



# 2022–23 Annual Report

Department Of Supportive Care

# Message From The Department Head

It is my great pleasure to present to you the Department of Supportive Care Annual Report for the fiscal year 2022–2023. The Department of Supportive Care (DSC) is an interdisciplinary department that spans across all sites of the University Health Network (UHN), administered through the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre. Our three divisions – Palliative Care, Psychosocial Oncology, and Cancer Rehabilitation & Survivorship (CRS) – are dedicated to supporting patients and their families to have the highest quality of life possible, throughout and beyond their treatment at UHN.

The DSC has continued to work steadily towards achieving the strategic goals set out in the DSC Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024, with new and exciting initiatives within all of our clinical programs. Of particular note for this year, the Sexual Health clinic was launched under the leadership of Dr. Andrew Matthew; Rose-Marie Fraser and Nadia Carnevale were recruited as dedicated palliative care social workers for the TGH and TWH palliative care teams; Dr. Abha Gupta secured Ministry of Health funding through the Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario to develop AYA services across Ontario using the Princess Margaret as a framework; and CRS launched the CaRE@Home-Advanced Cancer (AC) program.

Our renowned education programs have continued to attract learners from all over the world. In the last year, DSC has welcomed 16 clinical and clinical research fellows from 10 countries, as well as training 160 undergraduates and postgraduates and hosting 60 observers. This year, our education team created a centralized repository of all DSC education offerings to streamline the learner application process on a centralized website. Collaborative planning has also begun for our first Supportive Care Update Conference, to take place in the spring of 2024.

Our researchers have been equally active, with a total of 170 new peer-reviewed publications, including a randomized controlled trial of geriatric assessment published by Dr. Alibhai and colleagues in the Journal of Clinical Oncology. This year again brought successful national grant funding for DSC. Drs. Samantha Mayo, Lori Bernstein, Kim Edelstein were co-PIs on a CIHR project grant proposing an interprofessional approach to alleviating cancer-related cognitive impairment for adults with brain metastases. In addition, Dr. David Langelier, Dr. Jackie Bender, and Dr. Samantha Mayo all received grants from the Canadian Cancer Society, and Dr. Jennifer Bell received grant funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and Genome Canada.

I extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the DSC team, as well as to the Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation, the UHN Foundation, and our community partners for their unwavering support during another fabulous year.

Warm regards,



**Dr. Camilla Zimmermann, MD, PhD, FRCPC**  
Head, Department of Supportive Care



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# Department Overview

The **Department of Supportive Care (DSC)** is a multidisciplinary department that spans across all sites of the University Health Network (UHN). The DSC consists of three divisions – Palliative Care, Psychosocial Oncology, and Cancer Rehabilitation and Survivorship. The department is guided by its multidisciplinary Leadership Team and Steering Committee. Together, we are dedicated to supporting patients with advanced disease and their families to have the highest quality of life possible.

The Department of Supportive Care has continued to steadily work towards achieving the strategic goals set out in the DSC Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024. Of note, the DSC Wellbeing Collaborative has continued to refine a wellbeing survey to help collect baseline data on staff wellbeing drivers and barriers, the Sexual Health clinic was launched under the leadership of Dr. Andrew Matthew, a dedicated palliative care social worker was recruited for both the TGH and TWH palliative care teams, Dr. Abha Gupta secured ministry funding to develop AYA services for other cancer centers across the region using the Princess Margaret as a framework, and CRS launched the CaRE@Home-Advanced Cancer (AC) program.

Looking ahead, the team is focused on getting ready to start the planning process for the next strategic plan that will align with the **Princess Margaret Cancer Centre’s Always Moving Forward – Strategic Priorities 2023 and Beyond** strategic plan, as well as the new strategic plan for the University Health Network that will be developed in 2024. We will also be planning an upcoming department retreat for all staff to ensure we provide as many opportunities as possible for staff to provide feedback and input into the next strategic plan.

## Palliative Care



## Psychosocial Oncology



## Cancer Rehabilitation & Survivorship



## Our Vision

We meaningfully improve the lives of patients and families living with serious illnesses locally and worldwide.

## Our Mission

We will provide and promote high quality supportive care for all patients and their families throughout the course of illness, through excellence in clinical care, research, and education.

## Department Leadership



**Camilla Zimmermann**  
Department Head



**Madeline Li**  
Co-Lead,  
Psychosocial  
Oncology



**Robin Forbes**  
Social Work  
Co-Lead,  
Psychosocial  
Oncology



**Jennifer Jones**  
Director, Cancer  
Rehabilitation &  
Survivorship



**Breffni Hannon**  
Lead, Princess  
Margaret Cancer  
Centre Palliative Care



**Ebru Kaya**  
Lead, Toronto  
General Hospital  
Palliative Care



**Warren Lewin**  
Lead, Toronto  
Western Hospital  
Palliative Care

## Steering Committee



**Camilla Zimmermann**  
Department Head



**Aleksandra Chafanskaia**  
Manager, Cancer  
Rehabilitation &  
Survivorship



**Caitlin Doherty**  
Manager,  
Supportive Care



**Mary Elliott**  
Well-Being Lead,  
Supportive Care



**Robin Forbes**  
Social Work  
Co-Lead,  
Psychosocial  
Oncology



**Breffni Hannon**  
Lead, Princess  
Margaret Cancer  
Centre Palliative  
Care



**Jennifer Jones**  
Director, Cancer  
Rehabilitation &  
Survivorship



**Anet Julius**  
Director of  
Professional  
Practice, Princess  
Margaret



**Thomas Kais-Prial**  
Research Manager,  
Supportive Care



**Ebru Kaya**  
Lead, Toronto  
General Hospital  
Palliative Care



**Warren Lewin**  
Lead, Toronto  
Western Hospital  
Palliative Care



**Madeline Li**  
Co-Lead,  
Psychosocial  
Oncology



**Myann Marks-Aitken**  
Project Manager,  
Supportive Care



**Lesley Moody**  
Clinical Director,  
Solid Tumour  
& Ambulatory,  
Supportive Care,  
Gattuso Rapid  
Diagnostic Centre



**Athena Nicholas**  
Education  
Specialist,  
Supportive Care



**Gary Rodin**  
Director of Global  
Institute of  
Psychosocial,  
Palliative & End-of-  
Life Care (GIPPEC)  
Cancer Experience,  
Princess Margaret



**Emily Steinback**  
Senior  
Development  
Officer, PMCF

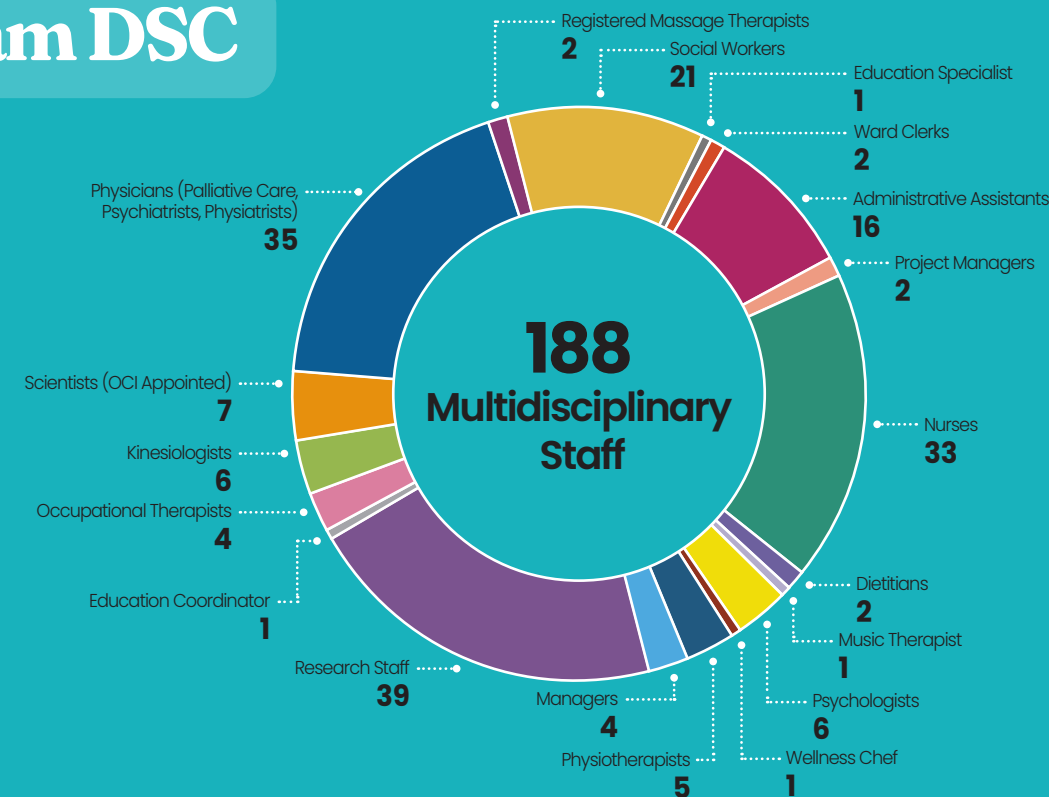


**Tanis Walker**  
Director, Major  
Gifts, PMCF



# The Year In Numbers

## Team DSC



## Research

27

Active Research Grants with DSC PI or Co-PI

36

Active Research Grant Collaborations

170

Peer-Reviewed Publications

**\$12,595,468**

Total New Research Funding

**\$7,006,931**

Total New Research Funding with DSC PI or Co-PI (22 Grants)

**\$5,588,537**

Total New Research Funding Collaborations (22 Grants)

## Education

65

Education & Research Rounds Hosted

15

Undergraduate Students

15

Graduate Students

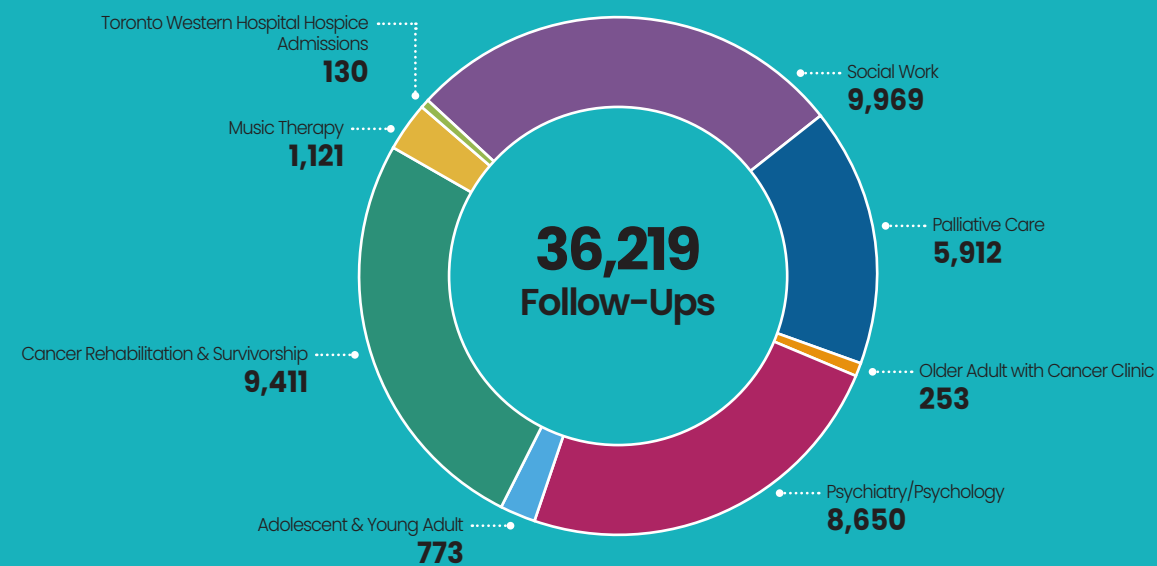
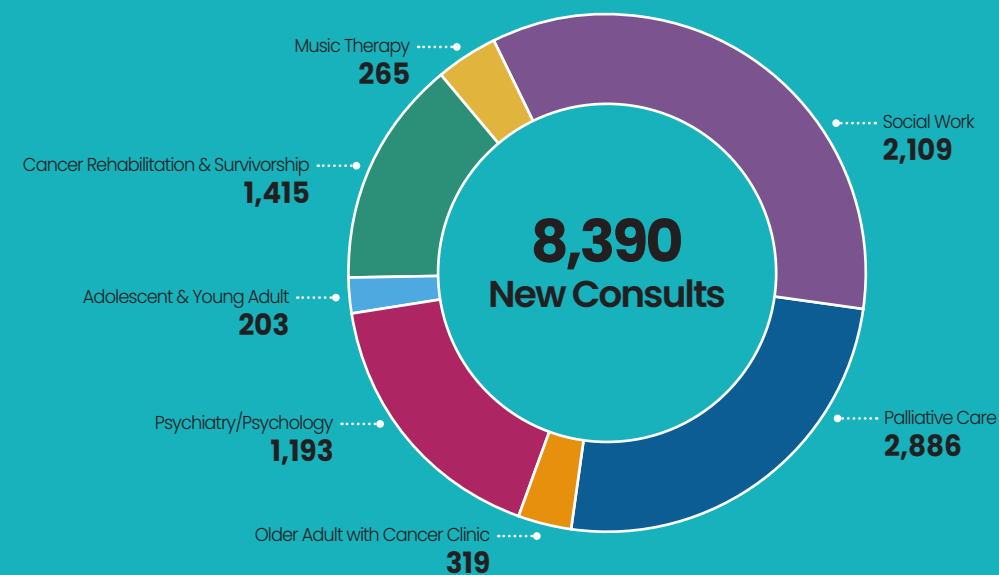
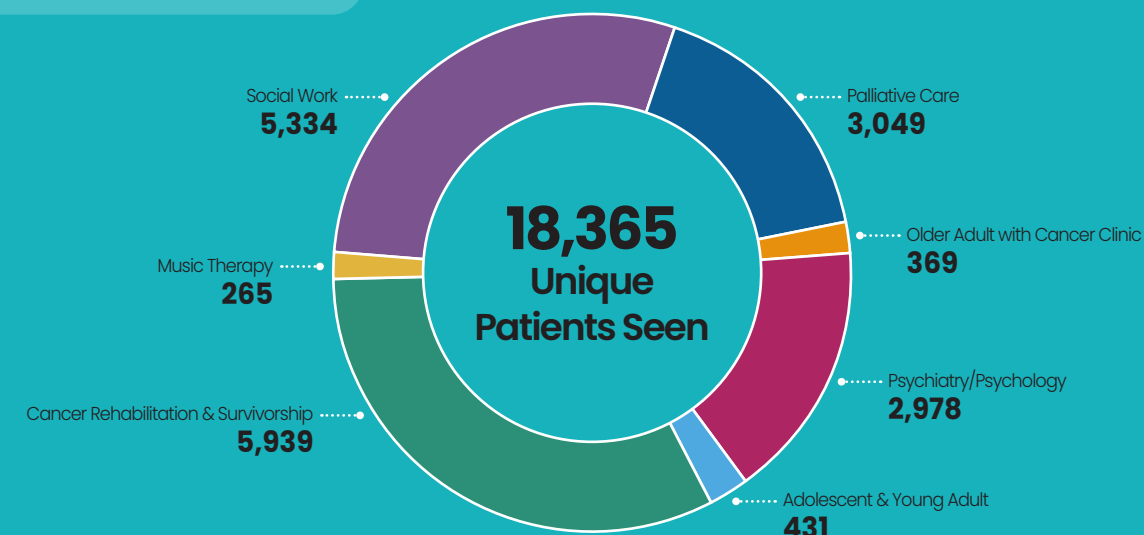
145

Post-Graduate Students

60

Continuing Education Learners

## Clinical Care

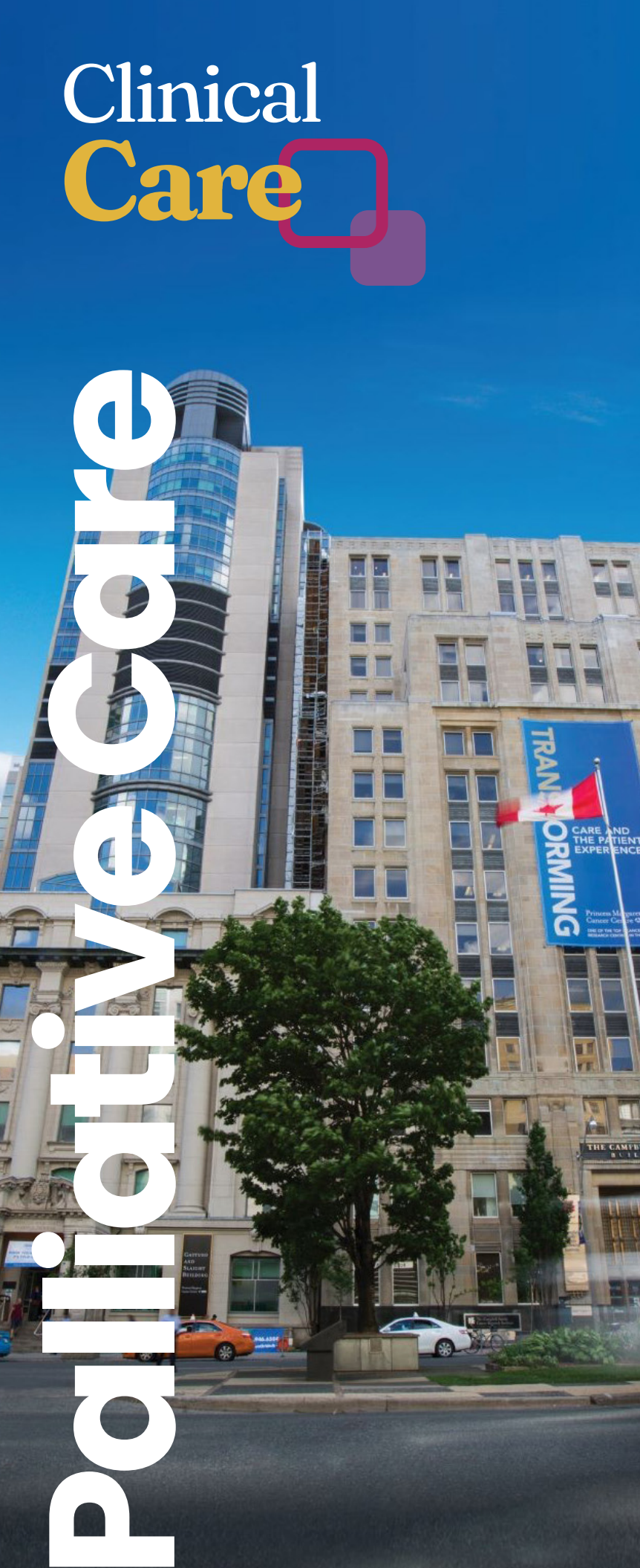


2022-2023



# Clinical Care

# Palliative Care



## Princess Margaret

The past year was dominated by all things Epic! Despite continued growth across all areas of the palliative care program at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, our superuser team worked tirelessly to prepare us for the electronic medical record transition in June 2022. Their collaborative efforts and thoughtful approach meant our inpatient and outpatient teams had all the necessary skills to hit the ground running at go-live, and the robust processes they established for communication and documentation within Epic have been held up as examples for other programs at Princess Margaret and UHN to follow. This is particularly noteworthy as we are one of the only programs where our physician team works across inpatient and outpatient settings simultaneously, needing to communicate quickly and effectively with a variety of clinicians across multiple programs. We want to extend special thanks to Malka Berman, Ana Luis Costa, Claudia Grande, Mark Jasinski, Carolyn Wong, Brenda O'Connor, Alejandra Ruiz Buenrostro, Angel Chuang, Duc Do, Antonella Falbo, and Ayesha Patel who were our nursing, physician, and administrative superuser leads for go-live, ably assisted by the rest of the team who provided input on workflows, communication tools, documentation templates and tip sheets. Amazing teamwork!

### Epic Superusers



Malka Berman



Angel Chuang



Duc Do



Antonella Falbo



Mark Jasinski



Brenda O'Connor



Ayesha Patel

## Toronto Western

### Continued Expansion & Collaboration into Krembil

The Toronto Western Palliative Care team has partnered with Canada's largest neurological and neurosurgical program in the country to enhance serious illness care for their most vulnerable patients and families.

Planning ahead for one's future is critical when living with a neurological illness that can take one's ability to speak for themselves away at any moment. This may happen over time with dementia or in a split-second when someone experiences an acute stroke. Very few people in Canada have an opportunity to plan for their future – we sought to change the narrative.

Any model of care which provides more comprehensive care is crucial in managing the complex needs of a patient. The collaboration between Neurology and Palliative Care was quite complementary and definitely made communication easier.

Patient/Family Member



Partnering with the Palliative Care services has been both necessary and beneficial. It allows all of us involved in the caring of a person with a neurodegenerative condition to work seamlessly together with the person and their family to achieve their own end-of-life goals.

Neurology Team Member

### Impact in Neurology

Despite strong evidence supporting earlier palliative care integration being paramount to increasing quality of life and Advance Care Planning (ACP) conversations for patients and families living with advanced neurodegenerative illness, few clinics exist providing this needed care. To address this need, **The Supportive Care Memory Clinic** was established as an embedded clinic model between the Departments of Neurology and Palliative care to support high-quality ACP discussions. Planning ahead allows people to better take control of their care should they not be able to speak for themselves one day. Joint visits are completed alongside the Neurology interprofessional team in order to enhance continuity of care for patients/families and to model for and coach the Neurology team, including their postgraduate trainees, to lead higher quality ACP conversations in their clinic using evidence-based structured and standardized tools. Recruitment for a quality improvement study exploring our collaborative clinic model's impact on patient/family and provider experiences is ongoing. Results may inform recommendations for similar clinics across Canada.







## Toronto General

Since last year, we have seen a 67% increase in clinical volumes on our inpatient service and together with a switch to Epic, our team has been working harder than we thought was possible. We had a new faculty member join us in July 2022, Dr. Abby Maybee who has settled seamlessly into her role and the team. Dr. Maybee, Hurlburt and Weiss are the amazing trio, along with our Clinical Nurse Specialist, Amy Cadena (covering for Lisa Rebello's mat leave), keep our inpatient service going with enthusiasm. We were also fortunate to finally have a social worker on our team, Rose-Marie Fraser, who has considerable experience in palliative care splits her time between outpatient and inpatient settings. Our outpatient clinics continue to grow and expand and we are actively working on new partnerships. Dr. Wolofsky has added a new OP clinic supporting people living with advanced anorexia nervosa and with all our other clinics, our non-cancer palliative care clinics attract trainees from all over Canada. We had a clinical research fellow with us at TGH, Dr. Fernando De Silva who has been helping us with our scholarly work. Dr. Ebru Kaya led the Masterclass at the McGill international PC conference last fall and Dr. Kirsten Wendlandt attended European Association for Palliative Care World Congress to present abstracts that our team have collaboratively been working on. Of course, we wouldn't be able to do any of this work without our two wonderful admin staff, Norine Mark and Archana Aingaran!

## Impact in Neurosurgery

The division of Neurosurgery at TWH is the largest in Canada. Despite large volumes of seriously-ill neurosurgical-managed patients, few of them were being referred to the inpatient palliative care team. A collaboration between the inpatient Palliative Care and the Neurosurgical teams was established in order to better identify, evaluate and manage the unmet palliative care needs earlier during hospital admissions. Members from both teams meet twice weekly to discuss patients who would benefit from palliative integration. Referrals to our program increased by 100% during an initial study period and have been maintained over two years. Patients are being supported even before confirmed biopsy results for a brain cancer and immediately upon hospital admission for a terminal brain bleed. Evaluation of program impact is underway with preliminary data presented provincially.

Reviewing my inpatient census with the Palliative Care team helped me to early identify patients who could benefit from their team's care. Identifying patients earlier in their illness also improved their overall symptom management and support system.

Neurosurgery Nurse Practitioner





# Toronto General

## Partnerships

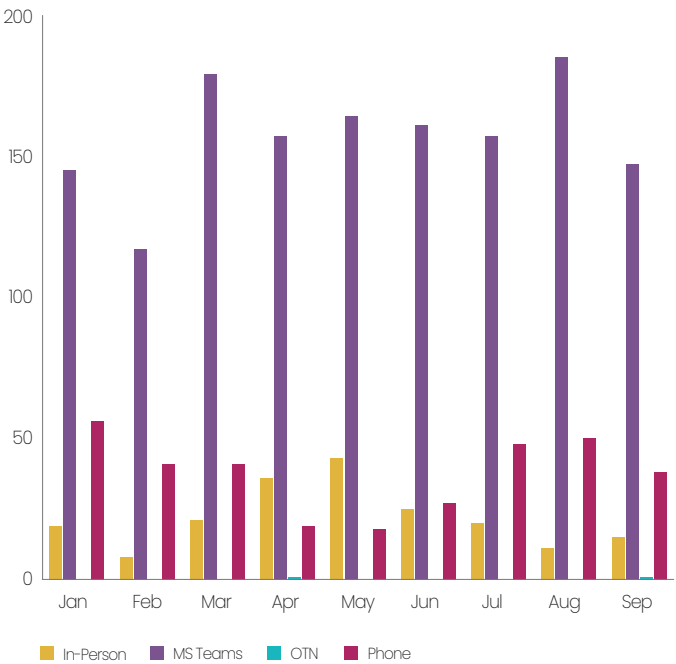
Toronto General Hospital has the largest solid organ transplant center in Canada. Our team has partnered with the transplant services to provide assistance with clinical care for patients either waiting for or being considered for heart, lung and kidney transplantation and who have palliative care needs or patients who have had a transplant but continue to have symptoms. This is through both IP and OP work. In addition, we have many collaborations on research and quality improvement projects.

## Expansion of Outpatient Services

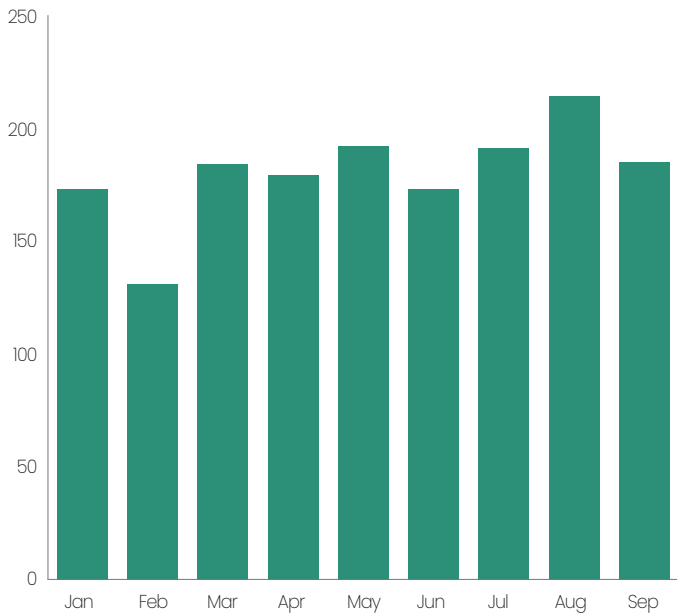
We have seen a significant increase in our outpatient (OP) volumes. Most of our patients are seen telemedicine: This is because we do not have our own clinic space and have adapted, while meeting the needs of our patients as many of them prefer telemedicine. This means that our service is unique compared with the programs at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre or Toronto Western Hospital. We see patients with heart (heart failure, ventricular assist devices, and congenital heart disease), lung (including pulmonary hypertension, interstitial lung disease, COPD) and chronic kidney disease (include dialysis patients). Our team includes physicians and a social worker and attracts trainees from all over Canada. It is the largest non-cancer palliative care OP program in Canada, providing care for patients 5 days a week.



Number of OP Patients



Number of OP Visits by Visit Mode



Reporting Period: Jan 1 - Sep 28, 2023

# Older Adults with Cancer Clinic

The Older Adults with Cancer Clinic has been challenged with an otherwise good news story – referrals are up. While we are grateful that physicians are referring to us and patients are grateful to be seen, our wait times have increased. This past year we focused on a quality improvement project led by one of our geriatric oncology fellows (Dr. Selynn Guo) as part of her Master's in Quality Improvement. We examined various ways to improve our referral and triaging processes, and have instituted several measures to try to tackle our wait times and better align bookings with urgency. We are in the process of expanding our clinics and adding another geriatrician in July to help us to meet the growing demand for our services and expertise.







# Cancer Rehabilitation & Survivorship

The **Cancer Rehabilitation and Survivorship (CRS) Program** continues to evolve and innovate and to deliver high-quality care to patients at the Princess Margaret. In 2022/23, we received approximately 1415 new patient referrals and delivered over 10,500 patient visits. CRS appointments were delivered using hybrid models, including in-person and virtual/phone appointments and we offered a number of virtual classes and e-modules to support patient teaching.

Our structured multidimensional **Cancer Rehab and Exercise (CaRE) Program** continues to grow and evolve in order to improve access and expand our reach. This included the launch of CaRE@Home-Advanced Cancer (AC) and the development of a tailored CaRE@Ellicsr-AYA program that is to be offered Spring 2023. Our integrated clinical-research program also remained busy including the completion of a Phase II trial of the CaRE-4-alloBMT program and the initiation of a multicentre Phase II multicentre preference-based trial of the CaRE-AC program.

In addition, as part of a CIHR/CCS funded implementation study led by PhD candidate Christian Lopez, we recently launched a new application at UHN called **REACH**. REACH is an online tool that screens for common cancer related impairments and, based on complex algorithms, connects users to resources and services (see [REACH - YouTube](#)). REACH will be implemented in three other centres across Canada in 2023. We also made significant strides on our educational initiatives this year. The Cancer Rehabilitation Trainee Program, led by Dr. Eugene Chang, has grown significantly and in 2022/23 the CRS program hosted two clinical fellows and six psychiatry resident rotations.

We would also like to congratulate Lydia Beck and Bernice D'Souza (occupational therapy), who completed the Emerging Leaders Program and Trish Blinn (occupational therapy) who completed a CAP Fellowship. Finally, after a number of years of development, we were very pleased to launch the Introduction to Cancer Rehabilitation and Survivorship course in collaboration with the Michener Institute (see [Introduction to Cancer Rehabilitation and Survivorship - The Michener Institute](#)) and includes five e-learning modules.



Lydia Beck



Patricia (Trish) Blinn



Eugene Chang



Bernice D'Souza



Christian Lopez





# Psychosocial Oncology

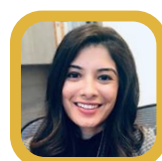
**Psychosocial Oncology** continued to diversify the professional staff and scope of service available to patients. In 2022-2023 the division was pleased to welcome Yehudis Stokes, a Clinical Nurse Specialist who is developing a new Severe and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI) program and working to support patients and staff with this complex and high needs population.

The generous support by Eric Bresler and Judy Klarman has led to the hiring of social worker Luana Flores Pereira, and the creation of a Breast Cancer Post-Treatment clinic to provide individual support for women at the completion of their treatment. We have also developed a multi-disciplinary post-treatment teaching class, which will incorporate the expertise of PM dietitians and other Allied Health staff. Early work for this role was undertaken by Dani Taylor and Zeynep Acar.

We were fortunate to recruit two new psychology clinician scientists. Gilla Shapiro's research focuses on understanding health behaviour and promoting equity, access, and inclusion, with a clinical focus in CALM therapy. Aliza Panjwani is developing novel

interventions with a joint focus on AYA with endometrial cancer. Both are involved in medical assistance in dying research.

Psychosocial Oncology also launched a new physical space in 2022, providing hybrid phone, video or in-person care in our new 5<sup>th</sup> floor clinic space (pictured above).



**Aliza Panjwani**



**Luana Flores Pereira**



**Gilla Shapiro**



**Yehudis Stokes**

## Music Therapy Program

The Music Therapy Program would like to recognize the extraordinary work of Mason Gibson MTA who covered the inpatient music therapy service while SarahRose Black was on maternity leave. Since January 2022, Mason has provided 314 music therapy sessions to patients at PM, working collaboratively with numerous interdisciplinary teams. Mason worked with the EPIC team in Spring 2022 to create music therapy documentation requirements, and joined the Sex and Gender Diversity Committee (SGDc). In August 2022, Mason was a guest speaker for a *Cancer 360* music therapy module. Of note, this module was given the highest rating (94%) to a unit this Summer with 100% of participants saying they would recommend this unit. Various learners across disciplines have observed music therapy sessions from Mason as a part of their education at PM, and continue to do so on a weekly basis with SarahRose. Mason is a contributing author to the *Oxford Handbook of Queer and Trans Music Therapy*, published at the end of 2022. SarahRose has recently contributed two chapters to the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *Music Therapy at the End of Life*, a textbook for music therapists working in hospice palliative care, and has keynoted several events including the National Coalition for Music Education's Policy Summit, and continues to serve as the editor-in-chief of the *Canadian Journal of Music Therapy*, which has now published its 28<sup>th</sup> issue.



**Mason Gibson**

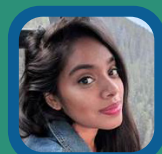




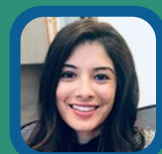
## Adolescents & Young Adult Program



The adolescent and young adult (AYA) team has grown, enabling us to diversify our programs. Aliza Panjwani is a PhD psychologist who is spearheading the adaptation and implementation of a program dedicated to fear of cancer recurrence. Jointly with funding from the Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario (POGO) and the Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) Program, we have also recruited Sharon D'Souza, an expert school and work transitions counselor, who provides training to patients regarding resume building, interviewing, and helps support individuals navigating the school or workforce during or following cancer treatments. Additionally, we have significantly increased our AYA patient community engagement by offering a multitude of events including monthly virtual yoga and meet ups as well as other seasonal events (skating, holiday card making contest, walk in High Park). We are poised to launch an art therapy program as well as a book club. We continue to be active on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), and look forward to ongoing patient participation in the community.



Sharon D'Souza



Aliza Panjwani

## Caregiver Clinic

The Caregiver Clinic has expanded its services and increased its reach in 2022-2023. With a full-time psychologist and a part-time postdoctoral psychology fellow on staff, the clinic offers one-on-one psychotherapy to family caregivers of patients seen at the PM. Over 170 outpatient referrals were received in 2022-2023, and new caregivers are typically seen via video or phone within two weeks of referral. This year, the Caregiver Clinic has also strengthened its collaboration with the Outpatient Palliative Care Clinic, launching a pilot program in which a Clinical Nurse Specialist provides a comprehensive screening, assessment, and intervention for family caregivers of patients with advanced cancer. The development and success of the Caregiver Clinic was documented in a peer-reviewed publication in the Journal of Clinical Psychology in Medical Settings in June 2022 and in a presentation at the IPOS/CAPO 2022 World Congress in September, 2022, and this has informed the development of similar programs worldwide.



Rinat Nissim

## Sexual Health Clinic

The Sexual Health Clinic (SHC) at Princess Margaret was launched in early 2022 by Dr. Andrew Matthew and a multi-disciplinary team of clinicians and researchers. The SHC is dedicated to helping cancer patients and couples re-establish sexual function, satisfaction, and relational intimacy. Using a bio-psychosocial approach to care, the SHC offers patients biomedical assessment and intervention combined with psychosexual counselling. The SHC employs a combined in-person and virtual model of care that serves to increase reach and access without compromising effective personalized care delivery.

The SHC in-person clinic is staffed by an interdisciplinary team inclusive of urologists, psychologists, nurses, and sexual health counsellors. The in-person clinic allows for medical assessment and sexual medicine prescription specific to the patient's sexual health concerns. Additionally, the clinic provides patients with the opportunity to meet face-to-face with our psychosocial team for psychosexual assessment and the provision of strategies designed to mitigate the psychosocial impact of their sexual health concerns.

The SHC virtual clinic offers a facilitated, interactive, and multimodal experience inclusive of animations and videos. The patient experience is personalized through the assignment of specific education modules based on the patient's cancer type, treatment type, biological

sex, and relationship status (single or coupled). Patients can further customize their experience by adding "patient preference" educational modules to their virtual care pathway (e.g. Unique Needs of LGBTQ2+). Combined with the educational modules the virtual platform includes symptom trackers and goal-setting exercises to empower patient self-management. In an effort to "humanize the technology" and promote patient engagement the SHC virtual clinic is facilitated by sexual health counselors via chat, telephone, or videoconference. The SHC counselors provide an additional layer of personalization through the provision of psychosexual education, guidance and supportive counseling.

The Sexual Health Clinic is currently open to patients (and partners) with Prostate, Testicular, Bladder, Kidney, Head and Neck, Cervical and Ovarian cancer. We look forward to opening expanding to other cancer sites in the near future. Referrals can be made to the SHC directly through EPIC.



Andrew Matthew



Welcome to the Sexual Health Clinic (SHC) at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre

### The SHC Team



In grateful recognition of the Jack Weinbaum Family Foundation and generous supporters of the Jack and Anne Weinbaum & Family Virtual Wellness Clinic.

### About the SHC

The SHC provides a "bio-psychosocial" approach to care. This approach recognizes that sexual dysfunctions are complex phenomena which can include physical, psychological, and relational components. Treating only one component can result in sub-optimal sexual recovery.

### Sexual Health and Wellbeing As An Important Part of Cancer Care

The *Relationship* features of sexual dysfunction can include:

- Difficulties in resuming sexual activity with a partner
- Impact on the partner
- Worry about satisfying your partner
- Impact on the couple (e.g. loss of intimacy)
- Disclosure and starting new relationships

### Maintain Intimacy - Understanding Intimacy and Passion

The Triangular Theory of Romantic Relationships

**Intimacy:**

Our goal in this clinic is to provide sexual health treatment in an effort to support the return to satisfying sexual activity and to provide sexual health counseling to help patients and their partners maintain intimacy while adapting to changes in passion. If we can help a couple achieve this goal, then consummate love can likewise be restored.







## Sexual & Gender Diversity in Cancer Program

It has been an exciting and eventful year for the PMChosenFamily team! Despite the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2022 has been a time for expansion, team growth and the launch of several new initiatives and activities within our group. Throughout the year, we have been engaged in a number of innovative projects to address the needs of our Sexual and Gender Diversity cancer (SGDc) community, within Princess Margaret Cancer Centre and the UHN Cancer Program. This inaugural annual report will highlight those projects and their impact across the organization and beyond with our national and international collaboration partners.

Sexual and Gender Diversity in Cancer Care is one element of a very complex healthcare system

which is currently experiencing enormous strains. For most of us, the levels of exhaustion and grief that most of us experience are probably at a scale we have never before experienced in our professional lives. Our 2022 work as a PMChosenFamily team has provided community and opportunities for in-person contact that have not been available to everyone. As a matter of fact, we believe that the constant 'presence of absence' of virtual care and physical disconnection over the past three years has been one factor influencing our team growth. As the psychoanalyst Gianpiero Petriglieri says: "I spoke to an old therapist friend and finally understood why everyone's so exhausted after video calls. It's the plausible deniability of everyone's absence... Our minds are tricked into the idea of being together when our bodies feel we're not.

Dissonance is exhausting... It's easier than being in each other's presence, or each other's absence, than in the constant presence of each other's absence. Our bodies process so much context, so much information, in encounters, that meeting on video is being a weird kind of blindfolded. We sense too little and can't imagine enough. That single deprivation requires a lot of effort."

2022 provided the PMChosenFamily team with ample opportunities to connect through digital means, but increasingly also in-person, reflecting a new chapter in our shared work life. We know that improving care for SGDc communities necessitates embedding systemic change within the organization, and lasting change that will extend long past Pride month. This change requires collaboration with many departments and divisions of both Princess Margaret and UHN.

Our work is grounded in health equity, principles of IDEAA and social determinants of health, which are foundational concepts underlying our work. We are deeply grateful to our funders, partners, donors, colleagues, community and patient partners for your continued support and collaboration as we work together to improve the cancer care experience for SGDc patients and chosen families.

Together, we are becoming a proud, innovative model and influence for creating inclusive cancer care. We especially extend our deepest gratitude to all of our PMChosenFamily team members, for all of the passion, time, talents and wisdom that they share. In community we feel safe and strong. And we can collaborate to the benefit of everyone. This is what makes us a PMChosenFamily!



**@PMChosenFamily**  
Sexual and Gender Diversity in Cancer Care





# Education & Training

In alignment with the purpose, values, and principles of the University Health Network (UHN), the Department of Supportive Care (DSC) strives for excellence in education, to further the provision and promotion of high-quality supportive care for patients and their families throughout the course of illness. Our inter-professional team, many of whom hold faculty positions at the University of Toronto, provide outstanding education programs and learning opportunities for fellows, residents, graduate students, medical students, summer students, and observers.

DSC welcomes learners from a wide range of disciplines including palliative care, psychiatry, nursing, and allied health. Education programs are offered within all three of our divisions: Palliative Care, Psychosocial Oncology, and Cancer Rehabilitation and Survivorship.

175 learners rotated through the **Palliative Care** Division at Princess Margaret, Toronto General, and Toronto Western sites, with experiences in inpatient consults, outpatient clinics, palliative care unit, and hospice.

54 learners rotated through the **Psychosocial Oncology** (PSO) Division including medical undergraduates (CC1-CC4), Psychiatry residents, and Social Work, and Psychology trainees. Evaluations were outstanding, which was also reflected by the increased frequency of rotation requests across all offered PSO programs.

61 learners rotated through the **Cancer Rehabilitation and Survivorship** (CRS) Program to gain an understanding and appreciation of the diverse services and types of care offered to patients during and after cancer treatment. Through immersion in clinic activities, trainees were able to learn about the inter-professional team, cancer-related impairments identified during comprehensive assessments, self-management support, and the overall patient experience.

## Diverse Learners



## Fellowships

The **Palliative Medicine Clinical Fellowship** continues to grow and attracts highly qualified international applicants. In 2022, the program trained ten fellows from 7 countries (Mexico, Brazil, Canada, Chile, India, Saudi Arabia, and Australia). In addition, the program extended acceptance offers to 12 applicants from 10 countries to start fellowship training in mid-2023. The **Older Adults with Cancer Clinic** has trained two new geriatric oncology fellows.

The **Psychosocial Oncology Clinical Fellowship** was re-launched for 2022-2023. The program trained two fellows, one international fellow from Mexico and one fellow from Quebec. We have a number of qualified applicants for the 2023-2024 cohort and are hoping to train two international fellows this upcoming academic cycle.

As a first in its history, the **Cancer Rehabilitation-Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) Fellowship** has grown to include two fellows. In February 2023, the first University of Toronto PM&R resident started a new one-month core rotation in Cancer Rehabilitation. This rotation will now be part of all PM&R resident training in the future.

### Palliative Care



Musab Aldhari  
Saudi Arabia



Vanessa Cunha  
Brazil



Helen James  
Canada/Australia



Nancy Jiang  
Australia



Andrea Pérez de Acha  
Mexico



Natalia Sanchez  
Mexico City



Claudia Vergara  
Chile



Mohammed Yousef  
Saudi Arabia

### Older Adults Clinic



Elizabeth Faour  
Canada



Selynn Guo  
Canada

### Psychosocial Oncology

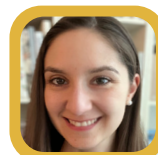


Sofia Canales Albarran  
Mexico



Sarah Blais-Laroche  
Canada

### Cancer Rehabilitation



Emma Mauti  
Canada



Jamie Joseph  
Malaysia

# Education Strategic Priorities



Christian Schulz-Quach



Athena Nicholas-Figliomeni

Under the leadership of Dr. Christian Schulz-Quach, the department's first Education Lead, and Athena Nicholas-Figliomeni, Education Specialist, three strategic priorities were identified, approved by the DSC Education Steering Committee, and executed for 2022-2023.

## Streamline Learner Application Process

The DSC Education Team succeeded in creating a centralized repository of all DSC education offerings, including offering details, eligibility criteria, and an overview of the application process. In partnership with Cancer Education, this information was added to the DSC Education external webpage and was part of a broader transformation effort to increase the accessibility of information for prospective learners. To further aid this process, a centralized email address (learners.supportivecare@uhn.ca) was also created for all learner requests and education announcements.

As an additional layer of support, the DSC Education Team also created a new Education Hub logo which links to the department's Education SharePoint page. This page provides current learners and staff with helpful information and resources such as recorded education rounds and seminars, an education directory, learner orientation resources, teaching and learning resources, and education-related guidelines and SOPs.

Complete

## Supportive Care Update Conference

The education team developed a plan for the department's first Supportive Care Update Conference, which is confirmed to take place in Spring 2024. This one-day virtual event will include education-focused evidence updates from all three divisions. The team has partnered with UHN Conference Services to carry out this inaugural conference. Conference planning will start to take place May 2023.

Ongoing

## Fellowship Program Optimization

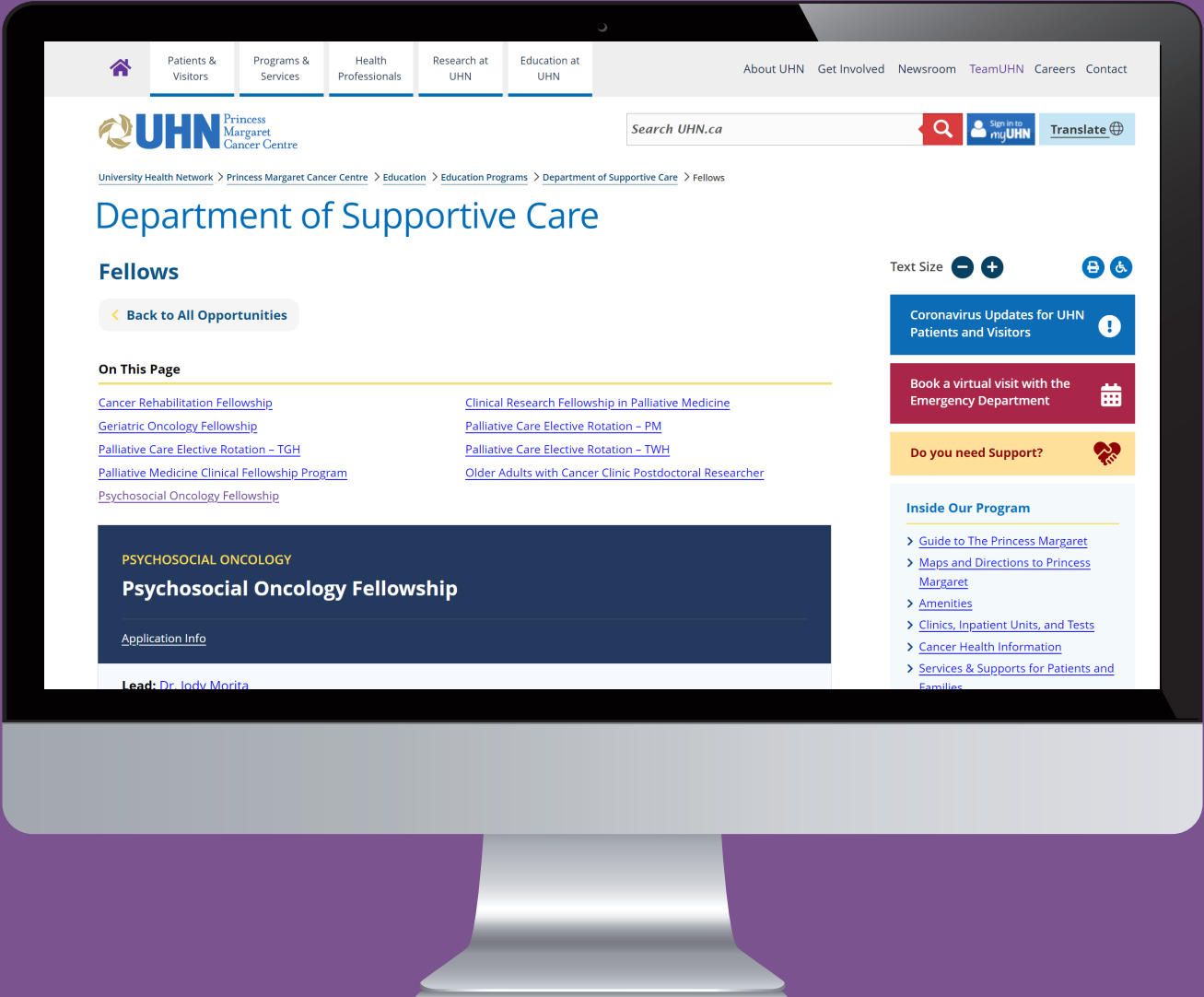
The DSC Education Team focused on optimizing the Psychosocial Oncology (PSO) Fellowship program. In collaboration with the UHN Centre for Mental Health and the University of Toronto, Department of Psychiatry, new PSO fellowship guidelines were developed and implemented. In an effort to optimize our current fellowship programs and test the feasibility of a joint-divisional fellowship program, the team also carried out a formal needs assessment of past and present fellow experiences following the UHN Clinical Fellowship Experience Conversation Guide. This valuable insight will be integrated into future fellowship planning efforts.

Complete

# Education Activities

65 Total # of Education & Research Rounds Hosted

- 7 Supportive Care Grand Rounds
- 27 Supportive Care Research Seminars
- 7 Pain & Symptom Management Rounds
- 9 Canadian Cancer Survivorship Research Consortium Rounds
- 3 Psychosocial Oncology Clinical Case Conferences
- 1 Psychosocial Oncology Human Touch Seminars
- 6 PM Cancer Survivorship Research Rounds
- 5 Global Institute of Psychosocial, Palliative & End-of-Life Care (GIPPEC) Seminars





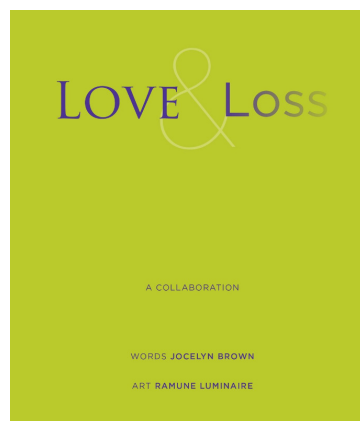
# Innovations In Education

Our amazing staff have been actively involved in the creation and further development of several education programs and initiatives, at the hospital level, community level, and nationally. The sections below include a brief update on each.



[The TWH Palliative Care Education Orientation] is VERY clear and helpful!! It really gives a great over-view and it's easy to follow. Definitely would be helpful to have this before starting the rotation. Also, I like how important things are bolded!

Learner



## Love & Loss: Normalizing Death and Grief

Jocelyn Brown, Palliative Care Clinical Nurse Specialist, collaborated with artist Ramune Luminaire to publish a book called "Love & Loss". Allowing readers to consider their own vulnerability and engage with it in a way that opens up space for change and healing, Jocelyn describes the book as, "...a guide for how we talk about dying, death, loss, grief, hope, and finding one's way."



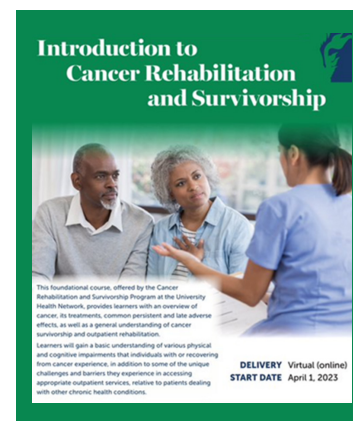
## Geriatric Oncology Program Education Modules

The Geriatric Oncology Program, in collaboration with Cancer Education, embarked on a series of nine educational modules in geriatric oncology targeted to oncologists and oncology nurses across Canada. The first such module, Introduction to Geriatric Oncology, has been deployed and work is underway this year for the additional eight modules.



## MAiD Curriculum Development Project

The Canadian MAiD Curriculum Development Project, a four year project lead by CAMAP to develop, produce and deliver a nationally recognized, fully accredited MAiD training curriculum to address the spectrum of needs of all clinicians who assess and provide MAiD in Canada is currently underway. Under the guidance of Dr. Madeline Li, the scientific lead, the team held their first pilot training workshop in Vancouver on February 4, 2023. Another pilot training workshop will be held at the University Health Network in June with a final hard launch of the curriculum beginning September 2023.



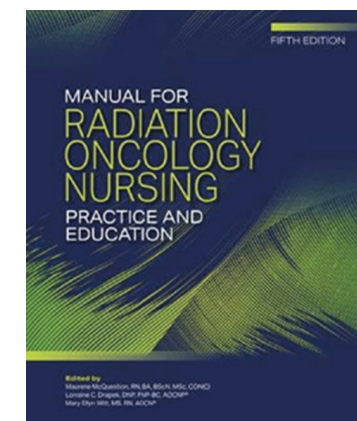
## Intro to Cancer Rehabilitation & Survivorship

In collaboration with the Michener Institute, the Cancer Rehabilitation and Survivorship (CRS) Program successfully launched "Introduction to Cancer Rehabilitation and Survivorship". This foundational course provides learners with an overview of cancer, its treatments, common persistent and late adverse effects, as well as the unique challenges and barriers faced by those accessing outpatient services.



## Palliative Care Education at TWH

This has been an exciting and productive year academically for Toronto Western Hospital! As of January 2023, Drs. Melissa Li and Jalal Ebrahim have taken over as Education Site Leads for Toronto Western Hospital. Jalal is working to optimize the learner experience by revamping the orientation process. Through stakeholder engagement and learner feedback, we are incorporating synchronous and asynchronous components that are organized, concise, and high-yield.



## Manual for Radiation Oncology Nursing

Under the leadership of Maurene McQuestion, an interprofessional team of Princess Margaret clinicians including Laura Mitchell, Anet Julius, Shannon Nixon, Dr. Martine Puts, Dr. Rana Jin and Marcia Flynn-Post contributed, as authors, to multiple chapters in the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition Oncology Nursing Society's Manual for Radiation Oncology Nursing: Practice and Education (2021).



I found [the Geriatric Oncology Program Education Modules] to be very comprehensive and I think that it addressed a lot of issues that run the entire spectrum of concerns that you think [older adults] might have. All the way from disease related things to, you know, how do I speak to other people? It really was very comprehensive.

Physician



I think [the Geriatric Oncology Program Education Modules] would advocate more for my patients to be able to have a CGA, to be able to do more de-prescribing and having a really good assessment of the social supports that patients require when they're starting into treatment as well.

Nurse Practitioner



### The Conversation Lab: Reimagining Healthcare

Dr. Warren Lewin has launched and grown The Conversation Lab – an educational and system-based initiative created at UHN to improve serious illness care and made possible through generous donor support. The Lab has 19 faculty completed (or soon to complete) certification as facilitators using the VitalTalk™ teaching method. It has offered 22 teaching workshops delivered to date to 260 trainees across 14 specialties and cultivated new partnership and funding through Princess Margaret Cancer Centre's Quality Improvement team. Feedback has been outstanding (>90% of participants endorse increased confidence leading serious illness conversations and 98% built skills they can immediately put into practice).

The Lab's first Clinical Research Fellow, Helen, is working hard to evaluate impact and to disseminate knowledge. Two International Oral conference presentations were accepted to showcase our work in 2023. The Lab's Clinician-Teacher partners have secured 1 provincial and 2 local grants to study our tools in

Great session! Definitely invaluable for the many difficult conversations we have in neurosurgery!

Neurosurgical Resident

three populations: ICU, Internal Medicine and Oncology.

July 2022 marked a special occasion whereby all neurosurgical postgraduate trainees across the University of Toronto participated in a first-ever half-day communication skills training workshop providing core knowledge and skills for leading critical neurosurgical conversations.

Almost all trainees stated they would recommend the workshop to future trainees and reported increased confidence to lead difficult conversations within their field. This feedback led to their Program Director supporting annual communication skills training for neurosurgical trainees at the University of Toronto – no doubt a first in Canada.

Amazing learning opportunity! As a clinician teacher who works both in Internal Medicine and Palliative Care, this training will allow me to enhance my ability to teach critical skills across disciplines. Prior to this course, I didn't feel I had a structure to teaching communication but now I feel more confident that I can teach it effectively with data driven recommendations.

Clinician Teacher

## Excellence In Teaching

Our amazing staff have been actively involved in the creation and further development of several education programs and initiatives, at the hospital level, community level, and nationally. The sections below include a brief update on each.



**Bernadette Southwood** received the Excellence in Nursing Preceptorship, Mentorship, and Teaching award.



**Camilla Zimmermann** received a 2022 Excellence in Mentorship Award from Cancer Education at PM, and a 2022 Temerty Faculty of Medicine Graduate Teaching Award: Mid-Career Excellence in Teaching and Mentorship.



**Christian Schulz-Quach** received the University of Toronto, Department of Psychiatry Academic Scholar Award and the Robin Hunter Postgraduate Teaching Award for excellence in teaching.



**Jenna Gim** received an award from the Temerty Faculty of Medicine, U of T for her teaching excellence.



**Haley Draper, Jalal Ebrahim, Christian Schulz-Quach, & Kayla Wolofsky** were each awarded a MD Program Teaching Award of Excellence for the 2021-2022 academic year.



**Nadine Gebara and Haley Draper** were both awarded the University of Toronto Department of Family and Community Medicine (DFCM) Award of Excellence – Excellence in Development and Use of Innovative Instructional Methods. In addition, Nadine Gebara was also awarded with the DFCM Award of Excellence – Excellence in Course/Program Development.



**Patricia Murphy-Kane** received the Princess Margaret Excellence in Oncology Nursing Award for Teaching/Preceptorship/Mentorship.



**Samantha Mayo** received the Graduate Teaching Excellence Award (Peer Nominated) and the Betty Burcher Mentoring Award (Peer Nominated), Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing.



**Stephanie Phan** received the Fieldwork Educator Recognition Award for excellence in fieldwork teaching in 2021 from the University of Toronto's Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy.



**Susie Monginot** received the 2022 CANO-Pfizer Award of Excellence in Nursing Education.



# Research & Innovation

Research productivity has continued to be strong during 2022–2023, with high-quality publications and grants from our supportive care researchers. Across the supportive care divisions of Palliative Care, Psychosocial Oncology, and Cancer Rehabilitation & Survivorship, supportive care researchers received more than 20 new grants in 2022–2023. The Department’s publication output has also continued to be high – there were 170 unique publications in 2022–2023, many of which involved intradepartmental and inter-organizational collaboration. Supportive care publications appeared in high-impact journals including the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* and included clinical trials as well as qualitative and mixed methods studies, guidelines, and reviews. Select research highlights from 2022–2023 are featured in the subsequent sections.

27

Active Research Grants with DSC PI or Co-PI

36

Active Research Grant Collaborations

170

Peer-Reviewed Publications

\$12,595,468

Total New Research Funding

\$7,006,931

Total New Research Funding with DSC PI or Co-PI (22 Grants)

\$5,588,537

Total New Research Funding Collaborations (22 Grants)

## Notable Publications



Impact of Geriatric Assessment and Management on Quality of Life, Unplanned Hospitalizations, Toxicity, and Survival for Older Adults with Cancer: The Randomized 5C Trial

Dr. Shabbir Alibhai and colleagues found that Geriatric Assessment Management in older adults starting systemic cancer treatment in this Canadian multi-centre randomized trial did not improve Quality of Life but may have benefit if completed before treatment selection. Published in the [Journal of Clinical Oncology](#).



Guidelines for Sexual Health Care for Prostate Cancer Patients: Recommendations of an International Panel

Dr. Andrew Matthew and colleagues convened an international panel with the aim of developing guidelines that will inform clinicians, patients and partners about the impact of prostate cancer therapies (PCT) on patients’ and partners’ sexual health, their relationships, and about biopsychosocial rehabilitation in prostate cancer (PC) survivorship. Published in the [Journal of Sexual Medicine](#).



Psychological Distress and Experiences of Adolescents and Young Adults with Cancer During the COVID-19 pandemic: A Cross-sectional Survey

Dr. Abha Gupta and colleagues found that Adolescents and Young Adults diagnosed with cancer experienced particularly high levels of psychological distress during the pandemic. Distress screening and evidence-based interventions to alleviate this distress are essential. Published in [Psycho-Oncology](#).



Improved Models of Care for Cancer Survivors

Dr. Doris Howell and colleagues found that current models of care are unsustainable and fail to address the many unmet needs of cancer survivors. Published in the [Lancet](#).



Managing Cancer and Living Meaningfully (CALM) in Adults with Malignant Glioma: A Proof-of-concept Phase IIa Trial

Dr. Gary Rodin and colleagues found that CALM appears feasible for use with adults with malignant glioma. High perceived benefit and reductions in symptoms of death anxiety, generalized anxiety, and depression were reported by participants. Published in the [Journal of Neuro-Oncology](#).

Early Integration of Palliative Care for Patients with Haematological Malignancies



Dr. Jacqueline Alcalde, Dr. Camilla Zimmermann and colleagues from Israel presented updated evidence from clinical trials of early palliative care in haematological malignancies and proposed models to support the integration of palliative care into care for this population of patients. Published in the [British Journal of Haematology](#).



Implementation of Electronic Prospective Surveillance Models in Cancer Care: A Scoping Review (In Press)



**Christian Lopez** (PhD candidate) and **Dr. Jennifer Jones** (supervisor) conducted a review that provides a comprehensive summary of the implementation of Electronic Prospective Surveillance Models (ePSMs) in cancer care. They identified common implementation strategies employed, and the prominent implementation determinants at the intervention and individual levels, the inner and outer settings and at the process level. The results can inform and improve the implementation and evaluation of ePSMs including planning for key determinants, the selection of implementation strategies, and outcomes to consider throughout the implementation process. To be published in the *Journal of Implementation Science*.

Web-Based Peer Navigation for Prostate Cancer Patients and Caregivers: A Feasibility Study



**Dr. Jackie Bender** and **Dr. Andrew Matthew** found that a web-based peer navigation program is highly feasible and acceptable among prostate cancer patients and caregivers, and the associated improvements in patient and caregiver activation are promising. Published in [Current Oncology](#).

Empowering Cancer Survivors in Managing Their Own Health: A Paradoxical Dynamic Process of Taking and Letting Go of Control



**Dr. Jonathan Avery**, **Dr. Doris Howell** and colleagues investigated gaps in cancer care support to help patients manage and live with the side-effects from cancer treatments, empowering patients to be more active and involved in managing their own health. However, empowerment in relation to promoting self-management behaviors is not well understood. Using the social constructivist grounded theory approach, their goal was to develop a theoretical understanding of this phenomenon in relation to the self-management behaviors of post-treatment cancer patients. Findings will guide the development of self-management interventions that use empowerment as a core construct. Published in [Qualitative Health Research](#).

A Phase II, Open-Label Clinical Trial of Intranasal Ketamine for Depression in Patients with Cancer Receiving Palliative Care



**Drs. Madeline Li, Gary Rodin, Camilla Zimmermann, Ernie Mak, Breffni Hannon, Christian Schulz-Quach** and colleagues determined the feasibility, safety, tolerability and preliminary efficacy of intranasal racemic ketamine for major depressive disorder in patients with advanced cancer. Published in [Cancers](#).

The Transformation of Adolescent and Young Adult Oncological and Supportive Care in Canada: A Mixed Methods Study



**Dr. Jonathan Avery**, **Dr. Abha Gupta** and colleagues launched this study into the ongoing disparity in the specialized care available to adolescents and young adults (AYAs) with cancer. The study aimed to understand the gaps and barriers to accessing care and preferences on solutions at a Canadian national level. A mixed-methods study involving an online survey and focus groups was conducted among AYAs residing in different regions of Canada. Published in [Current Oncology](#).

View the full list of publications for 2022–2023 on the [UHN DSC website](#).

# Notable New Funding

**Dr. David Langelier** (Co-PI) & **Dr. Shabbir Alibhai** (Co-I): Knowledge translation and mobilization to support exercise recommendations for people with bone metastases (CCS – Accelerator Grant)

**Dr. Sarah Hales** (Co-PI) & **Dr. Rinat Nissim** (Co-PI): iCALM pilot for Caregivers (Petro-Canada’s CareMakers Foundation Grant)

**Dr. Jackie Bender** (PI) & **Dr. Shabbir Alibhai** (Co-I): Addressing Inequities in Prostate Cancer Care for Black Men (CCS Health Equity Research Grant)

**Drs. Samantha Mayo** (Co-PI), **Lori Bernstein** (Co-PI), **Kim Edelstein** (Co-PI), **Rinat Nissim** (Co-I): Stepped care to enhance quality of life in advanced cancer: An interprofessional approach to alleviating cancer-related cognitive impairment for adults with brain metastases (CIHR Project Grant)

**Dr. Jennifer Bell** (PI): Personalized Genetic Drug Technologies and Medical Economies in Canada: Moral Experiment or Curative Renaissance? (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and Genome Canada, Insight Grant)

**Drs. Samantha Mayo** (PI), **Lori Bernstein** (Co-I), & **Kim Edelstein** (Co-I): Quality of Life after Treatment for Relapsed and Refractory B-Cell Lymphoma (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of Canada/CCS, Quality of Life Grant Program)

**Dr. Shabbir Alibhai** (PI): NUANCE: iNeqUity in AgiNg and CancEr (Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation Health Equity Grand Challenge Award Grant)

View the full list of grants for 2022–2023 on the [UHN DSC website](#).

# Notable Ongoing Projects

**Supporting Older Adults With Cancer and Their Support Person Through Geriatric Assessment and Remote Exercise and Education: The Soar Study**



**Co-PIs: Dr. Shabbir Alibhai & Dr. Jennifer Jones, Co-I: Dr. Andrew Matthew (CIHR Project Grant)**

This randomized pilot trial will examine chair-based remote exercises and education to improve quality of life and physical functioning in older cancer survivors.

**Quality of Life after Treatment for Relapsed and Refractory B-Cell Lymphoma**



**PI: Dr. Samantha Mayo (Co-PIs: Dr. John Kuruville, Dr. Anca Prica), Co-Is: Dr. Lori Bernstein and Dr. Kim Edelstein (Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada/CCS – Blood Cancer Quality of Life Grant Program)**

In this study, investigators will evaluate quality of life outcomes among adults who were treated for relapsed or refractory (RR) B-Cell Lymphoma with autologous stem cell transplant (ASCT), which has been the traditional treatment option, versus chimeric antigen receptor T-cell (CAR-T) therapy, which has emerged as a new standard of care for this population. These findings may inform treatment decisions and interventions for early identification of high risk patients, and patient-focused supportive care measures.

**Observing, Understanding and Telling Stories at End of Life for Opioid Use Disorder Patients (Outloud): Mixed-Methods Research and Knowledge Translation**



**PI: Dr. Jenny Lau, Co-I: Dr. Camilla Zimmermann (CIHR Project Grant)**

This study explores the current state of palliative care, opioid-prescribing and end-of life outcomes for people with opioid use disorder (OUD) in Ontario. The findings of this study will be important given the stigma individuals with OUD face when attempting to access opioids and palliative care near the end of life, given the ongoing opioid crisis. Both healthcare administrative data and individual-level interviews with key stakeholders including patients, caregivers, and healthcare providers will be used and findings will be communicated via innovative methods such as art installations and video series to raise public awareness.

**Emotion and Symptom-focused Engagement for patients with solid organ transplant (EASE-SOT): A novel intervention**



**Co-Is: Drs. Gary Rodin, Kirsten Wentlandt, Camilla Zimmermann, Carmine Malfitano, Rinat Nissim (CIHR Project Grant)**

This is a study designed to modify and test the application of Emotion And Symptom- focused Engagement (EASE) for patients who will be receiving a solid organ transplant. This project is still in its early phases. EASE was first developed by Dr. Gary Rodin, Dr. Camilla Zimmermann, and colleagues to relieve physical and psychological distress in patients undergoing curative treatment for acute leukemia and is now being applied to other populations.

**Comprehensive Health Assessment for My Plan: Initial Implementation Study (Champ Implementation Study)**



**Co-PI: Dr. Shabbir Alibhai (CIHR Project Grant)**

This implementation mixed methods study will examine the implementation of an electronic self-assessment geriatric tool for older adults considering surgery.

**Advancing the Care Experience in Palliative care patient Transitions from hospital to Home (ACE-PATH)**



**Co-Is: Dr. Kirsten Wentlandt & Dr. Camilla Zimmermann (CIHR Transitions in Care (TiC) – Phase 2 Team Grant)**

This project aims to involve patients receiving palliative care, including those who are frail, their caregivers, and healthcare providers at a sub-acute care facility as equal collaborators in the design of a sub-acute-to-home transition of care intervention. The goal of the intervention is to make the sub-acute-to-home transition seamless and patient-centered, while improving the palliative care experience for frail Canadians. The most successful concept from the co-design workshops will form a recommendation for a study to test its feasibility.

**Psilocybin-Assisted Existential, Attachment and Relational (PEARL) Therapy for Patients With Advanced Cancer: A Randomized Controlled Trial**



**PI: Dr. Sarah Hales, Co-Is: Drs. Camilla Zimmermann, Madeline Li, Rinat Nissim, SarahRose Black, Breffni Hannon (CIHR Operating Grant: Psilocybin-assisted Psychotherapy)**

Investigators have developed Psilocybin-assisted Existential, Attachment and Relational (PEARL) therapy, which combines elements of evidence-based psychotherapy with a psilocybin-assisted paradigm for patients with advanced cancer. This Phase II, double-blinded, randomized, placebo-controlled trial will assess whether PEARL therapy with 25mg of psilocybin is associated with greater improvement in depressive symptoms compared to PEARL with placebo. Safety, tolerability and feasibility of a larger trial will also be assessed as secondary outcomes.

**The Canadian MAiD Curriculum Development Project**



**Co-PI: Dr. Madeline Li (Health Canada)**

Development, implementation and evaluation of a standardized training curriculum in medical assistance in dying across Canada.



Canadian Cancer Rehabilitation  
(Canrehab) Team – Improving The  
Systematic Identification, Management,  
And Treatment Of The Adverse Effects Of  
Cancer



**Co-PIs: Drs. Jennifer Jones & David Langelier (CCS/CIHR Cancer Survivorship Team Grant)**

A large multi-centre grant that provides funding for three studies aimed at improving identification, reach and access to cancer rehabilitation. Project one is the implementation of an electronic prospective surveillance system for physical impairments, called REACH, which will be launched in 3 other Canadian centres in the Spring 2023. Project two is a multicentre (n=4) implementation effectiveness trial of a virtual cancer rehabilitation program (CaRE@Home). The trial is expected to begin in Spring 2023. Project three is a Phase II preference based RCT of a structured cancer rehabilitation program for patients with advanced cancer (CaRE-AC) being conducted in Toronto and Vancouver. The study was initiated in November 2022 and its recruitment is ongoing.

A Web-Based Peer Navigation Program  
For Men With Prostate Cancer – Hybrid  
Effectiveness Implementation Trial



**PI: Dr. Jackie Bender, Co-Is: Dr. Jennifer Jones & Dr. Andrew Matthew (CIHR Project Grant)**

This project aims to advance knowledge on the effectiveness and implementation of a web-based peer navigation program for men after treatment for prostate cancer. The study has recruited and trained 25 peer navigators to participate in the trial and 77 trial participants have been recruited and randomized thus far.

Palliative Care At The End Of Life Among  
Patients With Cancer Before And During  
The COVID-19 Pandemic



**Co-PIs: Dr. Camilla Zimmermann & Dr. Breffni Hannon, Co-Is: Dr. Gary Rodin, Dr. Jenny Lau, Javaid Iqbal (CIHR Project Grant)**

This mixed methods study will: (1) quantify the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on palliative care and acute care service utilization at the end-of-life; (2) determine whether this impact on palliative care service use has been disproportionately greater for those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged; and (3) describe experiences of bereaved family caregivers and healthcare providers regarding delivery of palliative care during the pandemic.

Emotion & Symptom-Focused Engagement  
(EASE): A Randomized Controlled  
Trial For Individuals With Acute Leukemia



**Co-PIs: Drs. Gary Rodin & Camilla Zimmermann, Co-Is: Dr. Carmine Malfitano, Dr. Rinat Nissim, Anne Rydall. (CIHR Project Grant; CCS Project Grant; CCTG)**

Multi-site randomized controlled trial of a novel combined psychosocial and palliative care intervention for patients with newly diagnosed acute leukemia, with recruitment sites including the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, Kingston Health Sciences Centre, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, and Ottawa Hospital.

# Excellence in Research



**Dr. Shabbir Alibhai** received an appointment as a Senior Scientist at the Princess Margaret Research Institute.



**Dr. Gilla Shapiro** was awarded the Canadian Psychological Association's Health Psychology & Behavioural Medicine Section Best Oral Presentation Award for the submission "The impact of introducing publicly funded school-based immunization programs for boys on human papillomavirus vaccination" at the 2022 Canadian Psychological Association Conference.



**Dr. Doris Howell** received the International Researcher Hall of Fame Award from Sigma Theta Tau.



**Javaid Iqbal**, a PhD student supervised by Dr. Camilla Zimmermann, received a 3-year Canada Graduate Scholarship from CIHR for his research investigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the quality of end-of-life care for patients with cancer.



**Lauren Squires**, a PhD student under the supervision of Dr. Jackie Bender, received a 3-year CIHR Doctoral Research Award for her research on the Role of Online Support Groups as a Source of Supportive Care for 2SLGBTQ+ people diagnosed with cancer.



**Dr. Christian Schulz-Quach** received the U of T Department of Psychiatry Academic Scholar Award (ASA). His ASA application was based on his Sexual and Gender Diversity in Cancer Care (SGDc) and Severe Mental Illness in Cancer Care (SMIc) work.



**Dr. Camilla Zimmermann** was appointed as Associate Editor for the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* and will handle papers related to supportive care for the journal.





# Team Supportive Care

DSC’s richest resource is its people. With a team of 188 staff, the department fosters an environment of innovation and learning to advance a quality patient experience. In 2022-2023, the DSC continued to exhibit excellence, innovation, and leadership in delivering world class patient care, research, and education, exemplified by the many achievements of our talented staff.

## New Recruits

- Sharon D’Souza**, POGO/AYA School and Work Transitions Counsellor, Psychosocial Oncology
- Jalal Ebrahim**, Physician, TWH/Hospice
- Luana Flores Pereira**, Social Worker, Psychosocial Oncology
- Aliza Panjwani**, Psychologist, Psychosocial Oncology
- Alyssa Scipio**, Social Worker, Psychosocial Oncology
- Gilla Shapiro**, Psychologist, Psychosocial Oncology
- Yehudis Stokes**, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Psychosocial Oncology
- Jillian Walker**, Kinesiologist, Cancer Rehabilitation and Survivorship

## Sustained Service

- Congratulations and thank you to our dedicated DSC staff who have reached their ≥25 year service milestone in 2022/2023.
- Terry Cheng**, Social Worker, 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary at PM/UHN
- Andrew Matthew**, Psychologist, 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary at PM/UHN
- Gary Rodin**, Psychiatrist, 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary at PM/UHN

# Retirement Celebrations

## Aleksandra Chafranskaia



Aleksandra Chafranskaia retired from the Department of Supportive Care on March 31, 2023. Aleks had been in a leadership role for Survivorship/CRS since 2005. Since that time, Aleks has helped to lead the team through multiple evolutions, continuously working to improve patient care. When Aleks joined the team in 2005, the clinic was known as the Breast Cancer Survivorship Program and over the next decade Aleks helped facilitate expansion of care to the gynecology and head and neck cancer sites between 2009-2013, the opening of the ELLICSR centre in 2010, launch of ELLICSR kitchen in 2012, and expansion of care to all cancer sites in 2016. The team valued her advocacy for staff and patients, support of staff well-being, and her collaborative approach.

Aleks championed an interdisciplinary cancer rehab team and valued the different roles that each profession brought in working with patients and each other as well as encouraged and supported their professional growth. She represented the CRS program across many different platforms over the years, both within Princess Margaret outpatient

clinics as well as forging increased collaboration with inpatient rehab and TRI outpatient therapy as well as with Women’s College, Mount Sinai, and other community partners. Aleks embraced innovation and quality improvement, new ideas, and different methods of service delivery to enhance patient-centred care and patient experience.

## Jim Redding

Jim Redding has made tremendous contributions to ELLICSR and to the evolution of the Cancer Rehabilitation and Survivorship program and has always supported staff, students and patients in the Department of Supportive Care.

## Maria Hoffmann

Congratulations to Maria Hoffmann (pictured below) on her retirement! Maria has been supporting the Palliative Care team as an Administrative Assistant at UHN for 17 years and she will be dearly missed. The Department of Supportive Care wishes Maria the best of health, happiness, and success on her new journey in life.





# Departures

**Cassandra Graham**, Physician, Palliative Care

**Dani Lam**, Administrative Assistant, Cancer Rehabilitation & Survivorship

**Lesley Moody**, Clinical Director, Solid Tumour & Ambulatory, Supportive Care, Gattuso Rapid Diagnostic Centre

**Brenda O'Connor**, Physician, Palliative Care

**Natalie Silva**, Administrative Assistant, Palliative Care

**Dani Taylor**, Social Worker, Psychosocial Oncology

**Janithaa Sathiyaseelan**, Administrative Assistant, Psychosocial Oncology

**Sonya Witz-Jackson**, Nurse, Palliative Care

## Robin Forbes



The Department of Supportive Care would like to acknowledge Robin Forbes, our PM Social Work Practice Lead and PSO Co-Lead for the last 11.5 years. She has taken on these roles with grace, intelligence, compassion, and dedication. Robin is a skillful and seasoned social worker willing to go the extra mile for her patients and families. In 2020, her compassion and dedication were recognized by receiving the Gerald Kirsh Humanitarian Award.

In these leadership roles, Robin always brought her uncanny sense of humour in supporting and representing the social work group and PSO within the department and PM at large. During Epic Implementation, Robin's strong and tireless leadership was clearly evident as she led the team from start to finish with a steady hand. She brought fun into the department by orchestrating the popular Best Covers and Summer Bops song competitions. And her choice of a 'raccoon' headshot perfectly personifies her wittiness and resourcefulness.

While we will miss her formal leadership roles in PSO, we are so grateful to be able to continue working beside her as our colleague.

## Lesley Moody



Dr. Lesley Moody has left her role as Clinical Director of the UHN / Princess Margaret Cancer Program to pursue a new and exciting opportunity in the private sector. We are most disappointed to lose her and wish her well in her new endeavors.

Lesley first joined the Cancer Program as Director of the Toronto Central South Regional Cancer Program, and was appointed in 2019 as a UHN/Princess Margaret Clinical Director. In that role Lesley has skillfully managed both in-patient and out-patient solid tumor, supportive care, urgent care, systemic therapy, dentistry and patient reported experience portfolios throughout the pandemic and beyond. Among her many roles at UHN, she is co-chair of the Princess Margaret Clinical Practice committee.

It has been our pleasure to have Lesley Moody as our Clinical Director in Supportive Care. Her support and leadership have had tremendous impact on our team.

# Notable Awards & Appointments



**Ahmed Al-Awamer** was promoted to Associate Professor in the Temerty Faculty of Medicine.



**Christian Schulz-Quach** has been appointed as the inaugural MD Co-Lead of the Code White Committee at UHN.



**Calvin Chow**, who works on the inpatient palliative care unit (16P) at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, received the Michael Kamin Hart Award for excellence in AYA cancer care.



**Joanne Siu**, **Rhonda Kibrick-Lazear** (now retired) and **Emily Barca** were part of a group selected for the 2022 Innovation in Education Award at the PM Cancer Education Awards for their work on the Autologous Stem Cell Transplant and CAR T-Cell Therapy Patient Education Classes.



**Rana Jin** and **Kelly McGuigan** both received the Rose Dean Essence of Oncology Nursing Award. This award is presented to an oncology nurse in recognition of an outstanding contribution to nursing within the cancer program.



**Christian Schulz-Quach**, **Margo Kennedy** and the SGDC Team won the Local Impact Award, TeamUHN, Princess Margaret Sexual & Gender Diversity Cancer Working Group.



**Ebru Kaya** was appointed by the Board of the Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians as the incoming President. Ebru has been appointed as Director of the Division of Palliative Medicine in the Department of Medicine at the University of Toronto.



**Bernadette Southwood**, who works on the inpatient palliative care unit (16P) at Princess Margaret, received the Excellence in Nursing Preceptorship, Mentorship, and Teaching Award.



**Madeline Li** received the prestigious 2022 CAPO award for Clinical Excellence.





## Team Building & Fundraising

After a brief pause during the pandemic, we are excited to announce that the Department of Supportive Care has reconstituted our department's Fundraising Committee in 2022-2023.

The Committee is now being Co-Chaired by Kyle Fitzgibbon and Myann Marks. Additionally, the Committee consists of department members Madelyn Fler, Argin Malakian, Ally Yu and Angela Mathews.

The Committee's objective is to support our department in assembling and fielding a **Team Supportive Care** for each of the Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation's three annual pillar events: The Journey to Conquer Cancer, The Ride to Conquer Cancer, and The Walk to Conquer Cancer. The Fundraising Committee will support awareness of these events and encourage registration to develop a department team for each of the events. The Committee will further assist Team Supportive Care through regular fundraising events to support team members in reaching their fundraising minimums necessary for participation, with the stated goal of aiming to ensure that any person who wishes to participate in one of the events on Team Supportive Care is able to.

We look forward to a very successful year of fundraising to come in 2023-2024. We cannot wait to share updates with you on Team Supportive Care's success at the 2023 editions of the Ride, Journey and Walk to Conquer Cancer!

### DSC Fundraising Committee



**Kyle Fitzgibbon**  
(Co-Lead)



**Madelyn Fler**



**Myann Marks**  
(Co-Lead)



**Argin Malakian**



**Angela Mathews**



**Ally Yu**

## Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

The Department of Supportive Care is committed to creating an environment where everyone feels comfortable being their authentic selves, and is engaged and empowered to share their thoughts, ideas and experiences in a safe space. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Department of Supportive Care can enhance productivity, innovation, collaboration, and wellbeing.

The EDI team will be working with the Supportive Care leadership to promote, support and facilitate equity, diversity and inclusivity across the department. This will involve conducting a department-wide EDI needs assessment to understand staff experiences, perspectives, and needs, and working collaboratively with clinical, education, and research leads to cultivate a culture that fosters inclusive excellence across the DSC.

### Supportive Care EDI Team



**Ekaterina An**  
(Research Coordinator)



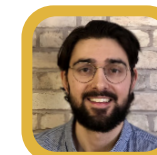
**Myann Marks**  
(Co-Lead)



**Laruen Squires**  
(PhD Student)



**Jackie Bender**  
(Co-Lead)



**Logan Meyers**  
(Clinical Research Coordinator)



**Eryn Tong**  
(Research Coordinator)







# Acknowledgements



## Annual Report Contributors

The Department of Supportive Care is generously supported by the Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation and University Health Network Foundation

**Myann Marks**  
**Shabbir Alibhai**  
**Jackie Bender**  
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**Kyle Fitzgibbon**  
**Robin Forbes**  
**Abha Gupta**  
**Breffni Hannon**  
**Jennifer Jones**  
**Thomas Kais-Prial**  
**Ebru Kaya**  
**Margo Kennedy**  
**Warren Lewin**  
**Madeline Li**  
**Brendan Lyver**  
**Andrew Matthew**  
**Athena Nicholas**  
**Chelsea Nicholas**  
**Rinat Nissim**  
**Christian Schulz-Quach**  
**Marlie Smith**  
**DSC Steering Committee**





**Department of Supportive Care**  
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