



Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Management

Annual Report | 2022

Director's Message

It has been a tremendous year of growth and progress for the Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Management (CCDPM).

After the highly-successful launch of the Research Incubator program, the Centre continues to foster new collaborations with clinicians that advance patient care across the vast Interior Health region. Research activities are now underway for our second intake of Incubator projects. These projects will take place over the next couple of years and expand opportunities for clinicians, scientists and students to engage in collaborative, impactful research.

We are thrilled to have Dr. Jonathan Little, Professor, Faculty of Health and Social Development, join the CCDPM as an Investigator. The addition of Dr. Little helps to broaden our collective research capacity and advance the CCDPM's strategic goals as the Lead for our Diabetes and Obesity Research Pillar.

During the past year, the Centre has committed to building a greater sense of community for CCDPM trainees. The newly-established CCDPM Trainee Engagement Committee has spearheaded new initiatives to help trainees build connections with their colleagues and showcase their research. This past

November, the CCDPM held its first-ever Research Day and provided a forum for trainees to present their research, make new introductions, and share best practices.

Through funding from the Reichwald Family Southern Medical Program Chair in Preventive Medicine, the Centre has provided numerous travel awards for our trainees. The awards offset travel costs for trainees to participate in meetings or conferences that ultimately support their professional development.

It is remarkable to reflect on the past year and take stock of the Centre's growth and deepening research connections. We are truly grateful for our partners and donors who continually allow us to remain agile and capitalize on new funding and partnership opportunities. It's exciting to see what the future holds as the Centre starts to hit its stride.



Dr. Kathleen Martin Ginis

Director Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Management

Reichwald Family UBC Southern Medical Program Chair in Preventive Medicine



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Management
Faculty of Medicine



A team approach to understanding post-treatment cancer care

This year, more than 30,000 British Columbians will be diagnosed with cancer, including 6,195 in the interior region. Following specialist treatment, many of them will go on to live long lives in the care of their family physicians, nurse practitioners or other primary care providers, thanks in part to early detection, improvements in technology and more effective treatments.

For Kelowna-based BC Cancer radiation oncologist Dr. Siavash Atrchian, a clinical assistant professor in UBC's Faculty of Medicine and a radiation oncologist at BC Cancer-Kelowna, ensuring the best outcomes for his patients means understanding how best to integrate family physicians into their care.

"Overall, in the patient cancer journey, I think family doctors play an extremely important role, from the start to the end," says Dr. Atrchian. "As oncologists, we can't follow our patients forever once their cancer treatment has been completed. I'm very interested in seeing whether we can improve this journey. How can I do a better job in my role? How can I communicate better with other care providers?"

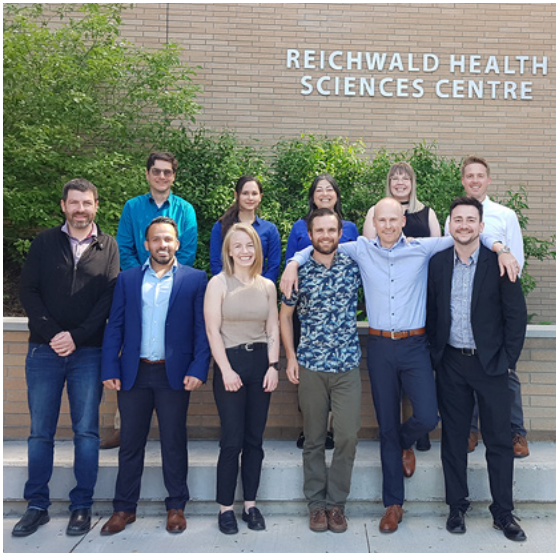
These questions were on his mind when Dr. Atrchian was first introduced to Dr. Christine Voss who was helping to launch the Centre's Research Incubator.

"The premise of the incubator initiative is really to bring health scientists together with clinicians," Dr. Voss explains. "In Dr. Atrchian, you have a clinician who really understands the needs around post-cancer treatment, while I'm a scientist who knows how to set up a mixed-methods study, collect and analyze the data," Dr. Voss adds. "I recommended interviews and surveys of family physicians and oncologists in Interior Health, and was able to guide how to set those up."

Dr. Voss and Dr. Atrchian soon became co-principal investigators of an interdisciplinary team of researchers, oncologists, family physicians, and Southern Medical Program students. Collectively, they are focused on the goal of examining how to best integrate family doctors into the post-cancer treatment care of the four most common cancers: breast, lung, colon and prostate.

While it's too early to share details of their findings, Dr. Atrchian says the work is revealing how cancer patients' post-treatment journey can be better supported by those caring for them. That includes bringing oncologists and family physicians together for more regular educational sessions; more robust guidelines for discharge notes from oncologists to family physicians; and creating more opportunities for them to communicate with one another.

West Lab hosts research launch event at UBCO



The NSERC Alliance grant represents a large research collaboration with the UBC Faculty of Medicine, UBC Okanagan School of Engineering, and industry partner Transonic.

The overall goal of the project is to develop a state-of-the-art telemetric solution that would allow researchers to conduct long-term monitoring of vascular blood flow, blood pressure and ECG in animal models.

"This partnership represents an extremely exciting endeavor for our lab and will enable us to make the first simultaneous measure of cardiac pressures, blood flow and ECG," says Dr. West, CCDPM Investigator.

"These innovative devices will advance our fundamental understanding of how the cardiovascular system responds to a wide range of stimuli."

Key project collaborators include Dr. Brian Kwon, Canada Research Chair in Spinal Cord Injury and Professor with the UBC Department of Orthopaedics and Dr. Rudolf Seethaler, Associate Professor with the UBC Okanagan School of Engineering.

Diet and lifestyle education in a family practice clinic can benefit wellbeing

Low-carbohydrate high-fat (LCHF) diets have shown to improve weight loss and cardiovascular health. But for many people, it's not often clear when or how to implement such a change. A new UBC Okanagan study explores how primary care physicians and allied health professionals can help patients adopt dietary and lifestyle interventions to improve their overall health.

"LCHF diets restrict the body's glucose to create a metabolic state called ketosis that focuses a body's metabolism on fats as opposed to carbohydrates," says Southern Medical Program student Alex Myshak-Davis and study lead author.

"Hypertension is the most common chronic disease, followed by Type 2 diabetes, obesity, osteoarthritis and chronic kidney disease amongst the study group," says Dr. Janet Evans, a Kelowna-based family physician and CCDPM affiliate clinician.



"Participants who followed an LCHF diet experienced weight loss and a body mass index (BMI) reduction," says Myshak-Davis. "Those who participated in ongoing health education with the registered nurse saw a greater improvement in weight, BMI, blood pressure, diabetes control and kidney function."

UBCO meeting EPIC challenge for people living with spinal-cord injury

Ever since Anand Kannan's 2008 ATV accident left him paralyzed from his chest down, the West Kelowna man has learned to appreciate any and all victories in his mission to stay healthy.

For instance, by participating in research studies at UBC Okanagan he was exposed to exercise equipment and regimens specifically tailored to the spinal-cord injury (SCI) community—something not readily available otherwise.

"I was at UBCO using a press machine, pulling down on the weight," Kannan says. "But then I realized the machine also worked in reverse—I could press straight above my head. For someone in

a wheelchair, just being able to use that simple motion without worrying about falling backward was such a gift."

That's one reason why Kannan is advocating for others in the SCI community to embrace the opportunities at UBCO in Kelowna by signing up for a research project.

"This is an opportunity for adults with an SCI to help those in their same situation," Dr. Martin Ginis says. "This isn't about doing research so the results can sit on a library shelf. We are genuinely driven to do research that can improve people's lives."

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CENTRE FOR CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT

CCDPM INVESTIGATORS BY THE NUMBERS 2022

61

Research Publications

\$4.54M

Primary Investigator
Research Funding

\$2.79M

Co-Investigator
Research Funding

RESEARCH PILLARS:

Diabetes and Obesity Lead:
Dr. Jonathan Little

Cardiovascular Health Lead:
Dr. Chris West

Neurological Disorders Leads:
Dr. Brodie Sakakibara and
Dr. Daryl Wile

INVESTIGATORS

Dr. Jonathan Little
Dr. Kathleen Martin Ginis
Dr. Sarah McCorquodale
Dr. Sarah Purcell
Dr. Brodie Sakakibara
Dr. Chris West
Dr. Daryl Wile (Clinical)
Dr. Christine Voss

AFFILIATE INVESTIGATORS

Dr. Jennifer Davis
Dr. Neil Eves
Dr. Daniel Fok
Dr. Ilona Hale
Dr. Devin Harris
Dr. Charlotte Jones
Dr. Mary Jung
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Dr. Tricia Tang
Dr. Deanne Taylor
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