

Canada and Japan Establish New Research Partnership

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) recently signed a partnership agreement to fund joint research projects on the epigenetics of stem cells. The agreement was established under CIHR's Canadian Epigenetics, Environment and Health Research Consortium Signature Initiative and JST's Strategic International Collaborative Research Program.

Epigenetics is a groundbreaking science that examines how environmental factors, such as diet and stress, can have lifelong effects on health. This new field of research looks at long-term changes in gene activity that are not the result of modifications in the genetic code. The epigenetics of stem cells is a novel research area where both Canada and Japan demonstrate research excellence.

Government Announces Funding to Support Case Managers in the Healthcare Sector

Parliamentary Secretary of Health Colin Carrie recently announced funding for the National Case Management Network (NCMN) to develop a standardized set of skills, knowledge and techniques for case management. The government's latest funding commitment will allow NCMN to begin the second phase of its project called Promoting Excellence and Professionalism for Case Management in Canada – Core Competencies, Credentialing and Sustainability. This project will develop a standardized set of skills and knowledge, as well as identify a process for credentials for case management.

NCMN is a federally incorporated non-profit organization dedicated to the support and advancement of case management providers. It supports the professional development of care workers through education, networking opportunities and the establishment of standards of practice. Under NCMN leadership, case managers across the country and across sectors are also collaborating to bring together evidence and best practices. Government of Canada funding for this project comes from Health Canada's Health Care Policy Contribution Program, which is designed to support this government's commitment to improving the healthcare system. This project also aligns with Health Canada's Health Human Resource Strategy to optimize Canada's health workforce.

New CIHI Online Resource Shows Hospital Performance Improving

A new resource at www.cihi.ca that looks at clinical and financial performances in acute care hospitals shows that hospitals saw fewer deaths after major surgery, heart attack and stroke; fewer readmissions after heart attack, stroke and hip and knee surgeries; and fewer cases of in-hospital hip fracture in 2010

than in 2007. This resource, a part of the Canadian Hospital Reporting Project at the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), provides a series of 21 clinical indicators (with risk-adjusted rates) and nine financial indicators that allows hospitals to compare their performance against those of their peers and to learn from leading practices. While the results show that performance in Canada's hospitals is moving in the right direction for many of the measures, there are substantial variations across hospitals.

Mental Health Commission of Canada Announces New Board Chair



The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) is pleased to confirm the appointment of Dr. David Goldbloom as its new chair of the board of directors, effective April 1, 2012. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Goldbloom served as the vice-chair of the MHCC Board since its inception in 2007. He replaces the outgoing chair

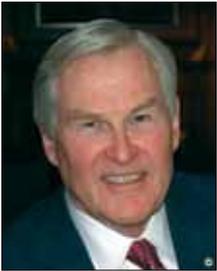
of the board, the Honourable Michael Kirby. Dr. Goldbloom is a practising psychiatrist at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto.

Dr. Goldbloom was raised in Québec and Nova Scotia and his distinguished educational background ranges from an undergraduate degree in government at Harvard University to a graduate degree from the University of Oxford, which he attended as a Rhodes Scholar, to medical and psychiatric training at McGill University. He is the recipient of numerous awards, the author of many articles, an experienced public speaker and an expert frequently interviewed by media. He currently holds several other positions including senior medical advisor of education and public affairs at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto, professor of psychiatry at the University of Toronto, and chair of the board of governors of the Stratford Shakespeare Festival.

Two New Appointments to the Governing Council of CIHR

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, minister of health, has announced the appointments of the Honourable Michael H. Wilson, PC, CC, and Ms. Lori Turik to the CIHR Governing Council for three-year terms.

The Honourable Michael H. Wilson, PC, CC, is the chairman of Barclays Capital Canada Inc. He was ambassador of Canada to the United States of America from 2006 to 2009. Elected to the House of Commons in 1979, Wilson was Canada's minister of finance from 1984 to 1991. He also served as minister of industry, science and technology and minister for



international trade. Prior to his career in public life, Wilson's career was in investment banking, with various responsibilities in corporate, government and international finance. Wilson has been active in a number of professional and community organizations, including NeuroScience Canada Partnership, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, the Canadian Cancer Society, the Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships and the Canadian Coalition for Good Governance. Wilson is a companion of the Order of Canada and has honorary degrees from the University of Toronto, York University and Trinity College at the University of Toronto.



Ms. Lori Turik is the executive director of the Ivey International Centre for Health Innovation at the University of Western Ontario (Richard Ivey School of Business). She has extensive background providing strategic, government relations, policy, stakeholder relations and communications advice to public and private sector clients in her capacity as consultant associate with Link Strategies. She served as vice-president of public policy for the Canadian Association of Chain Drug Stores. A registered nurse, Turik was director of nursing with the largest public health nursing division in Ontario and has over 12 years of experience in senior nursing positions and healthcare research. She has held appointments and guest lectured at the University of Toronto, York University and the Humber College (health sciences programs). Turik holds a master's degree in public administration from Queen's University and a bachelor of science degree in nursing from Lakehead University.

Health System Innovator and Leader Dr. Leslie Levin Recognized



The Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF) presented its annual Excellence through Evidence Award to Dr. Leslie Levin. Dr. Levin is the head of health quality for Ontario's Medical Advisory Secretariat, a professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Toronto and a senior consultant in medical oncology at Princess Margaret Hospital. Dr. Levin was instrumental in creating the Ontario Health Technology Advisory Committee. He is also the founding chief scientific officer of the MaRS Discovery District's Excellence in Clinical Innovation and Technology Evaluation. As the former vice-president of Cancer Care Ontario, Dr. Levin initiated its evidence-based cancer

guidelines and is responsible for creating a unique evidence-based provincial cancer drug program.

New Report on Postgraduate Medical Education

On March 29, 2012, a groundbreaking report was released containing 10 recommendations for transforming postgraduate medical education. These 10 recommendations, ranging from a shift to competency-based education to an overhaul of the governance structure for postgraduate medical education, are ambitious yet necessary for Canada to maintain its international reputation for excellence and innovation. "On behalf of the partners involved in this project, as well as all of those who provided input and expertise, I commit that we will do all that we can to support the implementation of these recommendations – Canada will continue to lead," said Dr. Nick Busing, president and chief executive officer (CEO) of the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada, the organization that acted as the secretariat for the project.

The project, which builds on the success of the Future of Medical Education in Canada undergraduate medical education project, was led by a consortium of four partners: the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada, le Collège des médecins du Québec, the College of Family Physicians of Canada and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. The final report and a link to a video of the national launch can be accessed at www.afmc.ca/fmccpg.

Dr. Aaron Schimmer Receives the Till and McCulloch Award

Canada's most coveted stem cell prize will be awarded to a researcher in Toronto – who acknowledges that he's only been working with the life-giving cells for a short time. Dr. Aaron Schimmer, associate professor in the University of Toronto's Department of Medical Biophysics and a clinician-scientist in the Princess Margaret Cancer Program/Ontario Cancer Institute at University Health Network, has received the 2012 Till and McCulloch Award, presented each year by the Stem Cell Network in recognition of the year's most influential peer-reviewed article by a researcher in Canada.

Despite being relatively new to the field of stem cell research, Dr. Schimmer brings extensive knowledge of chemical biology and drug discovery using robotic screening – a method known as high throughput screening that has become a valuable tool for identifying potential new therapies using stem cells. Dr. Schimmer was recognized for his article published in the November 2011 issue of the scientific journal *Cancer Cell* titled "Inhibition of Mitochondrial Translation as a Therapeutic Strategy for Human Acute Myeloid Leukemia." In the laboratory, Dr. Schimmer and his team used drug screening techniques on leukemic stem cells and were able to identify existing drugs

with strong potential to act as effective treatments for the devastating blood disorder.

Appointment of New Chief Public Health Officer

Dr. André Corriveau will assume responsibility as chief public health officer (CPHO) for the Northwest Territories effective June 2012. Dr. Corriveau was previously the chief medical officer of health in Alberta and also served as CPHO for the Northwest Territories from 1998 to 2009. Dr. Corriveau will also continue to serve as provincial-territorial co-chair of the Public Health Network.

Dr. Kandola, who provided acting CPHO coverage, will return to her former responsibility as deputy CPHO.

Dr. Evan Adams Named Deputy PHO for Aboriginal Health

In British Columbia, Aboriginal health physician advisor Dr. Evan Adams has been appointed deputy provincial health officer (PHO) for the First Nations Health Council and the interim First Nations Health Authority. In his new overseeing role, Dr. Adams will work alongside PHO Dr. Perry Kendall and Deputy PHO Dr. Eric Young by providing independent direction on First Nations and Aboriginal health issues to the Ministry of Health, reporting to citizens on health issues affecting the general population and setting out a path for the improvement of First Nations and Aboriginal health and wellness. Dr. Adams's new role reflects a strengthening of the partnership between the province of British Columbia and BC First Nations.

Dr. Adams is a Coast Salish physician and actor from the Sliammon First Nation located near Powell River. Previously he served as Aboriginal health physician advisor to government and the First Nations Health Council, contributing to positive developments in health for all citizens in British Columbia while making substantial improvements in service delivery to First Nations in the province. Dr. Adams is past president of the Healing Our Spirit BC First Nations AIDS Society, which provides prevention education for Aboriginal people in urban and rural communities throughout the province, as well as a past president of the Indigenous Physicians Association of Canada and the director of the Division of Aboriginal Peoples Health in the University of British Columbia Faculty of Medicine.

Alberta Accepts All 21 Recommendations in Health Review

The Alberta government has accepted and will immediately begin work on the 21 recommendations from the recent review of healthcare issues by Health Quality Council of Alberta (HQCA). A number of initiatives will be launched to dig deeper into specific findings, including the following:

- The creation of two task forces – one on health system governance and one on role clarity with respect to the College of Physicians and Surgeons
- An HQCA review of emergency medical services (EMS)

In addition, a public inquiry into allegations of queue jumping will be conducted in accordance with special provisions in the Health Quality Council of Alberta Act that was passed in the legislature last fall. The terms of reference for the public inquiry will direct the inquiry to consider the following:

- Whether improper preferential access to publicly funded health services is occurring
- What recommendations should be made to prevent improper access in the future if, indeed, there is evidence of improper preferential access to publicly funded health services occurring

In addition to leading a review of EMS, the HQCA will name a panel to conduct the public inquiry; both of these actions begin immediately. The public inquiry will have the power to compel evidence from witnesses, as well as the production of documents.

The terms of reference for the public inquiry, the government of Alberta's response to HQCA's recommendations and the letter directing HQCA to conduct a review of EMS operations in Alberta can be found at <http://www.health.alberta.ca/newsroom/news.html>.

Increased Funding Supports Better Access to Cancer Care

Saskatchewan cancer patients will have improved access to cancer care and services, thanks to a funding increase this year to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. The provincial government committed \$138.8 million for the agency in the 2012–2013 budget, an increase of \$16.9 million (nearly 14%) over 2011–2012. It will be used to enhance access to cancer screening, cancer drugs and oncologists.

Between April 2010 and February 2012, the number of people waiting to see a medical oncologist in Saskatchewan dropped by almost 50%. The number waiting for a first appointment at a cancer centre dropped by 64.5% during the same period. Almost no cancer patient currently waits longer than eight weeks for a first appointment.

The funding increase will support approximately 30,000 cancer drug treatment visits, 39,000 mammograms and about 6,000 new patient appointments at the cancer centres in Saskatoon and Regina in 2012–2013. It will also enable expansion of the Screening Program for Colorectal Cancer to all health regions in the province. Information on cancer services is available at www.saskcancer.ca.

Record Number of Future Doctors Attracted to Rural, Northern Communities under Expanded Recruitment Grant Program

In Manitoba, a record number of medical students have signed up to serve in rural and northern communities that need them the most in exchange for free medical school, thanks to a recently expanded doctor-recruitment initiative. The free medical school initiative supports the province's commitment to ensure every Manitoban has access to a family doctor by 2015. This year, over 251 undergraduate medical students and residents signed up for grants through the revamped Medical Student/Resident Financial Assistance Program in exchange for providing medical services after graduation in underserved rural and northern communities.

Under the expanded program, grants range from \$12,000 to \$25,000 per year, based on the year of study, a student's specialty and where the student chooses to work after graduation. Students can apply for grants in each year of medical school and can access a maximum of \$61,000 over four years, which covers tuition and other costs associated with studying medicine in exchange for a commitment to work for up to two and half years in communities identified as most in need of additional physicians. Since the program was established in 2001, over \$35 million has been provided to approximately 1,300 students. Since 1999, rural and northern Manitoba has seen a net increase of 116 doctors.

Moving to Patient-Based Funding Will Improve Care

Ontario is making changes to the way it funds hospitals to ensure that families get access to the right healthcare, at the right time and in the right place. The new patient-based funding model will see hospitals funded based on how many patients they see, the services they deliver, the quality of those services and other specific community needs. Currently, hospitals get a lump sum based on their previous year's budget, with no link to the type or quality of care they provide. Working in partnership with hospitals, Ontario will phase in the new patient-based funding model over the next three years. The new model will also provide a better return for taxpayer dollars and result in shorter wait times and better access to care in their communities; more services, where they are needed; and better quality care, with less variation between hospitals.

Allowing healthcare funding to follow the patient instead of the hospital is part of the McGuinty government's Action Plan for Health Care and builds upon the significant progress that has been made in improving Ontario's healthcare system since 2003. Other jurisdictions have been using this type of funding model and have shown benefits such as decreased wait times and a higher number of procedures. Sweden adopted a similar model in 1992, England in 2003 and British Columbia and Alberta in 2010.

OHA's HealthAchieve Honoured with Prestigious Award

The Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) was presented with the prestigious Best Event Produced by an Association award, announced during the 15th Annual Canadian Event Industry Awards, a national program that recognizes outstanding achievements in Canadian special events. OHA was recognized for its progressive annual conference and exhibition, HealthAchieve, which has grown from being the OHA's annual convention to one of the largest healthcare shows of its kind in North America.

HealthAchieve attracts thousands of healthcare and business leaders and close to 300 exhibiting companies from across the globe. Show participants and exhibitors have praised HealthAchieve as being an excellent opportunity to learn about the latest innovations in technology and healthcare, to hear from world-class speakers and experts from around the world and to network with colleagues from Ontario and beyond. For more information about HealthAchieve, visit www.healthachieve.com.

Pat Campbell to Be Appointed President and CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association



Janet Davidson, board chair of the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA), announced recently that Pat Campbell will be appointed president and CEO of OHA, effective June 4, 2012. Prior to her appointment at Echo, Campbell was president and CEO of Grey Bruce Health Services, a network of hospitals serving a largely rural region in Southern Ontario.

She held previous leadership roles at Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre, including that of president and CEO of Women's College Hospital in Toronto. Campbell has an undergraduate degree in nursing from the University of Western Ontario and an MBA from York University.

Campbell's predecessor, Tom Closson, stepped down from his role at OHA in January following four years of outstanding leadership to the association. Mark Rochon will continue to service as interim OHA president and CEO until Campbell assumes her responsibilities.

Jon Fairest Named President and CEO of Sanofi Canada

Sanofi announced recently that Jon Fairest has been named president and CEO of Sanofi Canada, effective May 1. Fairest is currently general manager of Sanofi's Portuguese affiliate and head of generics for Iberia. In his new position, he will succeed Hugh O'Neill, who is returning to Sanofi US to oversee projects designed to support the company's patient-focused business model.

Fairest joined Sanofi in 2001 and held positions in sales and business support in the United Kingdom before moving to Bulgaria, where he managed the affiliate's integration of Sanofi with Aventis. Next he moved to Finland, where he launched the consumer healthcare portfolio and implemented a new reimbursement and tender management system. In 2010, he was appointed to his role in Portugal, where he successfully restructured the organization to focus on growth opportunities.

Fairest will oversee the Canadian organization's ongoing transformation to a diversified healthcare solutions company, whose offerings include patented medicines, consumer health products, medical devices and the newly launched STARsystem, a web-based platform that empowers patients to self-manage their blood glucose levels and take control of their diabetes.

Sainte-Justine UHC Receives \$3 Million to Study the Long-Term Effects of Leukemia Treatment in Children

Thanks to \$3 million in funding from the CIHR and other financial partners, a team of investigators from the Sainte-Justine University Hospital Center (UHC) is endeavouring to find ways to lessen the long-term adverse effects that afflict two thirds of survivors of the most common form of blood cancer in children (acute lymphoblastic leukemia, ALL) as part of a new pan-Canadian research network focusing on the consequences of blood cancers in children. By studying the genetic determinants that underlie neurocognitive, metabolic, cardiac and bone problems in survivors who have reached adulthood, the project will contribute toward a healthy future for children with leukemia.

The funding of the pan-Canadian initiative, worth a total of \$12 million, involves three healthcare institutions. Sainte-Justine UHC will assume a leadership role regarding the pediatric leukemia survivors. The institution has world-renowned research expertise in ALL and its genetic determinants, the latest sequencing technologies, pediatric oncology clinicians and other healthcare professionals who work together on the study of the long-term effects of childhood cancer in survivors.

CRCHUM Receives \$2.8 Million for Research into Cancer Prevention

A team led by Dr. Jack Siemiatycki of the University of Montreal Hospital Research Centre (CRCHUM) with Dr. Michael Pollak of McGill University has received the go-ahead for a five-year project to develop and apply the CANJEM – the CANadian Job-Exposure Matrix – to discover occupational causes of lung, brain, ovarian and colorectal cancers. With \$2.8 million in funding from the Cancer Research Society and the Fonds de Recherche Québec – Santé, the team hopes to make important strides in cancer prevention by focusing on modifiable causes of cancer, particularly those encountered in the workplace (e.g., asbestos, radon gas, formaldehyde).

The centrepiece of this project is the CANJEM, a dynamic, simple-to-use tool that will incorporate data accumulated over the past 30 years pertaining to exposure to 300 carcinogens in over 3,200 jobs as well as from hygiene databases from Quebec, the United States and Europe. The CANJEM will include not only chemical exposures but also information on shift work, physical exertion and electromagnetic fields in different occupations. Moreover, it will be an updatable tool and applicable to more countries than just Canada.

The CANJEM will be an invaluable tool for occupational health practitioners seeking to identify potential exposures in different workplaces for surveillance purposes or for evaluating past exposures for compensation purposes. The results of epidemiological studies based on the CANJEM will be made available to scientists, journalists, public health authorities, regulatory agencies and other parties interested in assessing and ultimately preventing occupational and environmental risks for cancer.

Nova Scotia the First Province with Certified Electronic Medical Records

Nova Scotia is improving security and privacy for thousands of patients whose medical information is stored electronically. Nightingale on Demand, one of Nova Scotia's electronic medical record systems, is the first to receive jurisdictional certification from Canada Health Infoway. Now, Nova Scotia doctors who use it have an extra level of security. To meet certification, the software underwent rigorous evaluation and testing to show that it met privacy, security and operational standards set by Canada Health Infoway.

Electronic medical records provide physicians with comprehensive access to patient information, increase productivity by reducing paperwork and ultimately result in better quality of care for patients. Managing patient care also becomes more efficient. For patients with chronic conditions, an electronic medical record can flag when the patient is due for an appointment or important procedure. Doctors can also proactively follow up with patients for routine check-ups and tests and easily identify patients to contact in the case of a drug recall. **HQ**