

CPN

CHRONIC PAIN NETWORK

NOVEMBER
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NETWORK NEWSLETTER

A CHRONIC PAIN NETWORK UPDATE



INSIDE



Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research

SPOR

Putting Patients First 



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A message from the Scientific Director

Network updates from Dr. Norman Buckley



Over the last several months, the Network has been busy meeting with internal and external stakeholders to discuss the future and potential areas of collaboration for the next iteration of the Chronic Pain Network. As more and more projects come to a close and some aspects of the Network begin to wind down, efforts in other areas are just starting to ramp up in preparation

for the future. To properly plan for the future, we first must take a minute to reflect on the past.

Now in its sixth year of operation, the Network has contributed to the production of many useful tools and supports for those looking to engage patients in research. The Patient Engagement committee has created products to ease researchers into actively engaging people with lived experience as members of the research team, including a tips sheet and a paper published on guidance on authorship when acknowledging the contributions of patient partners in patient-oriented research.

We have seen the Clinical Research Network (CRN) grow from 12 sites to 16. We hope the momentum gained in these last six years will continue and that we will see increased collaboration in pain research amongst pain clinics across the country.

The next iteration of the SPOR-CIHR funded CPN will be focused on mobilizing the knowledge created into action- for care, training, and policy. We are working to submit the application for CPN version 2 in December. At the same time, we are meeting with the Secretariat of the Canadian Pain Task Force with the aim of meeting their goal of support for the CPN research activities.

As we look ahead towards CPN 2.0 we'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have helped guide the Network to bring it to this point. We have navigated many challenges over these last six years, with the united goal of advancing pain research. We hope that, whatever the future holds, we will continue to overcome any obstacles we encounter together.

New Guidelines Released for the use of Medical Cannabis for Chronic Pain

This September saw the release of the new Rapid Recommendations for medical cannabis or cannabinoids for chronic pain. Published in the British Journal of Medicine, the guideline was developed by an international panel including patients and clinicians with content expertise. Among this diverse group of experts were Chronic Pain Network patient perspective partner Lynn Cooper and Network co-primary investigator Jason Busse.

The recommendations look at the role of medical cannabis or cannabinoids for chronic pain that stems from both cancer or non-cancer causes and was informed

by a series of four systematic reviews summarizing the current body of evidence for benefits and harms, as well as patient values and preferences, regarding medical cannabis or cannabinoids for chronic pain.

Medical cannabis is increasingly used to manage chronic pain, however, existing guideline recommendations are inconsistent, and cannabis use remains illegal in many countries.

You can view the recommendations by visiting:
[bmj.com/content/374/bmj.n2040](https://www.bmj.com/content/374/bmj.n2040)

New Funding Opportunity

The Chronic Pain Centre of Excellence for Canadian Veterans (CPCoE) has new funding opportunities available for research in the areas of Unique Characteristics of Chronic Pain in Canadian Veterans and Effectiveness of Self-Education for Veterans Managing Chronic Pain.

The CPCoE is the national leader in Veterans' chronic pain research and funds research that improves the well-being of Veterans, and their families, suffering from chronic pain.

*The deadline to apply is November 17, 2021.
More information can be found at:*
veteranschronicpain.ca/funding or by
contacting research@vcp-vdc.ca.

Network Profile: Patients as Partners

Meet Janet Gunderson

“This was a way to become involved with research, beyond just a tokenistic role,” says Janet Gunderson when asked what inspired her to become involved with the Chronic Pain Network. “I actually first heard about the Strategy for Patient Oriented Research SUPPORT Units, and then learned about the Chronic Pain Network shortly after,” she explains.

Janet’s interest in patient engagement has seen her actively involved with The Canadian Arthritic Patient Alliance and The Cochrane Collaboration for a number of years, as well as a few other groups. “I have vasculitis, and I live with chronic back pain. Patient Engagement is important to me. This was an opportunity that I did not want to pass up.”

In her work with the CPN, Janet is a member of the Patient Engagement committee. She has also shared her experiences and knowledge in the Network’s Patient EngagEmEnt in Research (PEER) webinar series, which aimed to educate trainees on the nuances of Patient Engagement and how to incorporate it into research at the beginning of a project.

“Patient engagement can mean so many different things,” she says. “It is a process that involves patients throughout the research process, from the patients helping set research priorities and possibly helping design research projects with the researchers. The patient often provides a different perspective that the researcher has not thought about.”



Janet Gunderson is a member of the Chronic Pain Network’s Patient Engagement committee, as well as a representative for People with Lived Experience as part of the SPOR Evidence Alliance and the Saskatchewan Centre for Patient Oriented Research.

Outside of the CPN, Janet works with the Saskatchewan Centre for Patient-Oriented Research and the SPOR Evidence Alliance, providing a lived experience perspective. She also worked with Dr. Renée El-Gabalawy as a patient partner on her project looking at correlates of suicidality among those with usual pain and discomfort. Though Janet is very modest when asked about work she has contributed to, Dr. El-Gabalawy credits her with providing an incredibly valuable diverse viewpoint that led to asking questions such as what factors can help protect people from suicidality? “I think patient engagement is important because it helps. It can be used to define research questions and make them more relevant. Patients can help determine outcomes that matter

to patients,” says Janet.

As the first iteration of the Chronic Pain Network winds down, Janet now finds herself excited to see the outputs of research funded through SPOR. She also hopes people will be inspired by the work of the Network in prioritizing patient engagement. “I hope people will come away with their own ideas. I am sure there are many other ways for patients to be actively involved.”

Turning Chronic Pain into Inspiration: Delane Linkiewich uses life experience to guide research

Delane Linkiewich is a Patient Perspective Partner with the Chronic Pain Network, as well as a second-year master's student in the Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology Program at the University of Guelph. As part of her master's thesis study, she is currently recruiting adolescents, aged 13-17, as participants.

From the age of 12, Delane has lived with chronic pain. It was her own experiences that inspired her program of research.

As an adolescent, she was very isolated and felt like there was no one around her age whom she could talk to that could understand what it was like to live with chronic pain. Therefore, she decided to focus her program of research on harnessing the power of peer support for adolescents living with chronic pain.

Peer support could help to connect youth, create a space for them to learn from each other and let them know that they are not

alone in their experiences of chronic pain. Delane is taking a patient-oriented approach to her master's research, which seeks to understand the peer support needs of adolescents living with chronic pain.

Through her role in sitting on the Chronic Pain Network's Patient Engagement committee, Delane has learned about the importance of patient engagement in research and has engaged a patient partner on her research team. The information that she gathers from youth in her master's research will help to inform her doctoral research, where she plans to develop, implement and evaluate a peer support intervention for adolescents living with chronic pain.

Anyone interested in participating or sharing information about the study to access the following link for more information:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/g8zbnsmjm7gpud2/AADCWxiHVeJBLIHG3K6KR4Eza?dl=0>

Coming Events

What: National Pain Awareness Week
When: November 7-13, 2021

National Pain Awareness Week is only days away. Use your voice to help make pain a priority. Share posts and tweets on social media using the hashtags #PrioritizePain and #NPAW2021

To learn more, visit:
<https://paincanada.ca/>

Who: Canadian Pain Society
What: Annual Scientific Meeting
When: May 10 - 13, 2022
Where: Montreal, Quebec

For additional details visit:
canadianpainsociety.ca/

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