



IN THIS EDITION

Institute Update
Page 2

Canadian Pain
Care Forum
Page 3

Inaugural IPRC
Research Day
Page 4



INSTITUTE FOR PAIN RESEARCH & CARE

The first half of 2019 has been a very busy and exciting time for the Michael G. DeGroot Institute for Pain Research & Care (IPRC) and the National Pain Centre (NPC).

In January and April, we held two successful meetings of the Canadian Pain Care Forum (CPCF) at the Royal Botanical Garden in Hamilton. CPCF membership has grown to more than 95 people (April 2019), representing organizations across Canada. Approximately 30 members regularly participate in the forums either in-person or by teleconference. Participation in the CPCF is open to all organizations who have a demonstrated interest in and a desire to improve national and/or provincial pain care public policy. The CPCF is committed to improving the understanding and knowledge of member organizations and promoting coordinated actions on common interest public policy issues.

At the Canadian Pain Society 2019 Annual Scientific Meeting, the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Health, announced the establishment of the Canadian Pain Task Force.

The eight-member Task Force includes advocates with lived experience in chronic pain, as well as researchers and health providers who have experience preventing and managing pain. In addition to the Task Force itself, an External Advisory Panel was formed to provide advice and information on elements of the Task Force's mandate. Four members of the Task Force, as well as four members of the Advisory Panel, myself included, have ties to the Canadian Pain Care Forum and its continued work towards a National Pain Strategy.

The Panel has already met with the Task Force once and looks forward to continuing to provide valuable input to help address this issue.

We look forward to continued collaboration in 2019, working together to make a positive impact on the care and lives of those living with chronic pain.

Norm Buckley

CANADIAN CONSENSUS CONFERENCE IN BIOMARKERS IN PAIN RESEARCH

In February, the Chronic Pain Network hosted the first Canadian Consensus Conference on Biomarkers in Pain Research, to work towards a Canadian consensus on the most important biomarkers to pursue in pain research and to give consideration for planning a pain research biobank.

The day started with Jennifer Fazzari presenting a framework for biomarkers in Pain Research, which provided an overview of the current landscape. Cynthia Balion spoke about the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging and Mathew McQueen and Shana Lamers spoke about the Clinical Research Laboratory and Biobank. After the break, Luda Diatchenko discussed the importance of understanding chronic pain through genomics and transcriptomics. Nader Ghasemlou looked at challenges, surprises and opportunities when setting up the first human study of circadian pain variability. Karen Davis talked about imaging, QST biomarkers and ethical considerations and Laura Stone presented on methylation markers. The talks concluded with Brian Meshkin examining the challenges and directions in developing and commercializing biomarkers in Chronic Pain.

A group discussion took place following the lunch break, concluding that there was immediate value in examining currently operating registries and biobanks to identify areas for collaboration, as well as planning a future meeting to consider establishing a dedicated pain biobank and registry.



Laura Stone discusses methylation markers at the Canadian Consensus Conference on Biomarkers in Pain Research.

CANADIAN PAIN CARE FORUM

JANUARY 18, 2019

Our January CPCF, held at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton, featured Katie Gasparelli, a member of the senior leadership team of Six Nations Health Services. Her talk, *Considerations When Working with Indigenous Peoples and Communities*, included items from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission arising from the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (2005). The commission has a tri-fold mandate: to tell the truth, to acknowledge what had happened in the residential school system; to start the healing and to

reconcile. She also spoke on the collaboration between McMaster University's Pain Program (Michael G. DeGroote Pain Clinic) and Six Nations Health Services, a project where the Six Nations Health Services directly participated and provided support to the participants to better understand participant's perspective, experience and perception of the interaction with the pain clinic personnel.

Dr. Norm Buckley also provided updates on the Chronic Pain Network (CPN):

- A goal of the CPN's Clinical Research Network is to generate new clinical trials and roll them out more easily and quickly to the 12 sites. Many trials have small numbers; to get larger number takes long time. If we have 12 clinics, we can hopefully accelerate that process.
- Part of the CPN mandate is advocacy towards best informed policy. Toward that, CPN has collaborated with the Canadian Pain Care Forum, utilizing some of the resources allocated within the CPN for things like the deliberative dialogue. This resulted in a draft proposal for a national pain strategy. The dialogue helped inspire the creation of the Taskforce.
- Canada has a history of pain researchers collaborating to the extent that they could, but funding for pain research in Canada is extremely limited. Less than 1% of the CIHR budget is allocated to pain research, this is low given the relative importance of pain as a clinical entity. This is a problem. CIHR is looking into this and organized a summit on pain research in the fall of 2016. The current director of the Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis is leading a pain portfolio within CIHR to try to identify funding for pain research.

APRIL 26, 2019

At the April 2019 CPCF, we heard updates from Dr. Fiona Campbell and Maria Hudspith, co-chairs of Canadian Pain Task Force (CPTF). Their presentation included the mandate, the scope and the activities proposed for the Canadian Pain Task Force within the next three years.

For the Task Force and the External Advisory Panel, Health Canada selected members to ensure a broad range of knowledge, experience, expertise and perspectives on the issue of chronic pain. Members include people with lived experience, as well as researchers, educators and health

professionals with experience and expertise in preventing and managing chronic pain.

Following the update from the CPTF co-chairs, Dr. Jason Busse, one of the IPRC executive members, engaged the participants in initiating the Guideline Development Process for Cannabis and Chronic Pain. The guideline development group will include a Steering Committee, an Evidence Synthesis Group, A guideline Panel, Clinical Expert Committee, a Patient Advisory Committee and Knowledge Translation Group.

Coming Events

National Faculty Meeting

July 12, 2019
McMaster University
Hamilton, ON

Canadian Pain Care Forum

September 6th, 2019
Royal Botanical Gardens
Hamilton, ON

Annual McMaster Pain Program

September 18th, 2019
Liuna Station
Hamilton, ON

Michael G. DeGroote Institute for Pain Research & Care Symposium

November 2, 2019
McMaster University
Hamilton, ON

Canadian Pain Society Annual Scientific Meeting

May 19-22, 2020
Hyatt Regency Calgary
Calgary, AB



Andrea Furlan participates in discussion at the Canadian Pain Care Forum via remote connection.

INAUGURAL IPRC RESEARCH DAY



Vahid Ashoorion presents at the IPRC's Inaugural Research Day.

On February 14, 2019, the Michael G. DeGroot Institute for Pain Research & Care National Pain Centre held its inaugural Research Day in the Farncombe Atrium at McMaster University. Participants included our institute research members, postdoc fellows and grad students.

The first half of the conference included work in progress updates of IPRC funded projects. Dr. Harsha Shanthanna talked about "NMDA Antagonists and Steroids for the Prevention of Persisting Post-Surgical Pain after Thoracoscopic Surgeries."

Post-doc Research Fellow Vahid Ashoorion presented on "The effect of cannabidiol (CBD) vs. Placebo on persistent post-surgical pain following total knee arthroplasty: A multicentre, randomized pilot trial." Dr. Katja Linher-Melville, research scientist, reviewed "The connection between T cells, chronic pain, and sex differences in analgesia." Dr. Jason Busse gave an update on the "Characteristics of Canadians likely to try or increase cannabis use following legalization for recreational. A cross-sectional study."

After the break, we learned more about what's happening in pain at McMaster with presentations from Dr. James Khan (Persistent incisional pain after noncardiac surgery: Update on the VISION Pain Analysis), Dr. Gurmit Singh (The endocannabinoid system as an emerging target of pharmacotherapy) and Dr. Luciana Macedo (Improving post-surgical outcomes in lumbar spinal stenosis).

CANADIAN PAIN SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

The 40th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Canadian Pain Society took place over three days in Toronto, with a packed schedule that included poster presentations, breakout sessions, keynote speakers, workshops and the IPRC as one of several exhibitors.

The highlight of the meeting was the announcement of the Canadian Pain Task Force by the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Health.

The Task Force has a three year mandate to:

- Assess how chronic pain is currently addressed in Canada;
- Consultation and review available evidence to identify best and leading practices, potential areas for improvement, and elements of an improved approach to the prevention and management of chronic pain in Canada;
- Collaborate with key stakeholders to disseminate information related to best practices for the prevention and management of chronic pain, including for populations disproportionately affected by chronic pain (e.g., women, older Canadians, Indigenous populations, veterans).

The Task Force will deliver three reports to Health Canada, one for each of the three elements of their mandate, with the first to be submitted in June 2019.

Members will work with an External Advisory Panel that will provide advice and information related to certain elements of the Task Force's mandate.

2019 IPRC Awards Competition

Once again, our 2019 MGD IPRC Award Competition was a success. We received 18 applications for 4 categories of awards. This year we have added a new partnership between our Institute and McMaster Institute for Research on Aging. This has allowed for an exciting joint funding opportunity that will support research initiatives aimed at improving chronic pain in older adults.

These are 2019 Awards recipients:

Graduate Awards - \$20,000 per year

- Chad Brown - A human neuronal model of pain to identify novel drug therapies
- Carley Ouellette - The SMArTVIEW Nurse: A novel nursing approach to pain assessment and postoperative management through virtual hospital-to-home recovery support

Pain Fellowship - \$60,000 per year

- Cheryl Chow - Predictors and Trajectories of Pediatric Postsurgical Pain

Seed Awards - \$30,000

- Harsha Shanthanna - Topicals for Osteoarthritis Pain In Knee Surgery (TOPIKS): A Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial
- Gurmit Singh - Analgesic effects to Cannabinoids in an animal model of post-surgical chronic pain: An examination of mechanism(s) for sex differences
- James Paul - An investigation into the effectiveness of a new Transitional Pain Service (TPS) on opioid cessation after a broad range of surgeries done at Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS) and its affiliated hospitals

Catalyst Grant IPRC-MIRA - \$60,000

- Luciana Macedo - A user-centered approach to develop a pre-surgical rehabilitation program for patients with lumbar spinal stenosis.