

Canadian Center for Vaccinology Challenge Unit — A First for Canada

New Opportunities for Inpatient Clinical Research

Clinical research just took a giant step forward with the opening of a new inpatient facility in Halifax. The *Sanofi Pasteur Vaccine Challenge Unit* is a 5,400 sq. ft., ten-bed inpatient unit with single isolation rooms, located in the *IWK Health Centre*. It is the first of its kind in Canada and one of a very few such facilities worldwide.

It is designed primarily for human vaccine challenge studies which test the efficacy of vaccines at an early stage in the vaccine development process. In a typical vaccine challenge study, healthy adult volunteers are vaccinated then exposed to the virus or bacteria against which they were vaccinated. These studies are conducted only for well understood diseases which cause mild illness or can be treated if the vaccine does not provide sufficient protection. Examples include respiratory viruses (e.g. influenza) and gastrointestinal organisms (e.g. salmonella, campylobacter). Once exposed, the volunteer participants are usually required to stay in the Challenge Unit for days or weeks for observation. The level of protection provided by the vaccine is measured by blood tests, swabs and by looking for any symptoms of infection.

When the unit is not being used for vaccine research, researchers from institutions, government or the private sector can contract the unit to conduct health research requiring inpatient observation and care. These studies may include, but are not limited to, research on infectious disease transmission, antimicrobial effectiveness and pharmacokinetics.



Each of the 10 isolation rooms is equipped with a flat screen TV, Internet connection, DVD, mini fridge and telephone. There is also a meeting room and kitchen for staff and participants. The entire unit is pressure controlled and air is Hepa filtered to ensure pathogens are contained.

The unit is managed by the Canadian Center for Vaccinology, a partnership of Capital Health, Dalhousie University and the IWK Health Centre. Dr. Shelly McNeil is the Medical Director for the unit. Dr. McNeil is assisted by staff of the Canadian Center for Vaccinology: Cathy Brown, Clinical Operations Coordinator and Ying Watt, Administrator.

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Did you know that...



Clinical researchers may contract CCfV for full-spectrum infrastructure and resources needed to conduct clinical research such as the preparation of ethics/regulatory submissions, statistical and data management support, nursing support for inpatient and outpatient data collection, protocol-specific interventions, and all other trial-related activities. Rental costs for the facility will vary according to the needs of the study but will generally compare to hospital room costs in Nova Scotia.

The Canadian Center for Vaccinology including the Challenge Unit was founded with financial assistance from the Canada Foundation for Innovation, Nova Scotia Research & Innovation Trust and Nova Scotia Economic and Rural Development. Sanofi Pasteur donated \$1m for naming rights on the Challenge Unit.

For further information contact Cathy Brown Catherine.Brown@iwk.nshealth.ca

Point-of-Care Research Training Pilot Program Takes Off

In early September 2009, the call for participants was issued for the Point-of-Care Research Training Pilot Program. In just a few days, over 30 Capital Health practitioners from a variety of disciplines enthusiastically expressed interest in participating in the program, which is designed to assist them in developing a research question into a feasible project.

The Pilot Program will build research capacity in these front-line practitioners, enabling them to conduct research which is highly relevant and applicable. This program is consistent with, and supportive of, Capital Health's strategy to integrate research and patient care.

The Program is a joint effort by Capital Health and the Dalhousie Faculty of Health Professions and has recently been awarded funding from the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation to strengthen existing infrastructure.

The first eight individuals who met criteria and were able to confirm supervisory support were enrolled. The successful applicants were: Leah Morrison (Pharmacy), Carolyn Kelly (Occupational Therapy), Karla Moore (Occupational Therapy), Ann Nelson (Physiotherapy) Barbara Currie (Nursing), Jane Palmer (Nursing), Jan Gilby (Diagnostic Imaging) and Heather Lowe (Social Work).

Three of these individuals have recently completed the *Introduction to Health Sciences Research* course at Dalhousie University. Additional training sessions were provided to some participants on conducting literature searches and literature evaluation. A mentorship program was launched at a recent event which provided an opportunity for informal discussion between the mentees and faculty members who will mentor them.

In January, a series of five protocol development workshops will begin and participants will have until September 2010 to finalize their research protocols. The workshops will be facilitated by Grace Warner, Ph.D., from the School of Occupational Therapy.

This is an innovative research education partnership and updates will be provided on the participants' progress over the following months. Contact: janet.gallant@cdha.nshealth.ca 902.473.2118.

Educational Opportunities...

Educational Opportunities

Series	Topic	Time	Date	Location
Qualitative Research Speaker Series	<i>What are you Trying to Do: Explore or Explain?</i> Brenda Sabo, RN, PHD	12 noon	Jan. 15	Room B-31, Centre for Clinical Research
Qualitative Research Research Rounds	<i>Using photographs and other images in qualitative research</i>	12 noon	Jan. 22	Room B-31, Centre for Clinical Research
Qualitative Research Speaker Series	<i>Using Qualitative Research to Understand Clinical Problems and Improve Practice: Experiences of Early Psychosis</i> Jocelyn Brown, OT, MSc	12 noon	Feb. 12	Room B-31, Centre for Clinical Research
Qualitative Research Research Rounds	<i>Methodology: Photo documentation, photo elicitation, photo voice</i>	12 noon	Feb. 26	Room B-31, Centre for Clinical Research
Research Education Program	<i>Research Agreements</i>	12 noon	Feb. 16	Royal Bank Theatre
Qualitative Research Research Rounds	<i>Methodology: Photo documentation, photo elicitation, photo voice</i>	12 noon	Feb. 26	Room B-31, Centre for Clinical Research

Online Research Courses

A pilot has just been started to broaden accessibility to research training for the research community. Two research training sessions are now available through the Capital Health Learning Management System (LMS). The sessions are: (1) *Knowing Your Scope of Practice* (Jill Flynn, Professional Practice) (2) *Informed Consent: Special Circumstances* (K. Jenkins, REB Manager and Dr. C. MacKnight, Geriatrician).

These courses can be accessed from the Capital Health website: lms.cdha.nshealth.ca. Enter your employee ID number in the spaces labelled *user name* and *password*. The number of people accessing the course will be evaluated in May 2010 to determine if it should be offered in the future. Contact: janet.gallant@cdha.nshealth.ca 902.473.2118

Heart and Stroke Endowed Chair in Cardiovascular Research Outcomes

Congratulations to Dr. Jafna Cox who has been appointed the first Heart and Stroke Endowed Chair in Cardiovascular Research Outcomes. This Chair is funded by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia; Fred and Elizabeth Fountain, Marjorie Fountain and the late Sheldon Fountain; and the QE II Hospital Foundation. The Chair aims to stimulate local and national cardiovascular research initiatives and attract new researchers into this area, resulting in innovative treatments for heart disease and stroke. This research is essential to meet the cardiovascular healthcare challenges facing our population and to provide the best care possible to patients with cardiovascular disease and stroke.

Opportunities...

2010 Phyllis Horton Bursary

The Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia is inviting applications for the 2010 Phyllis Horton Bursary for research in Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. The Society will award a \$1500 bursary to a student (undergraduate, graduate, medical) in Nova Scotia who is interested in pursuing research in Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. The research may be in any field including basic science, clinical or psychosocial. To obtain an application form, visit www.alzheimer.ns.ca

Grant Opportunities

Deadline	Program Name	Agency	Website
January 7, 2010	Brain Tumor Research Awards Program	Goldhirsh Foundation	www.goldhirshfoundation.org/application_information.ht
February 1, 2010	Operating Grant: Rx&D Collaborative Research (2009-2010)	CIHR	www.researchnet-recherchenet.ca/rnr16/vwOpprtntyDtIs.do?
February 6, 2010 LOI	National Population Health Study of Neurological Conditions	Public Health Agency of Canada	www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cd-mc/nc-mn/index-eng.php
February 8, 2010 LOI	Canadian Breast Cancer Research Alliance/Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation Special Research Competition on Predictive Oncology	Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation	www.breast.cancer.ca/SpecialGrantPrograms
February 19, 2010	2010 PFC Awards Program (See list below.)	Physiotherapy Foundation of Canada	www.physiotherapyfoundation.ca/awards_2010.html
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Seniors' Health Division Research Grant in Older Adults Health ■ Ann Collins Whitmore Entry Student Competition ■ The Paediatric Division Physiotherapy Research Grant Related to Child and Adolescent Health Issues ■ OrthoCanada Research Awards in Neck and Back Rehabilitation and Core Stability ■ HSFC/PFC Scholarship in Physiotherapy Research ■ Community Rehab Research Grant for Community-based Physiotherapy Projects ■ NSD-PFC Joint Award for Physiotherapy Research in the Neurosciences ■ The Dominion Physiotherapy Research Scholarship ■ Constance Beattie Memorial Fund (CBMF) Bursary Program ■ Alun Morgan Memorial Research Award in Orthopaedic Physiotherapy ■ Ann Collins Whitmore Memorial Scholarship (ACWMS) Awards 		
March 15, 2010	Research Fund Competition	Capital Health	www.cdha.nshealth.ca/default.aspx?page=SubPage&category.Categories.1=580&centerContent.Id.o=26646

Congratulations...

Research Fund Awards—September 2009

Over \$170,000 has been awarded to Capital Health researchers in the September 2009 Research Fund Competition. This fund was established in 1996 and researchers in any discipline may submit their research proposals to an internal peer-reviewed grant competition which is held twice a year. For more information, contact Angela Kirby. angela.kirby@cdha.nshealth.ca 90.2473.7960

Applicant	Department/ Division	Amount awarded	Study Title
Anderson, David	Hematology	\$15,000	Prospective Evaluation of Longterm Outcomes of Pulmonary Embolism: The ELOPE Study
Arnason, Thomas	Anatomical Pathology	\$4,733	The immunohistochemical expression and prognostic value of Ki67, ER, PR, HER2, EGFR, VEGF and Cox-2 in gastroenteropancreatic neuroendocrine tumors
Baskett, Roger	Cardiac Surgery	\$14,060	Reducing Post-operative Major Adverse Cardiac Events in Cardiac Surgery: Towards a Prospective Intervention
Blanchard, Chris	Cardiology	\$14,784	Environmental influences on physical activity behaviours in breast cancer patients: A pilot study
Darvesh, Sultan	Neurology	\$14,994	Butyrylcholinesterase: A Potential Diagnostic and Therapeutic Target for Primary Brain Tumours
Fox, Roy	Nova Scotia Environmental Health Centre	\$15,000	Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE) for patients with chronic conditions such as Fibromyalgia
Good, Kim	Psychiatry	\$14,896	Is cognitive performance associated with preclinical markers of Parkinson's disease?
Hanly, John	Rheumatology	\$14,800	Change in health care utilization and costs for patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis and Systemic Lupus Erythematosus in Nova Scotia over two decades
Love, Michael	Cardiology	\$14,992	An evaluation of the impact of age and revascularization on survival in patients with non-ST elevation acute coronary syndromes in Nova Scotia
Robertson , George	Psychiatry	\$15,000	Nitric Oxide as a Mediator of the Memory Enhancing Effects of Darbepoetin Alfa
Sapp, John	Cardiology	\$15,000	Quantitative Measurements Comparing Body Surface Potentials During Pace-Mapping and Spontaneous Ventricular Tachycardia
Somal, Kirandeep	Ophthalmology	\$4,900	Amaurosis fugax and risk of retinal vessel occlusion: A prospective observational study
Tibbo, Philip	Psychiatry	\$13,203	Help Seeking Pathways in First Episode Psychosis: A Capital Health Region Pilot Study

What's happening in Research Services...

Research Services Contract and Grant Facilitation and Support Team

Meeting all the legal, financial and regulatory requirements for conducting research is a daunting, complex and time-consuming process. Research Services is pleased to have a contract and investigator-initiated/sponsored support team in place to ease this burden for researchers. The team's experience and knowledge will help ensure that all the different aspects of research project contracts, grants, budgets and ongoing administrative requirements will be taken into consideration and handled appropriately.



Located in Room 121 of the Centre for Clinical Research, 5790 University Avenue, Sara Lavender and Jennifer Thurlow offer support for researchers applying for grants and negotiating contracts. (l to r) Sara Lavender, Jennifer Thurlow



Sara Lavender coordinates the administrative processes required to initiate industry-sponsored research projects. She provides templates, negotiates agreements and budgets with industry sponsors on behalf of investigators and research teams and provides educational tools and support to investigators and research teams to ensure the successful and efficient start-up of industry-sponsored research studies.

Jennifer Thurlow provides assistance for investigators who are developing and conducting their own research. She negotiates and develops agreements and budgets both with funders and participating sites. She provides information regarding the liabilities, roles and responsibilities of PI's as sponsors and offers assistance to research teams for investigator-initiated/sponsored research to help maximize the potential for success of investigator-initiated/sponsored research at Capital Health.

For assistance with contracts, please contact: sara.lavender@cdha.nshealth.ca 902.473.6853; for grants, please contact: jennifer.thurlow@cdha.nshealth.ca 902.473.4841.

Research Publications, Presentations, Abstracts and Posters Database

The Research *Publications, Presentations, Abstracts and Posters Database* will be distributed twice a year—in February and July. The current database contains information from January 2007 to April 2009. If you have not already submitted items for the database or if you have new items since April 2009, please send them to emily.walker@cdha.nshealth.ca or contact her at 902.473.5156. The database can be viewed at <http://www.cdha.nshealth.ca/default.aspx?page=DocumentRender&doc.IdType=document&doc.Id=40450>.

Research in Progress

This newsletter is produced by Research Services. You can view it on the Capital Health website under the section: Research/Newsletters and Publications. The *Research Publications, Presentations, Abstracts and Posters* database can also be viewed at this site.



Capital Health