



IN THIS EDITION

CANADIAN PAIN
CARE FORUM

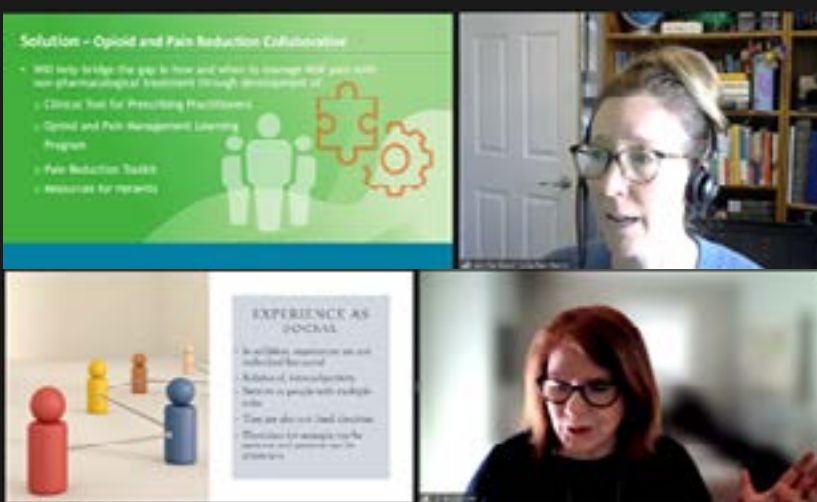
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IMPACT OF COVID-19
ON HEALTH RESEARCH:
UPDATES FROM THE
INSPIRE TRIAL

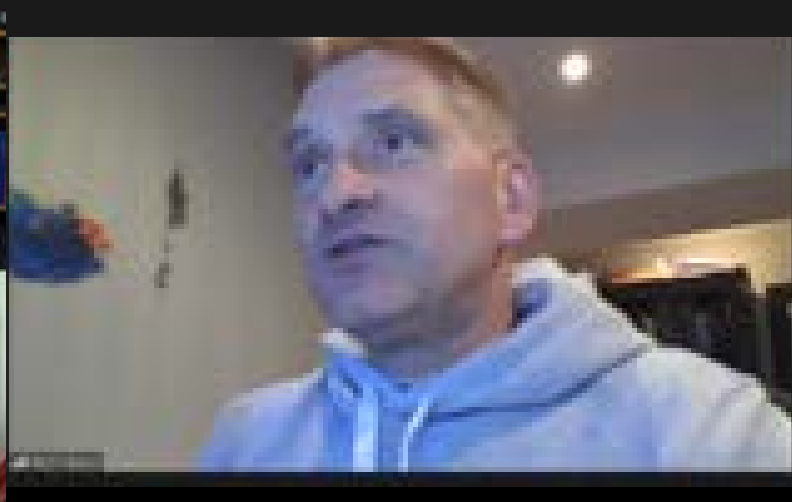
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Drs. Jennifer Nash and Fiona Webster present at our January 2022 CPCF Meeting.



Dr. Jason Busse presenting on the guideline development process, October 2021

THE CANADIAN PAIN CARE FORUM (CPCF) – ENGAGING MEETINGS AND A GROWING MEMBERSHIP

The CPCF has hosted two well attended virtual meetings, on October 1, 2021 and January 21, 2022. Both focused on understanding current pain education and curriculum content and the future for health professions in Canada.

In October, we had Dr. Phil Emberley’s team speak about the Canadian Pharmacists Association’s role in interdisciplinary pain care and the pharmacy curriculum on pain. On this topic we saw presentations by Drs. Joelle Walker, Beth Sproule and Barbara Coulston. Dr. Hillel Finestone, from University

of Ottawa, then spoke about Chronic pain management: Learnings from a nurse-led program in community primary care setting.

In January 2022, we continued our health professional pain education survey with Dr. Jennifer Nash, Assistant Professor, Department of Anesthesia, McMaster University. Dr Nash presented on the pain curriculum in the chiropractic training. Then, Dr. Fiona Webster, Associate Professor, Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing, Western University spoke about the issue equity of access for pain and addiction care in marginalized populations.

CPCF membership continues to grow. We are now at 129 members, representing 90 organizations, and we are always looking for new members to represent our various stakeholders. We are especially excited to see our membership grow to include more people with lived and living experience of chronic pain. Our next meeting is planned for May 2022.

THE NATIONAL FACULTY MEMBERS CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROCESS OF UPDATING 2017 OPIOID GUIDELINE FOR CHRONIC PAIN – MEETING IN OCT. 2021

The virtual National Faculty Meeting (NFM) was held on October 22nd, 2021 and focused on the process of updating the 2017 Opioid Guideline for Chronic Pain. Dr. Jason Busse gave an overview of the 2017 Guideline, including comparisons with competing guidelines that emerged in United States during the same time and impact of the guideline on the practice of care in Canada. The meeting concluded with considerations and discussions for the update of the 2017 Opioid Guideline, including exploring the opportunities for funding to support formal knowledge transfer and impact assessment.



Isabel Jordan provides expert insight during the Windows of Opportunity to Change: Improving Knowledge Translation in Chronic Pain session.

2022 CHRONIC PAIN NETWORK ANNUAL MEETING

"It's easy to say we're making space at the table," said Isabel Jordan, Strategic Lead in Patient Partnerships in the Chambers Lab at Dalhousie University and Co-Chair for the Patient and Caregiver Advisory Council for Solutions for Kids in Pain (SKIP), when discussing patient engagement in research at the 2022 Chronic Pain Network Annual Meeting. "But what if the very structure of the table doesn't allow for the participation of the people you need to hear from - of knowing whether the work that we're doing is the right work. What if where the table sits isn't a place where somebody with the most relevant lived experience can go? So how do we address that?" Isabel was one of several esteemed speakers providing insight into opportunities for growth and areas of change in patient engagement and knowledge mobilization in pain research.

With its six years of initial funding coming to a close, the Chronic Pain Network held its final annual meeting February 23 and 24. The meeting's focus was examining ways for better implementation of lessons learned over the course of the Network and to carry the momentum created forward in order to create tangible change.

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HEALTH RESEARCH - UPDATES FROM THE INSPIRE TRIAL

For most, COVID-19 had a dramatic impact on the way we live our lives and put an abrupt pause to many of our plans. Health research, and the INSPIRE trial, were no exception to this. The INSPIRE trial seeks to examine nerve sparing to reduce persistent post-surgical pain after breast cancer surgery. This builds on prior work published by the research team that found nerve sacrifice was the single largest risk factor for persistent pain after breast cancer surgery, increasing the absolute risk of this event by 21% (<https://www.cmaj.ca/content/188/14/E352>).

COVID-19 saw breast cancer surgeries delayed and postponed, which slowed the project's recruitment rate. In response, the trial recruitment period was extended from six months to 18 months, to address COVID-related delays, and recruiting centres were expanded to include two hospitals in India. These actions proved instrumental in achieving the recruitment target of 50 patients, which has now been met.

The end goal of a definitive trial will be to affect practice, if nerve sparing is found to be effective. The research group has previously shown that 43% of surgical trials are prematurely discontinued (<https://www.zora.uzh.ch/id/eprint/98709/>).

For this reason, a pilot study is needed to confirm feasibility of a definitive trial, and this is the purpose of the current study of 50 patients.

"We have found that patients were very interested in joining the study," said project lead Dr. Jason Busse, "and were excellent at providing us with long-term data. Our follow-up rate so far is 100% for our final 1-year check-in." Acquiring buy-in from cancer surgeons has been more difficult as the study topic is controversial and some surgeons have already made up their mind. The sentiment is either that nerve sparing is important or that it is not, and physicians that hold strong views are less likely to be comfortable randomizing patients to receive either nerve sparing or usual care (nerve sacrifice). As such, there is a need to engage surgical centres with clinicians that have not made up their mind on this issue. COVID has revealed that breast cancer surgery is vulnerable to delays and cancellations, and considering the impact of new COVID variants on recruitment is necessary going forward.

McMaster is the lead for the trial.

MEET IPRC POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW XIAOQIN WANG

"I'm always excited to know people from different cultures and to explore around, both in work and in life," said Xiaoqin Wang, who joined the Institute for Pain Research & Care as a postdoctoral fellow in late 2019. Working under the supervision of Dr. Jason Busse, Xiaoqin has been working on interventional treatments for chronic, local or radicular, non-cancer, spinal pain, examining a protocol for a systematic review and network meta-analysis of randomised trials.

Xiaoqin came to Hamilton from Jianyang, a beautiful, small city located in southwest China. It was McMaster University's reputation in evidence-based medicine that drew her interest in a fellowship with the Institute. "My previous methodology work was mainly focused on research in traditional Chinese medicine, like acupuncture, which was widely used for chronic pain in China," she explained. "The timing was right, after I finished my PhD studies, and the project matched my interest fields well." The fellowship also allowed Xiaoqin the opportunity to live with her husband while he completed his PhD work at McMaster.

One of the aspects she enjoys most in her role is the collaboration



and supportive team. "Everyone shares the same vision, and everyone's voice is being heard," she said. As a new mom, Xiaoqin is also appreciative of the understanding and adaptability her role allows her.

When asked what advice she would give to those considering pursuing a fellowship with the Institute, Xiaoqin has this wisdom to offer:

"always be ready. Take the time to explore the research area. Always do the pre-work before training and discussion. Be flexible and open to unexpected changes (like a pandemic) and experience different roles when possible, whether it's a leader, a team member on a project or an audience member at a presentation. All of these roles will bring you valuable experience from different angles."

Upcoming IPRC & NPC Meeting Dates

IPRC Annual Persistent Post-Surgical Pain Symposium

April 9, 2022

To register, visit:

<https://bit.ly/IPRCsymposium2022>

Canadian Pain Care Forum

May 6, 2022

Further details to be announced

NEW MGD IPRC AND NPC RESOURCES!

We are excited to share two new resources we have created for your use:

- Inventory of Canadian Pain and Addiction Education Programs, Tools and Resources for Prescribers, and
- Listing of Canadian Pain Clinics

These resources will be updated on a monthly basis as new information becomes available.

View them by visiting:

healthsci.mcmaster.ca/npc/resources

MICHAEL G. DEGROOTE
INSTITUTE FOR PAIN
RESEARCH & CARE

**2022 PERSISTENT
POST-SURGICAL
PAIN SYMPOSIUM**

**UNIVERSITY CLUB
McMASTER UNIVERSITY**

Saturday, April 9, 2022
8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Clinicians, researchers and trainees interested in predictors of pain chronicity following surgery.

Biological and behavioural topics, basic and clinical science.