

List of Supervisors: UHN Women's Health Program

The individuals listed below have indicated they are willing to supervise a summer student, however, any Women's Health Program member is eligible to serve as a supervisor. See [Women's Health Program Our Members webpage](#) for a full list of members.

Husam Abdel-Qadir, MD PhD FRCPC (Cardiology and Internal Medicine)

Husam Abdel-Qadir is a cardiologist at Women's College Hospital and the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, and a scientist at Women's College Research Institute, the Ted Rogers Centre for Heart Research, and ICES. He graduated from the University of Toronto's medical school with the Silver Medal and completed residencies in Internal Medicine and Cardiology at the University of Toronto, followed by a PhD in Clinical Epidemiology and Health Care Research at the Institute for Health Policy, Management, and Evaluation. His primary clinical and research focus is the cardiovascular health of people with cancer, particularly breast cancer. This research is supported by an early career Chair in Heart and Brain Health and the 2020 National New Investigator Award from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada. He also leads a research program on the management and outcomes of people with atrial fibrillation. His work has been recognized by the Canadian Cardiovascular Society Young Investigator Award and Atrial Fibrillation Research Award, European Society of Cardiology Young Investigator Award, and the Polanyi prize in Medicine/ Physiology. Dr. Abdel-Qadir is a board member of the Black Physicians' Association of Ontario and serves as its Director of Continuing Professional Development. He is also a member of the Advisory Board to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario.

Esther Bui, MD, FRCPC

Dr. Bui is a neurologist with an expertise in epilepsy and electroencephalography (EEG). Her research interests are in women's health in neurology and medical education.

As a key founding member of the Women's Neurology Program (est. 2015) at the University of Toronto, her work includes: Co-director of the Women's Neurology Program and Fellowship; Co-chair of the Women's Issues in Epilepsy, Canadian League Against Epilepsy; and, Founder of the Women in Neurology mentorship program for residents and fellows, University of Toronto. Her research interests are in women's health issues in epilepsy and neurology, music therapy for women with epilepsy (WWE) during pregnancy, understanding stigma in WWE during their reproductive years, factors affecting outcomes in pregnancy for WWE in Canada, breast milk concentrations for anti-seizure medications, and scoping review of women's issues in neurology.

In Women's Health in Neurology, Dr. Bui is a recognized national expert in Women's Issues in Epilepsy and co-author of the Women with Epilepsy, a Practical Management Handbook. At the national level, she continues to work within the Canadian League Against Epilepsy (CLAE) to advance our understanding of women's issues in epilepsy. She is currently an external expert for the European Association of Neurology: Gender and Diversity Task Force.

In Education and Mentorship, Dr. Bui is the recipient of the New Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award (2016-2017), the William Goldie Award in Education (2020-2021). She has been nominated for the Robert Shepherd Award for Health Equity and Social Justice and the John Edmeads Mentorship Award. Funding for education research has come from the University of Toronto New Initiatives Program, Medical Humanities Education Grant and the Postgraduate Innovation Fund Award.

Sophia (Yue) Li, PhD

Dr. Li is a staff scientist and Manager of Strategic Projects & Partnerships at the KITE Research Institute of the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute-University Health Network. She holds a PhD in Biomedical Engineering from the University of Montreal - École Polytechnique of Montreal. Dr. Li's research focuses on assistive technology, the impact of weather and building environment on safety and accessibility, and fall prevention.

Aleksandra Pikula, MD PhD FRCPC (Neurologist)

Dr. Aleksandra Pikula is an Associate Professor of Medicine (Neurology) at the University of Toronto, a Clinician-Investigator at Krembil Brain Institute, Director of Stroke Neurology Research at UHN and Co-Director of Women's Neurology Fellowship at U of T.

She is a founder and director of the largest multidisciplinary Stroke in Young Adults (SiYA) Program in Canada that entails three clinics – Combined CNS Vasculitis, Stroke in Young and Stroke in Women. Dr. Pikula completed her clinical training in Internal Medicine at NYU (MSH), Neurology at Boston University School of Medicine, and a three-year combined clinical and research Vascular Neurology fellowship training at the Boston University School of Medicine (BMC), at the Harvard School of Medicine (MGH) and at the Framingham Heart Study where she worked for 5 years prior to joining UHN. She is also board certified in Lifestyle Medicine through American Collage of Lifestyle Medicine.

Dr. Pikula's overarching clinical and research interests are focused on clinical and subclinical cerebrovascular disease in young population, with special interest in sex-disparities and women's brain health. Over the past decade, a major focus of her research had been in identifying the biological/molecular pathways and imaging markers for overt/covert vascular brain disease in middle-aged population (Framingham). At UHN/KBI, Dr. Pikula's clinical

research is focused on sex-disparities in stroke outcomes by utilizing PROMS and studying the effect of various factors (psychological, social, lifestyle) on HRQOL, stroke outcomes and post-stroke needs in young stroke survivors. This led to an emerging interest in developing innovative clinical strategies for primary/secondary stroke prevention in young – The EMBRACE Lifestyle Program. Through this program, Dr. Pikula is now leading the W - KNOW BRAIN CARE Study on patients' knowledge about lifestyle & brain health in neurology, with specific focus on age, sex and gender specific disparities.

Dr. Pikula co-chairs the U of T Women's Brain Health Rounds with Dr. Gillian Einstein from the U of T, Department of Psychology and through support from the Women's Brain Health Initiative & the Wilfred & Joys Posluns Chair in Women's Brain Health and Aging. The rounds serve as a unique international opportunity for students, faculty, residents and patients to share translational links between clinical and basic science around women's brain health in those with or without neurological conditions. The rounds are further supported by the Frontiers in Global Women's Health through Article Collection to allow students and junior faculty members to share and publish their work around the same topics.

Dr. Pikula's work had been published in high impact journals and recognized by, amongst others, the NIH/NINDS & ANA as a recipient of the Investigator Development Award and the AHA/ASA as a recipient of National Clinical Research Awards, which allowed her to study serum levels and genetic variation of various novel biomarkers in stroke and subclinical vascular brain injury in mid-age population. Since arrival to UHN, she maintains collaborations with Framingham Study and holds research support from the UofT, HSFC, CSC and CIHR for several active studies.

Lena Serghides, PhD

Dr. Serghides is a senior scientist at Toronto General Hospital Research Institute (TGHRI) at the University Health Network and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Immunology and the Institute of Medical Sciences at the University of Toronto. Her current research focus is on understanding the mechanisms that contribute to the increased risk for adverse pregnancy outcomes in women with HIV, and on the long-term effects of in utero exposure to HIV antiretrovirals. The research is motivated by the goal of optimizing maternal and infant health in the context of infections of global health importance.

Sharon Walmsley, MSc, MD, FRCPC

Dr. Sharon Walmsley is a professor of medicine in the Department of Medicine at the University of Toronto and a senior scientist at the Toronto General Hospital Research Institute. She is also the director of the Immunodeficiency (HIV) Clinic at the Toronto General Hospital and a CTN

National Co-director, along with [Dr. Marina Klein](#). In 2017 she was appointed as a member of the Order of Canada.

She first completed her undergraduate degree in honours microbiology and immunology and then received her medical degree from the University of Western Ontario. Her master's degree in clinical epidemiology was obtained from the University of Toronto. She has completed specialty training in infectious diseases, microbiology, and internal medicine.

Over the years, Dr. Walmsley's research interest has included a focus on HIV in women and she has participated in studies evaluating the epidemiology, therapy, psychosocial and other issues affecting women living with HIV. Other research has evaluated co-infection with HIV and other viral infections including hepatitis C, human papillomavirus (HPV), and herpes simplex virus. Her most recent work focuses on understanding the complex interactions between HIV and aging (CHANGE HIV; [CTN 314](#)) and will include evaluations specific to women. Dr. Walmsley is the chair of an international workshop on HIV and women.

In addition to her role as National Co-director and Steering Committee member, Dr. Walmsley is very active in CTN research. She has been involved in numerous CTN studies as principal investigator or co-investigator and has contributed to more than 80 CTN research publications since 2010.

Karen Weiser, PhD

Brad Wouter, Beng, PhD

Dr. Brad Wouters is the Executive Vice President Science & Research at UHN. He is a Senior Scientist at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre and was the institute's Interim Research Director (2014–2016). He is also a Professor in the Departments of Medical Biophysics and Radiation Oncology at the University of Toronto. His research program examines the molecular mechanisms underlying how hypoxia and the tumour microenvironment affect cancer biology and therapeutic outcome.

As EVP of Science and Research, Dr. Wouters is focused on creating an environment that incentivizes, facilitates and rewards excellence in research across all elements of UHN. To this end, he led the development of UHN's 2019–23 Strategic Research Plan, which incorporates team science and collaborative strategies to achieve UHN's goals for research impact and organizational excellence. The implementation of this plan will help deliver Team UHN's shared vision of A Healthier World.

Azadeh Yadollahi, PhD

Azadeh Yadollahi is an emerging investigator in the field of sleep and airway disorders. In 2014, she was appointed a Scientist at TRI—one of five research institutes within UHN—and recently obtained an academic appointment as Assistant Professor at the prestigious Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering at the University of Toronto. She is also an Adjunct Faculty Member in the Graduate Department of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Manitoba.

Dr. Yadollahi completed her doctoral training with Dr. Zahra Moussavi, Canada Research Chair in Biomedical Engineering and Director of the Graduate Program in Biomedical Engineering at the University of Manitoba, where she developed expertise in analyzing respiratory sounds and their application for diagnosing sleep apnea. As a visiting scholar at the Harvard University School of Public Health, she received asthma training from Dr. Jeffrey Fredberg, Professor of Physiology and world expert in mechanisms of airway narrowing in asthma. She then pursued postdoctoral training under renowned respirologist Dr. T. Douglas Bradley, Medical Director of the Centre for Sleep Health and Research at UHN, Director of the Respirology Program at the University of Toronto and the Clifford Nordal Chair in Sleep Apnea and Rehabilitation Research. Here, she honed her skills and developed an expansive repertoire of techniques with which to study the effect of the recumbent position during sleep on the severity of sleep apnea.

Vicky Zeldin, PhD