

April 10, 2020
Weekly WHRI Community Update – April 10, 2020

Sent on behalf of Dr. Lori Brotto, Executive Director, WHRI

I am writing to you, the WHRI community, from my home office, where it has now been four weeks since the normal operations of our institute have dramatically changed. Each week, we have provided critical information to our community about research curtailment, funding cancellations as well as new opportunities, and a steadfast message about the need for us to adhere to social distancing guidelines. Many of us have now become veterans with various videoconferencing platforms, and we are slowly adjusting to new schedules and the juggling of competing demands. It is clear that we are amidst a marathon, not a sprint, and that this entails settling into acceptance for how we can best position ourselves for the long road.

I want to reassure you that the WHRI continues to work hard to live out our [key objectives](#), while doing so remotely. In all four domains of our strategic objectives (enhancing our network; creating capacity; knowledge translation; and creating a pan-Canadian network of women's health researchers) we continue to forge ahead at this time.

Our administrative office remains open with staff working remotely to ensure that the research community can continue to connect with us. We continue to offer our [monthly research rounds \(3rd Friday of each month\) now entirely virtually](#). Our originally scheduled Patient-Oriented Research workshop, led in collaboration with the BC SUPPORT Unit, has now moved entirely online over the course of four 2-hour segments and was extremely well attended. And we plan to announce our 4th annual Catalyst Grant competition next month! (A note to the 2019 recipients of a WHRI Catalyst Grant: you will receive an automatic one year no-cost extension).

As women's health researchers, we also have the unique opportunity to ask some women-specific and sex-and-gender related questions about COVID-19 and contribute meaningful information about the virus. We have mobilized WHRI staff to assist with a phased approach to leading these research projects. I am grateful to everyone in the WHRI community for your ongoing flexibility, commitment, humour, kindness, and compassion. We need to practice self-care more than ever at this time. And we need to mobilize our community for the unique opportunity to contribute important women-specific data in the face of this crisis.

More than ever I remain committed to the staff and members of the WHRI. Please visit [our website](#) for information and resources related to COVID-19. And please feel free to connect with me directly, from my home office to yours.

Sincerely,
Lori Brotto
Executive Director, Women's Health Research Institute

Updates from April 4th – April 10th

[Do you need help with research tasks that can be carried out remotely?](#)

Qualified WHRI research staff are available to offer assistance to investigators who are looking for support with tasks that can be carried out in a remote work environment. Examples of such research tasks include would include protocol development, drafting funding grant and ethics applications, data entry and data cleaning, creating online surveys, social media-based recruitment, among others. For more information about the personnel supports that are currently available, please contact Kathryn Dewar (kdewar@cw.bc.ca).

Due to COVID-19, the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) cancelled the in-person component of the 2020 Annual Clinical and Scientific Conference. The abstract program remains a valuable resource to all our members. As such, *in lieu* of the in-person **abstract program, they will be posting all of the presentations** to the [SOGC website](#).

For presenters: confirm your participation in this year's abstract program by **May 6, 2020** by replying to this email or contacting abstracts@sogc.com.

The **CIHR Canadian HIV Trial Network** released a **COVID-19 Clinical Trial and Research Support** overview, which is available via <http://www.hivnet.ubc.ca/>

FUNDING AGENCY UPDATES and OPPORTUNITIES:

New and updated COVID-19 WHRI Funding Updates

Follow our webpage for all the latest news, COVID-19 funding opportunities, latest updates for deadlines and official statements from funding agencies regarding grant programs.

4.6.2020 The **Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR) announced the COVID-19 Research Response Fund and First Call For Proposals**. The MSFHR will support “projects (that) will build on BC-specific capacities and strengths, draw on available expertise and resources and include cross-institution collaborations.” The initial deadline for applications are open until May 19, 2020 with maximum award value \$150,000 and term of 12 months

Visit <https://www.msfhr.org/msfhr-covid-19-research-response-fund> for more information.

The BC Academic Health Sciences Network [Resources for Researchers Studying COVID-19](#)

For all research teams interested in conducting research on COVID-19, BC AHSN is a great resource which provides guidance on ethics, grant applications, clinical trials, and more.

NEW COVID-19 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Government of Canada – [Indigenous Community Support Fund](#) – 4/13
- Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovation (CEPI) – [Sponsor and CRO for clinical trials with COVID-19 candidate vaccines](#) – 4/19 (EOI)

- MSFHR – [COVID-19 Research Response Fund](#) – Ongoing until 5/19
- NSERC – [College and Community Innovation Program – Applied Research Rapid Response to COVID-19](#) – Ongoing until 6/1
- Amazon Web Services – [Diagnostic Development Initiative](#) – 6/30
- Canada Digital Technology Supercluster – [Call for COVID-19 Solutions](#) – Ongoing

UPDATES (4/1 - 4/7) TO COMPETITION DEADLINES

6/5 (LOI) - **Simons Foundation** - [2020 SFARI Collaboration on Sex Differences in Autism](#)

For updated list of funding opportunities and deadline changes, click [here](#)

For any questions regarding grant applications or grant writing assistance, reach out to Eric Lussier, eric.ducharmelussier@cw.bc.ca.

Have five minutes?

We're loving this powerful article published by Project Syndicate, written by Susan Papp, Managing Director of Policy and Advocacy at Women Deliver, and Marcy Hersh, Senior Manager for Humanitarian Advocacy at Women Deliver, **emphasizing the importance of including gender in the analysis of COVID-19**.

From the ways that outbreaks are experienced at an individual level, to the collection of data, to disruptions to essential maternal, sexual, and reproductive health services, the authors point to the urgent need to prioritize a gender lens for effective responses to health emergencies.

“To protect us all,” they write, “this time must be different.”

Read the article [here](#).

Postdoctoral fellow **Moe Elgendi & his wife Halla Elmobayad created a Facebook group** with the main goals of helping boost the morale of frontline healthcare staff, connecting the community to the frontline. Through this effort, **coffee and food donations have been delivered to units at BCWH, SMH and Burnaby hospitals**. Efforts have also been made to coordinate the making and distribution of PPE (e.g. headbands and caps to make wearing masks more comfortable) to hospitals. Healthcare workers can join the group and post and ask, and the group will help if they can.

Please visit their website: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/256356918716202/>

STAFF RESOURCES

New technical resources available to **UBC Faculty and Staff**:

<https://it.ubc.ca/news/snagit-and-camtasia-now-available-all-ubc-staff-faculty-and-students>

PHSA has highlighted some important resources and strategies for staff:

Psychological well-being: An early and often strategy

Not only have we experienced a critical event, but we continue to be part of it. Don't wait -- seek support sooner rather than later. Notice right now how you are feeling and take steps to access support. Start with resources that you can easily access online:

- [Anxiety Canada](#) Coping with COVID-19 Resources for everyone
- [Starling](#) Managing Mental Health during COVID-19
- [Workplace Wellness](#) PHSA Workplace Wellness Resources

If you would like to speak to a trained professional, there are a number of no-cost resources currently available to you:

- [Homewood Health](#) Employee & Family Assistance Program
- PHSA Confidential Staff Psychosocial Support email workplacewellness@cw.bc.ca or call 604-875-2982
- [BC Psychology Association](#) BCPA COVID-19 Psychological Support Service

Working well during COVID-19

Join us for upcoming wellness sessions to practice mindfulness, learn about healthy strategies for managing stress and anxiety during COVID-19, and ways to support your overall well-being.

- PHSA [Mindfulness Meditation Series](#)
 - C&W Tune-in Tuesday and Thankful Thursday mindfulness sessions email mindfulness@cw.bc.ca to join
 - [Calming Your Mind in Challenging Times](#)
 - [COVID-19: Strategies for Managing Stress](#)
 - [Virtual Yoga](#): Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:00-12:20pm via zoom
 - [21 day Self-Care Challenge](#) starting Tuesday April 14th. Sign up on [LearningHub](#) to receive the daily Self-Care Challenge email.
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