

BCMHSUS RESEARCH

Inside this issue:

Message from Executive Director	1
News & Announcements	1
Highlighting Research	2
Awards, Grants & Honours	3
Research Opportunities	3
Patient & Family Engagement	4
The Knowledge Exchange	5
Upcoming Events	6

Message from the Executive Director



Masks still required at all healthcare facilities

Dear BCMHSUS Research Community,

Welcome to spring and as we adjust to the lifting of some of the restrictions, I hope you find time to connect with colleagues, friends and family with the upcoming holiday and in-person events.

As of March 10th, 2022, Dr. Bonnie Henry announced the [removal of the mask mandate in many indoor public settings](#), as well as the lifting of additional COVID-19 restrictions, such as the BC Vaccine Card on April 8th.

While B.C. and the Provincial Health Officer take the steps to lift additional health orders, the mask policy in health care settings remains in effect, including all research sites. Although social distancing is no longer required and our meeting rooms have returned to full capacity, we ask that you continue to wear a mask and full vaccination remains a requirement to work at all sites.

We do hope to see more of you around the research institute!

Sincerely,

Jehannine



Need extra support during COVID-19?

PHSA: Visit Workplace Wellness: [Coping with COVID-19](#)

UBC: Visit <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/covid-19/#expressed> and <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/wellbeing-benefits/living-well/mental-health/staff-faculty/>



In Memory of Dr. Christine Tipper

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of Dr. Christine Tipper, former investigator with BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services and BC Children’s Hospital, and Assistant Professor with the Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia.

Christine was working to improve brain imaging technology to support neurodevelopmental conditions such as autism, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, anxiety, chronic pain and traumatic brain injury. Her goal was to develop new interventions to improve the quality of life for children and families affected by these conditions. Her work made brain imaging more accessible and less scary and in her words: “Most kids find it quite enjoyable – it’s like a little head massage. When you’re done, you just take off the cap and you’ve got beach hair for the rest of the day!”

Christine will be remembered by her colleagues as a brilliant and passionate researcher, wonderful friend and collaborator, and a warm-hearted mentor. She was also an outdoorsy nature lover who enjoyed hiking, rollerblading, snowshoeing, camping and yoga. Our thoughts and sincere condolences are with Christine’s family and loved ones.

In memoriam donations can be made in recognition of her research program focus at:

BRITISH COLUMBIA AUTISM FOUNDATION

Registered Name: BRITISH COLUMBIA AUTISM FOUNDATION

Business No: 892778366RR0001

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/british-columbia-autism-foundation/?mprompt=1>

News & Announcements

COVID-19 Patient Database for Research

The [COVID-19 Consent to Contact Registry Database \(CCRD\)](#) is a means for researchers to connect with British Columbians who have experienced COVID-19, and contribute to improving care for COVID-19 patients.

Now with over 59,000 participants, we invite any researchers doing COVID-19 work to connect yours with us at covidresearch@bccdc.ca. It is free, quick and everyone has expressed interest in doing research, making for a faster recruitment process. Researchers interested in accessing the registry must first submit their request through the [CRCI Request Form](#).



Highlighting Research

Featured Researcher

Every newsletter we highlight an outstanding PI/Trainee



Dr. Clare Beasley

Who are you?

I am a neuroscientist – I completed my undergraduate degree and doctorate in neuroscience in the UK, followed by a post-doctoral fellowship in neuropathology at the Institute of Psychiatry in London, before moving to Vancouver in 2003. I am currently Associate Professor in the UBC Department of Psychiatry and I have been with the BCMHSUS Research Institute since it opened at the Oak St site in 2008. My primary research interest is the cellular and molecular neurobiology of major mental illness; essentially, I am interested in how and why brain cells might malfunction in people with psychiatric disorders, and ways of measuring this.

What are you working on?

A major current focus of our research is to further understand the role of the immune system in psychiatric disorders. We study cells and molecules involved in immune function both in brain tissue donated by deceased patients who experienced a psychiatric disorder, and in other types of samples, such as blood and saliva. Our goal is to explore the relationship between the immune system, brain structure, and behavior, and to uncover effects of peripheral inflammation on the brain. Complementary studies are focused on understanding how psychiatric medications might impact the immune system.

Who are you working with?

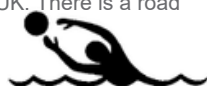
My research team can be found at wet lab benches or looking down microscopes at the Research Institute, and is capably managed by Li Shao, who has been with us for over ten years. I have collaborated with many BCMHSUS researchers, working with Dr. William Honer on postmortem studies of aging and psychosis and with Drs. Alasdair Barr and Donna Lang on animal models of medication and alcohol use. Recent interest in blood and saliva-based biomarkers has led to collaborations with Dr. Evelyn Stewart, investigating salivary immune biomarkers in OCD, Dr. William Panenka and Dr. Christian Schütz.

Why this project?

Our prior findings that morphology of brain cells responsible for mediating inflammation and expression of molecules involved in the inflammatory response are altered in schizophrenia suggest that immune disturbances may be present in some individuals with this disorder. Following on from this, we recently obtained funding to investigate the role of the complement system in the pathophysiology of schizophrenia. Complement C4, a member of the immune regulatory complement cascade, has previously been identified as a genetic risk factor for schizophrenia. Our study aims to identify the mechanisms by which dysregulation of complement C4 may impact brain structure and function in this disorder.

Fun fact:

Some fun facts... As an undergraduate I played water polo for my University team. I am a big fan of Leicester City football club, and try to catch a game when I visit the UK. There is a road named after my family in the village where I grew up.



Recent Publications from BCMHSUS Researchers

- **Remote group therapies for cognitive health in schizophrenia-spectrum disorders: Feasible, acceptable, engaging.** Mendelson, D., Thibaudeau, É., Sauv , G., Lavigne, K.M., Bowie, C.R., Menon, M., Woodward, T.S., Lepage, M. and Raucher-Ch n , D. *Schizophrenia Research: Cognition*. [Read more](#)
- **Antipsychotic Drug-Induced Increases in Peripheral Catecholamines are Associated With Glucose Intolerance.** Boyda, H., Pham, M., Huang, J., Ho, A., Procyshyn, R., Yuen, J., Honer, W. and Barr, A. *Frontiers in Pharmacology*. [Read more](#)
- **Functional Delineation of Prefrontal Networks Underlying Working Memory in Schizophrenia: A Cross-data-set Examination.** Sanford, N. and Woodward, T.S. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*. [Read more](#)
- **Item-specific overlap between hallucinatory experiences and cognition in the general population: A three-step multivariate analysis of international multi-site data.** Chinchani, A. M., Menon, M., Roes, M., Hwang, H., Allen, P., Bell, V., ... & Woodward, T. S. *Cortex*. [Read more](#)
- **Celecoxib versus placebo as an adjunct to treatment-as-usual in children and youth with obsessive-compulsive disorder: protocol for a single-site randomised quadruple-blind phase II study.** Westwell-Roper, C., Best, J.R., Elbe, D., MacFadden, M., Baer, S., Tucker, L., Au, A., Naqqash, Z., Lin, B., Lu, C. and Stewart, S.E. *BMJ open*. [Read more](#)
- **The OCI-CV-R: A Revision of the Obsessive-Compulsive Inventory-Child Version.** Abramovitch A, Abramowitz JS, McKay D, Cham H, Anderson KS, Farrell L, Geller DA, Hanna GL, Mathieu S, McGuire JF, Rosenberg DR, Stewart SE, Storch EA, Wilhelm S. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*. [Read more](#)
- **Emergency department use for mental and substance use disorders: descriptive analysis of population-based, linked administrative data in British Columbia, Canada.** Lavergne, M.R., Shirmaleki, M., Loyal, J.P., Jones, W., Nicholls, T.L., Sch tz, C.G., Vaughan, A., Samji, H., Puyat, J.H., Kaoser, R. and Kaulius, M. *BMJ open*. [Read more](#)
- **Chronic Pain among Individuals Experiencing Homelessness and Its Interdependence with Opioid and Other Substance Use and Mental Illness.** Vogel, M., Choi, F., Westenberg, J.N., Cabanis, M., Nikoo, N., Nikoo, M., Hwang, S.W., Somers, J., Sch tz, C.G. and Krausz, M. *International journal of environmental research and public health*. [Read more](#)
- **The Utility of Research Domain Criteria in Diagnosis and Management of Dual Disorders: A Mini-Review.** Hakak-Zargar, B., Tamrakar, A., Voth, T., Sheikhi, A., Multani, J. and Sch tz, C.G. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*. [Read more](#)
- **Metacognitive training for psychosis (MCT): past, present, and future.** Moritz, S., Menon, M., Balzan, R. and Woodward, T.S. *European Archives of Psychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience*. [Read more](#)

International Day of Women and Girls in Science

Dr. Nicholls was recognized as an 'inspiring female leader' by BC Children's Hospital Research Institute, Women's Health Research Institute and BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services Research Institute. In 2015, UNESCO and UN Women announced an annual day to appreciate and honor the important role women and girls play in science and technology.

On Thursday February 10, 2022, we celebrated the International Day of Women and Girls in Science [#WomenInScience](#) ! Dr. Nicholls was asked to speak about what inspired her to enter a career in research and to reflect on the role of mentors and how her program of work has developed. [Read more](#)

Awards, Grants & Honours

Dr. Clare Beasley is the recipient of a CIHR Project Grant

Congratulations Dr. Beasley for receiving a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Fall 2021 Project Grant award for the project entitled "**Association between Complement C4 and Synaptic Pathology in Schizophrenia**". [Read more](#)

Armaan Rajan is awarded the Derek Eaves Student Research Grant

Congratulations to Armaan, who working under Dr. Tonia Nicholls, has been awarded with the Fall 2021 Derek Eaves Student Research Grant for their project "The VERDICT on Virtual Review Board Hearings for Forensic Psychiatric Patients: An Examination of Virtual Engagement, its Remedial or Detrimental Influences since COVID-19, and Trajectories". Congratulations on this outstanding work! [Read more](#)

Research Opportunities



NEW BCMHSUS Research Membership Categories

Are you interested in research? The BCMHSUS Research Institute has two new membership categories – Community Partner and Affiliate Investigator. Join us as we expand our research community and connect those interested in and/or doing research focused on improving the health, wellbeing, and health care for British Columbians at risk for or experiencing mental health and/ or substance use issues and those involved with the criminal justice system. Our **Community Partner membership** category is for those of you interested in learning more about research and opportunities to participate in research or research events. The BCMHSUS Community Partner membership launched in 2021 and as of today has 17 members, a mix of clinicians, students and persons with lived experience from across the province.

Launched in March 2022, the **BCMHSUS Research Affiliate Investigator membership** is for those of you engaged in research relevant to BCMHSUS and its programs/populations or have significant engagement in a research program that is closely aligned with a BCMHSUS researcher. Applications are reviewed and approved by the Executive Director, BCMHSUS Research.

All of our members are eligible to receive the BCMHSUS Research Institute newsletter and attend organized research activities. You may opt out of receiving this information at any time.

For more information about BCMHSUS Research and these new opportunities to participate in research, visit our [Become a Member page](#) on the website which includes links to the applications. [Contact us](#) if you have any questions!

The VERDICT on Virtual Review Boards

Have you participated in a virtual Review Board Hearing? Did you think it worked well? Did you think it was efficient or cumbersome? Were there things you'd like to see changed? We want to hear from you!

Forensic Psychiatric Services staff are invited to participate in The VERDICT study to share their opinions on how virtual Review Board Hearings compare to in-person hearings, impacts on patients and what can be done to improve the experience for all stakeholders. The survey takes less than 10 minutes to complete, and your insights are invaluable to the successful implementation of this new mode of practice.

We need a Minimum of 25 staff members for this study:

- It's only 10 minutes!
- All disciplines and both Forensic Psychiatric Hospital/clinic staff and physicians are welcome (we are also sampling 25 inpatients, 25 clinic patients; 25 family, 25 RB members and 25 legal reps)
- The person needs to have taken part in at least one in person hearing and one virtual hearing.

Please visit <https://rc.bcchr.ca/redcap/surveys/?s=XYJPLH93LT> to learn more and/or complete the survey.

Funding Opportunity - Strategic Investment Fund (SIF)

The University of British Columbia Faculty of Medicine's spring 2022 call for Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) proposals is now open. SIF funding is aimed at supporting projects that advance the strategic plan, [Building the Future: 2021-2026](#). Since its launch in 2017, faculty, staff and learners have leveraged this funding to create new research platforms and lay the groundwork for CFI applications; develop new partnerships and interdisciplinary collaboration; create and test new and innovative education methods; and improve the ways we support wellbeing and community engagement. To learn more about previously funded projects, [click here](#).

Click [here](#) to learn more about how to submit a proposal.



Funding Opportunity—2022 Health Professional-Investigator Competition

The Health Professional-Investigator (HP-I) awards are designed to help close the gap between health research and its implementation and support BC health professionals who are actively involved in patient care to conduct and apply research relevant to health and/or the health system, ultimately to improve health outcomes in BC and beyond.

Health Research BC recognizes the importance of engaging patient partners and our broader community to facilitate research that contributes to changing policies and practices related to patient health and/or the health system. As such, we have modified the 2022 application process to include a patient and community review. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Looking to collect research data online? Consider using REDCap!

What is REDCap?

- REDCap (Research Electronic Data Capture) is a web-based software used for designing and capturing data for research studies
- REDCap allows users to build and manage online surveys and research databases quickly and securely

> Research Electronic Data Capture



- REDCap is managed by the BC Children's Hospital Research Data Management team for use across PHSA. The team provides REDCap support for BCMHSUS Research through project specific consultation, training materials, virtual/in-person workshops and IT/technical support.

Why use REDCap?

- Accessible: Web-based access (on and off site), collaborative and centralized environment
- Accurate: Maintains consistent and accurate data entry for easy exporting to common statistical packages: SPSS, SAS, Stata, R/S-Plus, Tableau
- Customizable: Fast and flexible design and implementation, customizable modifications at any time
- Secure: User authentication and data-logging, securely stored and monitored



To request a REDCap project, follow this link: <https://rc.bcchr.ca/redcap/surveys/?s=DJDMKP4DC4>

For more information, email us at redcap@bcchr.ca or visit our REDCap HUB page: <https://hub.bcchr.ca/display/redcap/REDCap>

Check out this week's REDCap Tips & Tricks!

Learn about all the new features in the REDCap LTS Upgrade 12.0

coming March 29, 2022 from 16:00-18:00 PST!

Click here to learn more: [LTS 12.0 Upgrade T&T](#)

Patient & Family Engagement

BCMHSUS clients share stories of stigma in new mini-documentary series

By Katie Mai, Leader, Patient Experience and Community Engagement, BCMHSUS



[Stigma](#) creates additional challenges and the likelihood of negative outcomes for people with mental health and substance use issues, pushing them into the shadows and making them feel they are not deserving of help. Research teams, and the healthcare system more broadly, have an opportunity to play a transformational role in combatting stigma by connecting with people as human beings first and foremost, rather than just as a participant, a diagnosis, or other label.

In partnership with former clients and patients, BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services has created a [three-part mini-documentary series](#) featuring Chris, Charles, and L.T. who share the impact stigma has on their health, their experiences with the health care system, and their hopes for the future. These videos are part of a broader initiative "Understanding Each Other Together (UNITE): A journey into our experiences of stigma to celebrate diversity and create change."

We hope you take the time to watch these videos, share them within your networks to advance our understanding of the impacts of stigma and reflect on how you can combat stigma through your research.

[Video 1](#): Stigma—stories of experience

[Video 2](#): Standing in the gap—stories of experience

[Video 3](#): Overcoming and healing—stories of experience

Resources to support patient-oriented research

Patient-oriented research is research done in partnership with patients/ clients that aims to answer research questions that matter to them and that have potential to improve healthcare.

Road map to support patient-oriented research

BC SUPPORT Unit has developed a [Journey through Public & Patient Engagement in Health Research: A Road Map](#). This interactive road map focuses on patient and public partners on a research team, outlining diverse activities that they could engage in across multiple phases of a health research project.

There is no "correct" or "absolute" way to engage patients and public partners in research; however, there are many different options and opportunities for patients to meaningfully be engaged and make a difference.

Reach the participants and patient partners you need

REACH BC is an online platform that connects the public and patients with research opportunities related to their health conditions and/or interests, to ultimately advance health care and improve health outcomes in British Columbia. You are invited to post your health research opportunities here!

REACH BC is free and easy to use:

1. Sign up for a Researcher account at REACH BC
2. Submit your active research project to the public directory
3. Find volunteers that are matched using the eligibility criteria
4. Follow up with interested volunteers

For more information you can visit: www.reachbc.ca/researchers



The Knowledge Exchange

*Anita David is an advocate, facilitator, and community-based researcher. Anita is also a lived experience strategic advisor with BCMHSUS, and as such has played an instrumental role in establishing and guiding the inaugural BCMHSUS [Research Challenge](#). Anita also works as mentor for the SPARK program, a trainer for Mental Health First Aid, and as a Peer Mentor with the BCCDC. To learn more about Anita, you can listen to an [interview](#) about her mental health journey on CO-OP radio's *The Storytelling Show* or watch a [video](#) of her sharing her story for *Bounce: Moving Stories of Moving Forward*.*

Anita describes Knowledge Translation and Exchange (KTE) as a bridge between research and practice that transforms information into formats the audience can receive and understand. Clearly influenced by her background in communications, the key questions she asks are: "Who needs to know? And how do they need to know it?" Anita describes herself as "doing KTE" every time she with engages people the way they want to be engaged.

Anita is a self-described fan of arts-based methods. Her interest in KTE was piqued while working as a Peer Researcher on a 2018 photovoice project called [Imagining Inclusion](#). As part of this project, Anita attended the Mental Health Commission of Canada's [SPARK training](#) on the [Innovation to Implementation](#) framework, which was foundational in developing her understanding of both KTE and patient-oriented research, two areas in which she now provides leadership and training to others.

Anita recommends anyone wanting to engage in KTE focus on building relationships with stakeholders. You may know what information you want to transmit, but are your stakeholders able to receive it? Rather than writing a report, peer reviewed paper, or presenting at a conference, your audience engagement may be more successful if you create accessible resources, such as infographics highlighting key concepts or incorporate storytelling. People are resistant to change, so it's important that change initiatives be made appealing or exciting.

Anita emphasizes the importance of genuineness, cultural safety, and trauma-informed practice in relationships with stakeholders. As Anita says, "It's really important to be able to define why you're doing things and to ask what's in it for that audience, that stakeholder – if you can't answer that then you probably shouldn't be doing it." Anita also cautions that being ill-prepared to engage stakeholders can lead to unintentional harm, particularly when engaging those with lived or living experience. For example, talking about traumatic events in a very clinical way without giving space, compassion, and empathy for the lived experience in the room can be retraumatizing. When patient partners are involved, it is essential to take steps to humanize everyone around the table. As Anita explains from her own experience, it can be a huge jump for a physician who always see patients in crisis to then partner with them on a project – unfortunately our health care providers do not get many opportunities to see clients at their best. One way to do this is through using icebreaker activities to address power dynamics at the beginning of meetings.

Above all, Anita encourages anyone creating a KTE plan to think outside the box and get creative, because when KTE is done well it can inspire change.

We want to hear from you! Do you have KTE ideas, stories, or questions? Connect via [email](#).



Upcoming Events

BCMHSUS Learning Rounds

An introduction to the Adapt clinic: Using research to develop a new service that helps empower people with psychiatric disorders and their families

In this presentation, Dr. Austin will talk about their experience of developing a first-of-its-kind-in-the-world clinic, based on their research conducted within the BCMHSUS Research Institute.

The adapt clinic is covered by MSP, and is available to all residents of BC who have psychiatric disorders and/or substance use problems, and has won a BC quality forum award for its impact on patient outcomes - specifically, it increases empowerment. Dr. Austin will provide an overview of the clinic, and how clinicians can refer their patients to it.

When: Thursday, April 14th 12pm-1pm **Location:** Webinar (Zoom)

Register on the LearningHub: [BCMHSUS Learning Rounds](#) or

Join with this [Zoom meeting link](#).

Meeting ID: 986 5259 9434 Passcode: 234567



The Indigenous Cultural Safety Collaborative presents Weaving Indigenous Wisdom Traditions: The Grandmother Speaks

On April 28, the [Indigenous Cultural Safety \(ICS\) Collaborative](#) will be offering the first of a four-part webinar series featuring nationally recognized Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and Elders sharing insights into the wisdom needed to thrive in this era of disruption and environmental change.

While the series has been developed specifically for Indigenous people, non-Indigenous people are welcome to attend as listeners and witnesses. Listening is a key component of traditional Indigenous teaching practices and an essential aspect of becoming a good ally.

[Register for the April 28 webinar.](#)



Interested in research opportunities at BCMHSUS? Get involved! Visit the following [link](#) and become a member.