

BCMHSUS RESEARCH

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Message from the Executive Director



Welcome Summer Students!

Dear BCMHSUS Research Community,

As another summer rolls in, we would like to congratulate our Summer Studentship recipients and welcome you all to BCMHSUS. We hope your time with us will be a valuable and meaningful experience!

We would also like to remind all staff, students and volunteers of the newly updated vaccination requirements at the Oak Street campus. Now, as part of the onboarding process, vaccination status must be submitted through the following [link](#) before bringing any new members to receive their Photo IDs.

We hope everyone stays cool in the warmer weather and takes time for some well deserved rest and relaxation!

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/>

Comings & Goings

Welcome to our new Affiliate Investigator, Dr. Dylan Gatner



Dr. Dylan Gatner is a scientist practitioner who holds the title of Forensic Psychologist with Forensic Psychiatric Services of BCMHSUS. He is currently developing research projects to be conducted out of the Vancouver Regional Clinic, and hopes to develop a small research lab and provide supervision on topics such as forensic assessment, risk assessment, and sleep disorders.

Dr. Gatner applies a scientist-practitioner approach to all his professional work. Specifically, his research interests include psychopathic personality disorder (psychopathy) and violence risk assessment. Through these interests, Dr. Gatner has been a lead author in high-impact, peer-reviewed journals related to psychology and forensic mental health (e.g., Journal of Personality, Assessment, International Journal of Forensic Mental Health). Additionally, he has also presented at international conferences and has received grants and national funding for his scholarly work. Dr. Gatner also engages in ongoing scientific service work via editorial consultation for various peer-reviewed academic journals, including the Journal of Forensic Psychology Research and Practice, Criminal Justice and Behavior, and the Journal of Threat Assessment and Management.

Please give him a big welcome as our first Affiliate Investigator!

Are you a researcher interested in being an affiliate investigator? Visit our website for eligibility on how to [Become a Member](#).

Farewell to our Research Data Management Coordinator, Natalie Morin



Please join in wishing Natalie a farewell and good luck in all her future endeavours!

Natalie wants to thank everyone at BCMHSUS for their unwavering support and kindness throughout these past two and a half years. "It was wonderful getting to know everyone despite the challenges of the online social space COVID-19 catapulted us into. Under my guidance I had the pleasure of watching teams start from concepts and thoughts, to forming fully functioning and thriving projects. Sharing my love of mental health advocacy and teaching teams how to optimize their research projects continues to be my favourite part of my position. I will truly miss the BCMHSUS community.

I am thrilled and nervous to start nursing school in the Fall. My goal is to stay connected to the BCMHSUS community as I work through my program, and eventually return to the healthcare workforce as a public health nurse – so this is not goodbye, just farewell for now!"

News & Announcements

Dr. Christian Schütz, Research Lead, Complex Mental Health and Substance Use Services



We are pleased to announce that Dr. Christian Schütz has accepted the role of Research Lead for Complex Mental Health and Substance Use Services, BCMHSUS. Reporting to Dr. Jehannine Austin and working in close partnership with clinical and operational leadership and the Research Leads for Forensic Psychiatric Services (Dr. Tonia Nicholls) and Correctional Health Services (TBD), he will continue to build a leading-edge research program that contributes to the evidence base and drives excellence in how we deliver care and improve health outcomes for people with complex concurrent mental health and substance use needs.

PHSA Conflict of Interest Policy for researchers updated

The PHSA Board has approved a revised Research Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy to reflect a greater understanding of COI within PHSA Research since the document was first created.

The revised policy, which has been simplified and streamlined, includes the following changes:

- Procedural components are now in a separate “Protocol” document
- New components such as “Responsibilities” have been added
- Outdated policy language has been revised and clarified, and gender-neutral pronouns have been adopted

Both the revised policy as well as the new protocol document are available on [PHSA Research's webpage](#).

Highlighting Research

Featured Researcher

Every newsletter we highlight an outstanding PI/trainee.



Who are you?

I am a clinical child psychologist. I received my PhD from the University of Georgia and completed my clinical internship at the University of Washington. I have held the LEEF B.C. Leadership Chair in Proactive Approaches to Reducing Risk for Violence among Children and Youth at SFU since 2010. My primary research and clinical interests are with children and youth with conduct problems, which can range from oppositional behaviours such as excessive defiance to aggression and property destruction. My research focuses on how these problems develop and how best to treat and prevent them, especially in the context of the family.

Dr. Robert McMahon

What are you working on?

My most significant research has been conducted in the context of the Fast Track Project (ongoing since 1990), which is a collaborative study focused on the prevention of serious conduct problems in at-risk school-age children at four sites in the U.S. This randomized controlled trial investigated the effects of a comprehensive preventive intervention implemented from grades 1 through 10. We have followed the participants from kindergarten through age 34 (so far). Analyses through age 25 document favorable intervention effects across a broad array of outcomes, including antisocial behaviour, substance use, mental health, and risky sexual behaviours.

Who are you working with?

The Fast Track Project is a collaborative effort of the Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group (CPPRG), which is a team of eight senior researchers, most of whom are based at various U.S. universities. (I am the exception.) My trainees (graduate students, postdoctoral fellows) at BCMHSUS Research have benefited tremendously from access to this very rich longitudinal data set on nearly 1,200 families. In turn, they have made major contributions to understanding the development of conduct problems and their consequences in adolescence and into adulthood.

Why this project?

The Fast Track Project was a response to an epidemic of violence in the U.S in the late 1980s that motivated public interest in prevention programming. It was becoming clear that youth who began engaging in serious conduct problems at an early age were at significantly higher risk for poor outcomes as adolescents and adults. The members of the CPPRG represented complementary areas of expertise, such as family- and school-based interventions, youth skills training, and peer relations. We are currently analyzing data from the age 34 assessment and seeking continued funding to examine outcomes at age 41, with a particular focus on the causes and consequences of opioid misuse.

Fun fact:

A couple of things - As a relatively new grandfather, I take delight in seeing my now 2-year-old grandson change on an almost daily basis. Thank goodness for FaceTime, photos, and videos to fill in those gaps between in-person visits!

I have been a recreational runner since my mid-20s, and this continues to be a primary source of pleasure as well as a stress management tool. However, during the pandemic, I also discovered the satisfaction of long walks along the seawall and exploring various Vancouver neighborhoods on foot.

Recent Publications from BCMHSUS Researchers

- **Anxiety symptoms and theory of mind in older and younger adults: curvilinearity moderated by age group.** Braley MS, Thornton AE, Loken Thornton W. *Aging Ment Health*. [Read more](#)
- **Functional brain networks underlying probabilistic reasoning and delusions in schizophrenia.** Fouladirad S, Chen LV, Roes M, Chinchani A, Percival C, Khangura J, Zahid H, Moscovitz A, Arreaza L, Wun C, Sanford N, Balzan R, Moritz S, Menon M, Woodward TS. *Psychiatry Res Neuroimaging*. [Read more](#)
- **Somatization in Adolescents With Persistent Symptoms After Concussion: A Retrospective Chart Review.** Green KE, Purtzki J, Chapman A, Oberlander TF, Silverberg ND, Dhariwal AK. *J Neuropsychiatry Clin Neurosci*. [Read more](#)
- **Pain, opioid use, depressive symptoms, and mortality in adults living in precarious housing or homelessness: a longitudinal prospective study.** Jones AA, Cho LL, Kim DD, Barbic SP, Leonova O, Byford A, Buchanan T, Vila-Rodriguez F, Procyshyn RM, Lang DJ, Vertinsky AT, MacEwan GW, Rauscher A, Panenka WJ, Thornton AE, Barr AM, Field TS, Honer WG. *Pain*. [Read more](#)
- **The relationship between outpatient service use and emergency department visits among people treated for mental and substance use disorders: analysis of population-based administrative data in British Columbia, Canada.** Lavergne MR, Loyal JP, Shirmaleki M, Kaoser R, Nicholls T, Schütz CG, Vaughan A, Samji H, Puyat JH, Kaulius M, Jones W, Small W. *BMC Health Serv Res*. [Read more](#)
- **Long-acting injectable antipsychotics for early psychosis: A comprehensive systematic review.** Lian L, Kim DD, Procyshyn RM, Cázares D, Honer WG, Barr AM. *PLoS One*. [Read more](#)
- **Decreased food-allergy-specific anxiety and increased general anxiety in parents of children with food allergies during COVID-19.** Westwell-Roper C, To S, Soller L, Chan ES, Stewart SE. *Ann Allergy Asthma Immunol*. [Read more](#)
- **Bowel and Bladder Dysfunction Is Associated with Psychiatric Comorbidities and Functional Impairment in Pediatric Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder.** Westwell-Roper C, Best JR, Naqqash Z, Afshar K, MacNeily AE, Stewart SE. *J Child Adolesc Psychopharmacol*. [Read more](#)

Awards, Grants & Honours

Meet the recipients of our 2021 BCMHSUS Summer Research Studentships!



Max Hemmerich (supervisor Dr. Christian Schütz)

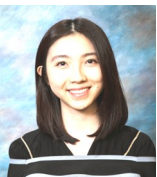
Lead Research Assistant for CAPU RISE at the B.R.A.I.N. Lab, UBC

Max is a fourth-year BSc student in the behavioural neuroscience program at UBC. As part of CAPU RISE, he plans to examine the acute effects of cannabinoids on impulsivity. Max is interested in the neuronal, epigenetic, and cognitive influences on mental illness and maladaptive behaviour and, in the future, would like to pursue a Ph.D. in neuropsychology. He loves to cycle, hike, eat, sleep, read, and make music in his spare time.



Kyle Hui (supervisor Dr. Todd Woodward)

My name is Kyle and I have just completed my undergraduate degree in animal biology at UBC. This summer, I will be using functional magnetic resonance imaging to study the functional brain networks involved in delusion symptoms in schizophrenia. In my free time, I enjoy playing spikeball, hiking, and playing strategic board games.



Ariel Qi (supervisor Dr. Evelyn Stewart)

My name is Ariel, and I am very grateful to be a recipient of the BCMHSUS Summer Studentship Award. I recently graduated from UBC with a Bachelor's degree in Honours Physiology, and will be starting medical school at Queen's University this fall. This summer, I am excited to work under the supervision of Dr. Evelyn Stewart on a project aimed at exploring the intersectionality of vulnerability factors for psychiatric illness and unmet mental health support among Canadians during the COVID-19 Era. I look forward to all the wonderful learning opportunities and experiences through this Summer Studentship!



Jeff Sheppard (supervisor Dr. Clare Beasley)

Jeffrey is wrapping up a BA in Psychology and an Addiction Studies certificate at Vancouver Island University. While he is originally from Ontario, Jeffrey has spent time living in Newfoundland and Alberta, and has called the west coast home for the last 6 years. He, his partner, and their dog live on Gabriola Island, overlooking the Northumberland Channel. Jeffrey is interested in neuropsychopharmacology, abnormal psychology, data analysis, and knowledge mobilization. He's looking forward to learning from Dr. Clare Beasley while investigating the effects of antipsychotics on microglial activation and density in the hippocampus of rats.

Congratulations to BCMHSUS researchers for recent CIHR successes!

Drs. William Panenka and Allen Thornton received a five year \$1,434,376 award for their project: "Traumatic brain injury and cerebral small vessel disease in a vulnerably housed cohort, a prelude to early neurodegeneration and dementia." [Read more](#)

Drs. Tonia Nicholls and Christian Schütz received a four year \$638,776 award for their project: "An evaluation of the health, criminal justice, and service use outcomes of the Ministry of Health assuming responsibility for prison health care services in BC (PRISM-BC)." [Read more](#)

Dr. Todd Woodward is Co-PI on two, five-year awards including the award of \$956,250 for the project: "Efficacy of Combined Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Cognitive Remediation Therapy for Schizophrenia-Spectrum Disorders: A Randomized Controlled Trial". [Read more](#) And the award of \$979,200 for the project: "From episodic memory to functioning in schizophrenia and related psychoses: A neurocognitive model". [Read more](#)

Dr. Alasdair Barr is awarded NSERC Discovery Award

Congratulations to Dr. Barr on his Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) Discover Award for his project entitled: "Understanding the role of dopamine antagonists on peripheral glucose regulation". [Read more](#)

Dr. Amanda Butler received Dean's Convocation Medal

Congratulations to Dr. Butler, recognized with the Dean of Graduate Studies Convocation Medal for her doctoral thesis, "Mental health needs, substance use patterns, and risk of re-incarceration among adults admitted to provincial prisons in British Columbia, Canada". [Read more](#)

Research Opportunities

Looking to collect research data online? Consider using REDCap!

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

Managed by the BC Children's Hospital Research Data Management team for use across PHSA, the team provides support for BCMHSUS Research through project specific consultation, training materials, virtual/in-person workshops, IT/ technical support and the [REDCap HUB](#)

To request a REDCap project, follow this link:

<https://rc.bcchr.ca/redcap/surveys/?s=DJDMKP4DC4>



Tips & Tricks!: request Discover the two ways you can manage participant ID in your research project!

The link to the tips & tricks can be found here:

<https://rc.bcchr.ca/redcap/surveys/?s=RHMD7NDHYCAKRYWK>

Questions? Email redcap@bcchr.ca.

Patient & Family Engagement

Using journey mapping to improve care and research

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



Stories Patient journey mapping is a facilitated process that helps us understand the gaps and opportunities experienced by the people accessing our services and programs. It involves the real-time translation of patient and client stories into a visual map with text, depicting the journey through care, from intake to discharge.

As part of the [UNITE Project](#) to disrupt stigma at BCMHSUS, we facilitated journey mapping with clients and families at Heartwood Centre for Women, Forensic Psychiatric Clinics, and Correctional Health Services. Plans are underway to host journey mapping at Red Fish Healing Centre and the Forensic Psychiatric Hospital in fall of 2022.

The journey maps to date have provided BCMHSUS leadership with a full picture of what end-to-end care within our services look like from the client perspective, helping to identify pain points and areas for improvement. We are currently taking action on the findings, including:

- Enhancing communication at intake and discharge
- Enabling skills-building and self-care workshops for clients moving from inpatient to outpatient care environments
- Facilitating opportunities for more collaborative family partnerships

The use of patient and client journey mapping as a qualitative research approach is a novel way to identify research priorities. To learn more about the journey maps, including how this process can benefit your research, reach out to the Patient Experience and Community Engagement team at engage_bcmhsus@phsa.ca.

