

The 2019 Advocacy Program

The Parliamentary Health Research Caucus



The Parliamentary Health Research Caucus: Senator Judith Seidman, MP Kim Rudd, MP Marilyn Gladu, Deborah Gordon-El-Bihbey and MP Carol Hughes

In the first six months of 2019, Research Canada held four very popular Parliamentary Health Research Caucus (PHRC) events, each raising awareness among Parliamentarians about the social and economic benefits of Canadian health research and health innovation.

In February 2019, the PHRC and Research Canada hosted a Luncheon on **Veterans' Health and Health Research in Canada**. Co-hosted by the Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research (CIMVHR), this

Luncheon featured researchers from three of Research Canada's member organizations who provided an overview of the PTSD and suicide prevention health research aimed at advancing the well-being of our Veterans and highlighted our strengths and challenges in taking care of the pride of Canada's military.

The first Reception of the year, held in April 2019, explored **The Opioid Crisis: How Can Research Inform Solutions?** Co-hosted by HealthCareCAN, this Reception was the second in a series of events focused on this public health crisis and featured 10 stellar researchers from many of Research Canada's member organizations. These Canadian experts delved into the deeper reasons for the crisis by focusing on five major themes and proposing integrated solutions that research in these areas can provide: harm reduction to fight the opioid epidemic; challenging transitions of care for opioid patients; integrating public health and health care strategies to combat the opioid crisis; cannabis as a possible and; mental health disorders and opioid use.

The second Reception event, held in May 2019, was on **Women's Health and Health Research in Canada** and featured 13 female experts who use a sex- and gender-based lens to understand and improve women's health. These 13 researchers,



Dr. Zul Merali, Dr. Hance Clarke, Dr. Martha Lopez-Canul and Dr. Gabriella Gobbi

including several Indigenous researchers, spoke with Parliamentarians about the important and ground-breaking research they are conducting in the areas of women and drugs; gender and violence and; sex, gender and health outcomes.

Closing out the year's PHRC events ahead of the federal election, a second Luncheon was held on **The Future of Health Research in Canada: The Student Perspective**, on the occasion of



Dr. John Reynolds, Dr. Martin Osmond, Hugh Scott, MP John Oliver, MP Kim Rudd, Shawn McGuirk, Deborah Gordon-El-Bihbety, MP Marilyn Gladu, MP Carol Hughes, Dr. Robert McMaster and Senator Mohamed Ravalia

Research Canada's 2019 Annual General Meeting in June. This Luncheon featured two of Canada's young researchers who spoke to Parliamentarians about the unique challenges facing students, postdoctoral fellows and doctoral trainees as they build their careers in academe and in other sectors as the future stewards of Canadian health research and innovation.

Celebrating the 2019 Gairdner Awardees

In April 2019, Research Canada and Senator Judith Seidman, Senate Representative of the PHRC, in partnership with the Gairdner Foundation, hosted a private Luncheon at the Fairmont Chateau Laurier to **Celebrate the 2019 Gairdner Awards**. This Luncheon afforded key representatives from the Government of Canada the opportunity to meet Canada Gairdner Laureates and learn about their incredible contributions to biomedical research around the world.



Dr. Janet Rossant, Dr. Connie Jean Eaves, Senator Stan Kutcher, Senator Judith Seidman, Senator Colin Deacon, Dr. Susan Band Horwitz, MP Kim Rudd, Deborah Gordon-El-Bihbety and Dr. Rose Goldstein

CanadaSpeaks! 2019 National Poll

During the spring of 2019, Research Canada, along with five of our national health Partners, conducted the **CanadaSpeaks! 2019 National Public Opinion Poll on Health and Medical Research**. Updating the results from landmark surveys in 2006, 2009 and 2015, this year's poll emphasized Canadians' strong support for health research and health innovation. Through this poll, Research Canada brought Canadians' voice to Parliamentarians in our lobbying efforts and to Candidates of the federal election throughout our **Your Candidates, Your Health** Initiative.

The Partners: Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC), Health Charities Coalition of Canada (HCCC), HealthCareCAN, Innovative Medicines Canada (IMC), Medtech Canada (formerly MEDEC).

Research Canada's Publications

Research Canada continues to produce our two popular publications. **RC On the Move** is Research Canada's newsletter for Members. Produced three to six times each year, **RC On the Move** provides Members with political and policy news, information about Research Canada's upcoming Parliamentary Health Research Caucus events, news from the HRI Portal, and more!

RC Update is a newsletter for Parliamentarians that focuses on the most recent Parliamentary Health Research Caucus events and aims to profile the incredible research happening at our Member institutions. In addition to those researchers who are selected to participate in Parliamentary Health Research Caucus events, **RC Update**, recognizes and profiles those researchers from member organizations who may not have been able to attend our events.



Social Media

At the end of 2019, the Research Canada Twitter account had almost 6,400 followers and our tweets over the past year have been achieving on average almost 1,000 Impressions per tweet. Our Facebook page now has almost 1,200 likes, and these numbers are continuing to grow each day. At the end of 2016, Research Canada had just 5,000 Twitter followers and 950 Facebook likes, meaning we have grown our social media audience by over 25% over the past three years, reaching even more of the health research and health innovation community online to profile our Members and amplify the voices of the Canadian health research and innovation ecosystem.

HRI Portal



Throughout 2019, Research Canada has continued to use the **HRI Portal** as a vehicle through which we can profile the important and innovative work of our Members and the advocacy and education work that

Research Canada does through the Parliamentary Health Research Caucus and policy initiatives. Research Canada offers this service to our Members to assist you in getting the word out about your ground-breaking research and innovations at an affordable rate.

The HRI Portal also hosts the news and commentary the health research community wants to see through the **Daily Media Digest** and the French **Weekly Digest (La revue de presse hebdomadaire)**. These stories are made available to our community for free.

FINA Submission

Research Canada submitted a response to the **House of Common's Standing Committee on Finance's (FINA) Pre-Budget Consultations** in advance of the 2020 Budget in August 2019, entitled ***Climate Emergency: Investing in Health Evidence to Support Canada's Transition to a Low Carbon Economy***. In an effort to ensure Canada's ability to effectively address climate change and its associated health impacts, Research Canada recommended that the Government of Canada:

- 1) make a significant investment in research focused on the unique climate change-related health issues faced by Canada's diverse populations;
- 2) invest in research with, by and for Indigenous Peoples, elucidating the unique impact of climate change on Indigenous Peoples and recognizing the leadership role they play in developing mitigation and adaptation strategies; and
- 3) make a significant investment in research focused on the complex interactions between climate change and emerging infectious diseases.

2019 AGM: The Future of Health Research in Canada

As part of Research Canada's 2019 Annual General Meeting, we organized a panel discussion related to the day's theme **The Future of Health Research in Canada**. This panel featured three leading voices on the unique challenges facing early-career researchers, who spoke with our Members and guests on **Calling for Recognition, Better Funding and Career Training: The Canadian Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Experience**. These stellar panelists and audience members raised important issues such as the disjointed nature of Canada's doctoral and post-doctoral system; the need to address the academic community's narrow definitions of research excellence and career success; the importance of sufficient support of doctoral students and post-doctoral trainees, and in particular, those of marginalized groups, through Canada's federal fellowships and scholarships and; the value of non-academic sectors, including the health and biosciences sector, in providing doctoral students and post-doctoral trainees with important experiential learning and career opportunities.



Dr. Ryan Wiley (Chair), Dr. Tina Gruosso, Dr. Joseph Sparling and Dr. Jennifer Polk

Research Canada's Policy Initiatives

A cornerstone of Research Canada's mission and mandate is to reach across the many sectors that comprise the health innovation continuum and encourage opportunities to work together in response to public policy processes and to seek out alignment among our national partners

on a number of important issues such as the need for more support of early- and mid-career health researchers. Research Canada's Policy Engagement Committee, comprised, in part, of representatives from our Members across the different sectors that make up our health research and health innovation ecosystem, has continued to advise Research Canada's Board of Directors on our shared efforts to advance health research and health innovation in Canada. In 2019, Research Canada wrote five letters to the Prime Minister and members of Cabinet on a number of issues, including the cancellation of the Networks of Centres of Excellence; the Council on Science and Innovation; the proposed reforms to the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board; the recommendations of the Health and Biosciences Economic Strategy Table; and the Made-in-Canada Athena SWAN Initiative, for which a pilot program has now been launched under the name of **Dimensions EDI**.

Leadership in Advocacy Award

Research Canada's Leadership in Advocacy Award honours health research advocacy champions and draws greater attention to health research and health innovation in Canada. The award is given on an annual basis to recognize individuals and/or organizations that have made outstanding efforts in advocating for Canadian health research at the local, provincial and/or national level.



*Dr. Robert McMaster, Dr. Tina Grusso, Marie Franquin,
Dr. Ryan Wiley, Dr. Roderick McInnes and
Deborah Gordon-El-Bihbety*

The 2019 Leadership in Advocacy Award, announced at the Prix Galien and the Health Research Foundation's Medal of Honour Award Ceremony on November 20, 2019, was given to **Dr. Roderick McInnes**, Director of the Lady Davis Institute, **Dr. Ryan Wiley**, President of Shift Health, and **Science & Policy Exchange (SPE)** in Montreal.

Dr. McInnes' advocacy work is best characterized by his grassroots efforts and his local and extensive consultation with stakeholders. Notably, the advocacy work he undertook for the Canadian Institutes of Health Research during his time as Acting President secured the largest single-year budget increase in 15 years.

Dr. Wiley exemplifies corporate goals of being both the collective voice of Canada's healthcare research advocacy in the public sector, and a tireless advocate of private sector innovation both within Canada and globally. Ryan has helped to propel the use of science in marginalized societies and engaged global pharmaceutical companies to help educate governments on the merits of both specific drugs and broader disease categories, encouraging all to view healthcare as a continuum from innovation to application.

SPE brings together leading experts from academia, industry, and government to engage and inform students and the public on issues at the interface of science and policy. SPE turns its members' relative youth into an asset by highlighting how underinvestment in research will hinder the future prospects of our country.

Election 2019: Your Candidates, Your Health

In the fall of 2019, Research Canada launched the **Your Candidates, Your Health 2019 Federal Election Campaign** to provide its Members with the tools and resources necessary to effectively advocate for and educate 2019 Federal Election Candidates about the social and economic benefits



**YOUR CANDIDATES
YOUR HEALTH**

**VOS CANDIDATS
VOTRE SANTÉ**

of Canadian health research and health innovation. Consisting of both a dynamic website and the **Advocates' Toolkit**, the *Your Candidates, Your Health* initiative offered valuable tips, advocacy messages, and information about health research and innovation in Canada. Throughout the federal election campaign, Research Canada joined our Members in engaging with Candidates on this critical issue to Canadians' health and wellbeing.

Following our collective advocacy efforts, Justin Trudeau's Liberal Party won their second mandate, claiming 157 seats for a strong minority government. Andrew Scheer's Conservative Party claimed 121 seats, the Bloc Québécois took 32 seats, the NDP won 24, and the Green Party broke ground with three seats.



BRIGHTER WORLD

Member Webcast Series

In 2019, Research Canada launched our **Webcast Series for Members** that offered key insights and information about political Ottawa and provided our Members with an opportunity to network with and learn from other organizations in our Alliance. Originally branded as a Webinar Series, Research Canada held three very successful events featuring Guest Speaker Michelle McLean, Senior Vice-President of Health and Wellness at Hill+Knowlton which focused on Budget 2019 (February); **Your Candidates, Your Health** and the federal election Campaign (September); and the results of the 2019 federal election and its impact on Canadian health research and innovation (October).



*Michelle McLean,
Hill+Knowlton Strategies*

Into the Future

Five Parliamentary Health Research Caucus Events in 2020!

Research Canada will kick off the 2020 Advocacy Program with a Welcome Reception for new and returning Members of Parliament. Following this Reception, we will organize four Parliamentary Health Research Caucus Receptions and Luncheons focused on the health impacts of climate change; rare and orphan diseases; medical imaging for treatment and diagnoses; and cancer research. We welcome suggestions on research projects and researchers in these fields from our Members. In addition to these stellar events, Research Canada and the PHRC will also host, in collaboration with the Gairdner Foundation, a luncheon to celebrate 2020 Gairdner Award winners.

Welcome Reception for New and Returning MPs

Following our ***Your Candidates, Your Health*** initiative and the 2019 federal election, Research Canada will hold a **Welcome Reception** for new and returning Members of Parliament. Accompanied by a Welcome Kit provided to the entire 43rd Parliament of Canada, this Reception will provide our Members, Supporters and Partners an opportunity to introduce their organizations to MPs and to strengthen their relationships with them.

Always Mission-Driven

As a mission-driven organization, Research Canada continues to take the long-term health research and health innovation advocacy view recognizing that advocating for investments in health research and policies that build a strong health innovation system take time and persistence and require a consistent presence on Parliament Hill — a presence that Research Canada has because of your ongoing support.

For more information about Research Canada: An Alliance for Health Discovery, visit rc-rc.ca.