



CanHepC

Canadian Network on Hepatitis C
Réseau Canadien sur l'Hépatite C

CanHepC Newsletter June 2016

Dear CanHepC Members, Trainees and Partners,

Welcome to the second edition of the CanHepC newsletter!

Much has happened since the beginning of 2016 and I would like to take this opportunity to update you on what we've been up to in the Network before we break off for the summer holidays.

Before we begin we would like to thank Tom Wong for all his hard work as the leader of the Knowledge Translation Core. Tom has stepped down from his role and his involvement in CanhepC and the Steering Committee is currently seeking a replacement. We expect to have this done by the end of the summer.

Happy reading!

5th Canadian Symposium on HCV and Annual Meeting

The **5th Canadian Symposium on HCV** took place in Montreal on February 26th under the theme "We're not done yet: remaining challenges in Hepatitis C". The Symposium, organised by CanHepC, was once again well attended and sparked lively discussions about the need for an HCV vaccine as well as using momentum with the new Canadian government to inform a collective Federal, Provincial, and Territorial HCV elimination strategy or action plan.

[Watch the presentations for the Symposium](#)



The first **CanHepC Annual Meeting** took place the day after the Symposium and gathered the CanHepC investigators, knowledge users, trainees and some collaborators. The objective of the meeting was to agree on an **overall framework and to identify the research priorities for the Network**. Each Core (Basic Science, Clinical Research, Epidemiology, Policy and knowledge translation) met separately during the breakout sessions to establish a plan of action.

Several other subjects were also discussed including administrative and financial matters. Andrea Cox also gave a special presentation on the challenges associated with conducting a phase II HCV vaccine trial. Finally, **3 Student Prizes of \$500** were awarded to the following recipients:

- Nick Van Buuren & Annie Bernier for the 5th Canadian Symposium on HCV best Basic Science Poster
- Sahar Saeed for 5th Canadian Symposium on HCV best Clinical Science Poster

Megan Powdrill received the Frank Bialystock certificate of distinction. Congratulations to all!

The [program, minutes and presentations](#) of the Annual Meeting are available in Dropbox.

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE: The **6th Canadian Symposium on HCV** will take place **Friday 3rd March 2017** in **Banff, Alberta** at the Fairmount Banff Springs and will be followed by the **CanHepC Annual Meeting** on **Saturday 4th March 2017** at the Banff Centre. Further details will be posted soon!



Parliamentary Breakfast with Health Minister Dr Jane Philpott



CanHepC was part of the organisations represented at a **Parliament breakfast with Health Minister Dr Jane Philpott** which took place on June 16th 2016 on Parliament Hill in Ottawa.

Amongst others from the CanHepC Network, **Naglaa Shoukry, Jordan Feld and Julie Bruneau** were present on behalf of CanHepC to this event organised by the Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH) to launch World Hepatitis Day. Jordan Feld gave

a 5 minutes presentation affirming our **support to Canada's commitment to Hepatitis C and the development of a National Action Plan**. In her presentation, the Health Minister acknowledged the funding for our network, the importance of research and re-affirmed Canada's commitment to the **WHO elimination targets for Hepatitis by 2030**.

In addition, CanHepC with other partners including AHC, CSIH, CATIE and CTAC prepared an **infographic document advocating for Canada to respect its engagement towards hepatitis C** by supporting a National Strategy for eliminating the infection in Canada. Many thanks to Jason Grebely, Marina Klein and Jordan Feld for putting this together. The infographic was included amongst the material distributed at the Parliamentary breakfast and an updated version will be officially **launched in time for World Hepatitis Day**. For this we are coordinating our efforts with the partners involved to help disseminate our message as widely as possible. We will circulate the infographic once it's finalised.

The [CSIH press release, the draft infographic and Jordan's presentation](#) are available in Dropbox.



CanHepC website overhaul



The CanHepC website is getting a **complete overhaul and our logo will also be re-designed**. The new website will have a fresher look with a better structured navigation which we hope will increase our visibility. It will continue to act as a hub for information about our Network and our activities and will feature a news and events section, a training program section with complete online trainee and summer student application forms as well as an intranet section for our members.

We expect the new website to be **ready by the end of the summer**. Until that is done and the old one will remain active.

Student fellowships

A total of 19 trainee applications were received this year and reviewed by the Training Committee. Ten applicants were interviewed at the end of February and all **ten have been selected to receive a CanHepC student fellowship**.

Regarding the **2016 summer students**, a total of 13 applications were received and reviewed and **10 of them have been shortlisted for an award**.

Congrats to our new trainees and summer students and welcome to the CanHepC family!

We would also like to congratulate our trainees who received **external fellowships**:

Mohamed Abdel-Hakeem (FRSQ), Christopher Ablenas (FRSQ), Yalena Amadore-Canizares (Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation), Adelina Artenie (CIHR), Annie Bernier (FRSQ), Maude Boisvert (FRSQ), Che Colpitts (CIHR), Sophie Cousineau (Vanier Graduate Scholarship, Max E. Binz Fellowship), Thomas Fabre (CIHR), Emmanuel Fortier (CIHR), Gilian Kolla (Ontario Graduate Scholarship), Alison Marshall (University International Post Graduate Award - Australia), Sahar Saeed (FRSQ), Abdool Yasseen (Ontario Graduate Scholarship).

As a reminder, the **deadline for the 2017 Trainee Applications is November 30, 2016**.

Quick update from the Cores

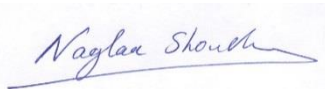
All the CanHepC Cores have been meeting via teleconference or in person following the Annual Meeting in view of carrying out the agreed CanHepC workplan. Much progress has been made in several areas and below are some of the highlights:

- The Basic Science Core have established a **questionnaire to assess sample site capacity in view of creating a biobank** for the network and are currently awaiting response from sites in Montreal, Calgary, Vancouver and Toronto.
- The Clinical research Core are moving forward with the **creation of a prospective clinical registry** and have selected a total of **14 sites to be included** in the registry in the first instance representing a mix of rural/academic/community settings across Canada. A **data intake form and follow-up form** have also been drafted and will be included in the chosen data collection tool developed at the University of Calgary.

- The process of **hiring the required staff resources to help build the CanHepC research platform** has now started and the necessary funds from the CanHepC CIHR grant have now been transferred to the institutions involved:
 - A **Health Services Research Scientist position** has been advertised at UBC to help support the admin data linkage for the Policy Core.
 - A **postdoctoral fellow position** has been advertised at CRCHUM to develop and implement a longitudinal study of at-risk and hepatitis C infected persons as part of the Epidemiology Core.
 - The Clinical core is currently shortlisting a **research worker** to support the clinical registry data management and coordination based at University of Toronto.
 - **A part-time resource will be hired at CAAN** to help support some ongoing knowledge translation building between aboriginal communities and CanHepC.
- The Training Core has been busy **reviewing student applications and the MCB course** which will start in September 2016.
- The **Knowledge Translation Core** has hired a **Summer Student** to help draft a primer on international **HCV commitments and frameworks**.

We have achieved a great amount of work in the first part of 2016 and we have many things ahead of us to look forward too. In the meantime, I wish you all happy summer holidays!

Best wishes,



Naglaa Shoukry, B.Pharm,
Ph.D.

