranet page.

CIUSSS launches new EDI Book Club

The CIUSSS-ODIM now has a new book club, "Stories of Diversity". This activity, open to all employees, is an excellent opportunity to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and take part in constructive, stimulating discussions.

The first meeting will take place on January 14, 2025. The focus will be Kim Thúy's book, *Ru*. The book is beautifully written, and recounts the moving experiences of a young Vietnamese refugee in Québec. It explores themes of memory, identity, and resilience. The discussions will take place online, with the possibility of creating breakout groups in French and English.

Registration for the first meeting is now open. Come contribute to interesting discussions and discover new perspectives!

Year-End Farewell

SMRC sincerely thanks our research community for yet another transformative year. From launching new projects and clinical trials, to establishing deeper community partnerships, this year marked many milestones for our research centre. Our 2024 successes will be released in the new year in SMRC's Annual Report.

Looking forward, SMRC hopes to grow our research capabilities and support infrastructure to continue to maintain a standard of excellence at our research centre.

Our key list of priorities for 2024-2025 include:

1. **The renewal of our Chair in Family Medicine:** Dr. Jeannie Haggerty served as the chairholder of this position and is set to retire in 2025. Our objective is to ensure the recruitment of her successor.
2. **Establish a Community Engagement Plan:** Through strategic partnerships and knowledge transfer events, SMRC will create a more inclusive research environment that reflects and addresses the needs of our culturally diverse community.
3. **Reinforce EDI policies and initiatives:** SMRC created the Community engagement Office in October 2024, which will be actively working on specific policies and EDI-related projects for our research centre.
4. **Become DORA affiliated:** Adhering to DORA best practices will allow SMRC to advance innovative, transparent, diverse, and high caliber research.
5. **External Review:** We will conduct a review of our research center by engaging an external evaluator. This process is considered a best practice to ensure alignment with the highest standards in research.
6. **Older Adult Strategic Plan:** We are undertaking an exercise to develop a research strategy focused on older adult care.

We extend our deepest thanks to our researchers, staff, and key partners—your dedication is the foundation of our progress. May this holiday season bring you rest, joy, and the opportunity to reflect on all we have achieved together.

We would also like to thank the St. Mary's Hospital Foundation for their steadfast support. Your generosity enables us to advance the frontiers of research and improve healthcare for our communities. Together, we are shaping a healthier future.

Here's to a bright new year of growth and continued success. Happy holidays!

With gratitude,
The SMRC Team

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

FONDATION DE L'HÔPITAL ST. MARY | ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

St. Mary's Research Centre is grateful to St. Mary's Hospital Foundation for its generous financial contribution towards scientific advancement. Le Centre de recherche de St. Mary remercie la Fondation de l'Hôpital St. Mary pour son généreux soutien financier en appui à l'avancement scientifique.

© St. Mary's Research Centre, 2024