



**ALBERTA**  
CLINICAL RESEARCH CONSORTIUM  
MANAGED BY ALBERTA INNOVATES

# ACRC 2023 Annual Conference

**Detailed Program**

**September 25-26, 2023**

Holiday Inn Conference Center Edmonton South,  
4485 Gateway Boulevard, Edmonton, Alberta

Funded by



**ALBERTA INNOVATES**

## Message from the Chair of the Alberta Clinical Research Consortium (ACRC) Executive Committee



On behalf of the ACRC Executive Committee and Alberta Innovates, I would like to cordially welcome you to the 2023 ACRC Annual Conference – a celebration of Alberta’s clinical research ecosystem.

For over 12 years, Alberta Innovates has supported and managed the ACRC as a provincial strategic initiative to align and coordinate administrative, regulatory, operational, and support processes across Alberta. Alberta Innovates brought together academic institutions, health care systems, the government, and the community to form the *consortium* and work collaboratively towards the goal of a high-quality, integrated, and efficient clinical health research environment for our province.

The ACRC Executive Committee consists of senior representatives from Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health, the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta, the Government of Alberta (Ministries of Health and Technology & Innovation), and the Universities of Alberta and Calgary. The ACRC works closely with many research groups, including the Calgary Centre for Clinical Research, the Northern Alberta Clinical Trials and Research Centre, the Cross Cancer Institute, and the Tom Baker Cancer Centre. Alberta Innovates provides administrative and project management for ACRC developed activities, leading the strategy implementation. While these groups form the core members of the ACRC, the pan-Alberta nature of the consortium includes engagement and collaboration with many provincial stakeholders.

In September 2022, the ACRC proudly released its third strategic plan, focusing on the future of health care while identifying gaps and opportunities to advance Alberta’s clinical research capacity and capabilities. In collaboration with members and the broader clinical research community of the province, the ACRC is delivering on 5 key priorities:

- Streamlining, integrating, and standardizing processes for efficient execution of clinical research
- Data and digital health innovation for clinical research
- Building a qualified workforce and clinical research community
- Integrating clinical research into care in pursuit of a learning health system
- Supporting pathways to commercialization for Alberta’s clinical research ecosystem

The 2023 ACRC Annual Conference is set to showcase Alberta’s strengths in clinical research across these priority areas, showcasing innovators and companies, advances in therapies and biomanufacturing, and emerging opportunities for Alberta to deliver better care through research and innovation. You will hear from diverse experts and learn about Alberta’s advantage in clinical research as we continue to build our provincial capacity and capabilities. I look forward to engaging with our community during this exciting 2-day agenda.

**Tim Murphy, Vice-President, Health, Alberta Innovates**

**Chair, ACRC Executive Committee**



***“Our vision is high quality, integrated, and efficient clinical health research in Alberta.”***



#### ACRC Executive Committee

**Tim Murphy** - Chair- Vice President, Health, Alberta Innovates

**Conny Avila** - Chief Innovation Officer, Covenant Health

**Jeremy Beach** - Assistant Registrar, Physician Health, College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta

**Hubert Eng** - Sr. Director, Life Sciences Industries Unit, Ministry of Technology & Innovation, Government of Alberta.

\*Non-voting member.

**Stephen Freedman** - Professor, Associate Dean (Clinical Trials), University of Calgary

**Michael Hill** - Professor - Medicine, University of Calgary. Member at Large.

**Nikki Kain** - Program Manager, Research & Evaluation Unit, College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta

**Marc Leduc** - Senior Provincial Director, Health Evidence and Innovation, Provincial Clinical Excellence, Alberta Health Services

**Alexa Parry** - Director, Health Evidence and Policy, Health Standards, Quality and Performance Division, Alberta Health Government of Alberta. \*Non-voting member.

**Jose Monzon** - Clinical Associate Professor, University of Calgary; Director, Clinical Trials Unit, Tom Baker Cancer Centre

**Lawrence Richer** - Professor and Vice Dean Research (Clinical), Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, University of Alberta

**Randeep Sangha** - Associate Professor, University of Alberta; Director, Clinical Trials Unit, Cross Cancer Institute

**Marcello Tonelli** - Associate Vice President (Research), University of Calgary

## *Organizing Partners*



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**National Research  
Council Canada**

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## *Sponsors*



**ACRC Evening Networking Reception**

**4:30 to 7:30 pm**

**Monday, September 25, 2023**

[Gene Bio Medical](#)



**CENTRE FOR ADVANCED  
MEDICAL SIMULATION**

**DiscoveryLab Award for Best Pitch**

[Centre for Advanced Medical Simulation - NAIT](#)

## ACRC 2023 Annual Conference Agenda – Day 1

Time	Monday, September 25, 2023
8:00 – 8:20 AM	<b>Registration</b>
8:00 – 8:20 AM	<b>Land Acknowledgement and Opening Remarks</b>
8:30 - 10:00 AM	<b>Pitch Sessions</b> presented by DiscoveryLab <b>Award Sponsored</b> by NAIT's Centre for Advanced Medical Simulation (CAMS) Chaired by: Zachary Klarenbach, Ali Salman, Rajiv Nair, and Ken Hein
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Danika Kelly</b>, Co-Founder &amp; CEO, My Normative Inc.</li> <li>• <b>Maximilian Kerz</b>, Co-founder &amp; CEO, Cherry Health</li> <li>• <b>Ty McKinney</b>, CSO of PeerX.AI</li> <li>• <b>Amir Nezhad</b>, CEO CriticareDx</li> <li>• <b>Jessica Hu</b>, CEO, Gene Biomedical</li> </ul>
10:00 - 10:30 AM	<i>Break and Partner Networking</i>
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Piyush Kumar</b>, Chief Scientific Officer, WWiKY BioSciences</li> <li>• <b>Aneal Khan</b>, CEO, Discovery DNA</li> <li>• <b>Mohammad Rahim</b>, Founder &amp; CSO, RANE Pharmaceutical</li> <li>• <b>Amol Karnick</b>, President &amp; CEO, KA Imaging Inc.</li> <li>• <b>Mirna Damergi</b>, Product Manager, Rapid Infection Diagnostics Inc.</li> <li>• <b>Ali Pormohammad</b>, CEO, MHCombiotic Inc.</li> </ul>
12:00 - 1:00 PM	<i>Lunch and Partner Networking</i>
1:00 – 2:30 PM	<b>20 Minute - Opening Discussion: Cell and Gene Therapies</b> Presented by Stacey Nunes, National Research Council
	Panel Discussion led by the National Research Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Risini Weeratna</b>, Director, Cell &amp; Gene Therapy Program Human Health Therapeutics Research Center, National Research Council Canada</li> <li>• <b>Kevin Hay</b>, Clinician Scientist, University of Calgary Foothills Medical Centre</li> <li>• <b>Jailal Ablack</b>, BD Manager, Entos™ Pharmaceuticals</li> <li>• <b>Michael Chu</b>, Clinician Scientist, Cross Cancer Institute</li> </ul>
	<b>Audience Engagement and Feedback</b>
2:30 - 3:00 PM	<i>Break and Partner Networking</i>
3:00 – 4:30 PM	<b>20 Minute – Opening Discussion: Biomanufacturing</b> Presented by Stacey Nunes, National Research Council
	Panel Discussion led by Stacey Nunes, National Research Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nasha Nassoury</b> Research Council Officer, Human Health Therapeutics Research Centre, National Research Council</li> <li>• <b>Gayle Piat</b> Director, Alberta Cell Therapy Manufacturing</li> <li>• <b>Trina Racine</b>, Director of Vaccine Development, Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization</li> <li>• <b>Andrew MacIsaac</b>, CEO, Applied Pharmaceutical Innovation</li> </ul>
	<b>Audience Engagement and Feedback</b>
4:30 - 7:30 PM	<b>Networking Event Sponsored by Gene Bio Medical</b>

## ACRC 2023 Annual Conference Agenda – Day 2

Time	Tuesday, September 26, 2023
8:00 – 8:20 AM	<b>Registration</b>
8:20 – 8:30 AM	<b>Land Acknowledgement and Opening Remarks</b>
8:30 – 10:00 AM	<b>Session 1: <i>Increasing participation and integrating research for better care</i></b>
	<b>8:30 AM Keynote – Wayne Clark, Executive Director - Indigenous Health Program, Faculty of Medicine &amp; Dentistry, University of Alberta</b>
	<b>9:00 AM Fireside Chat</b> <b>Chair: Tammy Mah-Fraser</b> , Executive Director - Health Platforms, Alberta Innovates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Wayne Clark</b>, Executive Director - Indigenous Health Program, Faculty of Medicine &amp; Dentistry, University of Alberta</li> <li><b>Blaine Penny</b>, CEO, Lumio</li> <li><b>Jeffrey Narayan</b>, Clinical Trials Project Lead, University of Alberta; BeTheCure</li> </ul>
10:00 – 10:30 AM	<b>Break and Partner Networking</b>
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM	<b>Session 2: <i>Data and digital health enabling future care</i></b>
	<b>10:30 AM Keynote – Ewan Affleck, Senior Medical Advisor – Health Informatics, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta</b>
	<b>11:00 AM Panel Discussion</b> <b>Chair: Tim Murphy</b> , Vice-President - Health, Alberta Innovates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Elena Lopatina</b>, Senior Scientist, Alberta Virtual Pain Program &amp; Alberta Pain Strategy, Strategic Clinical Networks™, Alberta Health Services</li> <li><b>Ewan Affleck</b>, Senior Medical Advisor - Health Informatics, College of Physicians &amp; Surgeons of Alberta</li> <li><b>J Ross Mitchell</b>, Chair, Artificial Intelligence in Health - Alberta Health Services; Senior Program Director, Artificial Intelligence Adoption - Alberta Health Services</li> </ul>
12:00 – 1:00 PM	<b>Lunch and Partner Networking</b>
1:00 – 1:45 PM	<b>Session 3: <i>National efforts in advancing clinical research.</i></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Rachel Syme</b>, Vice-Chair N2 Board of Director</li> <li><b>Katherine Soltys</b>, Director, Office of Clinical Trials Pharmaceutical Drugs Directorate, Health Products and Food Branch, Health Canada</li> <li><b>Stacey Nunes</b>, Team Lead, Business Management, Human Health Therapeutics, National Research Council Canada</li> </ul>
1:45-2:30 PM	<b>Session 4: <i>Alberta's strengths in clinical research</i></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Becky Wong</b>, Director - Health System Access, Health Evidence &amp; Innovation, Alberta Health Services</li> <li><b>Mari Boesen</b>, Provincial CTMS Implementation Project Manager, University of Calgary</li> <li><b>Scott Klarenbach</b>, Director Real World Evidence (RWE) Consortium, Professor, University of Alberta</li> <li><b>Mary-Ann Clarkes</b>, Manager - Covenant Health Research Centre (CHRC)</li> <li><b>Kim Kordov</b>, Research Ethics Office, University of Alberta</li> <li><b>Jenna Dobry</b>, Quality Assurance and Regulatory Compliance Specialist, Calgary Centre for Clinical Research, University of Calgary</li> </ul>
2:30 – 3:00 PM	<b>Break and Partner Networking</b>
3:00 – 4:00 PM	<b>Session 5: <i>Resources and supports along the pathways to implementation</i></b>
	<b>Chair: Antonio Bruni</b> , Director - Health System Transformation, Alberta Innovates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Crespo'o Ndiabamoh</b>, Associate Director - IMPACT, University of Calgary</li> <li><b>Christy Holtby</b>, Vice President - Philanthropy, Alberta Cancer Foundation</li> <li><b>Brooke Rose</b>, Director of Development, College of Health Sciences &amp; Faculty of Medicine &amp; Dentistry, University of Alberta</li> </ul>

## *Land Acknowledgement*

We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit who have lived in and cared for these lands for generations. We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us. Alberta Innovates respectfully acknowledges that we are situated on traditional territory of the Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 First Nations; home to Métis Settlements, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and Regions 2, 3 and 4 within the historical Northwest Métis Homeland. We respect the histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.



September 25, 2023

## Discovery Lab Pitches

**8:30 AM to 12:00 PM**

**Description:** Alberta's health and life sciences ecosystem is growing rapidly, with entrepreneurs and innovators developing solutions intended to improve health outcomes for Albertans. In addition to new diagnostic tools and therapeutics (small molecule, biologics), digital and data-enabled technologies are driving the development of patient-focused and personalized clinical solutions, new models of care, and an acceleration of research into innovation. In this session, we will hear from several up-and-coming entrepreneurs eager to pitch their ideas on how they plan to improve Alberta's health care through clinical technologies.

Chair: [Zachary Klarenbach](#), Student Researcher, University of Alberta



8:35 [Danika Kelly](#), Co-Founder & CEO, [My Normative Inc.](#) (Calgary) is a female-focused health platform driving innovation through clinically validated data collection, data management, and analytical processes



8:50 [Maximilian Kerz](#), Co-founder & CEO, [Cherry Health](#) (Calgary), a network founded by physicians for physicians that aims to make recruitment into clinics and hospitals as straightforward as possible

### **9:05 AM - Break and Partner Networking**

Chair: [Ali Salman](#), Co-Founder, Lawtiq



9:20 [Ty McKinney](#), CSO of [PeerX.AI](#) (Calgary), Co-founder of 8 Bit Cortex and Research Director of the Branch Out Neurological Foundation



9:45 [Amir Nezhad](#), CEO, [CriticareDx](#) (Calgary) offers capillary self-powered microfluidics and electrochemical nano-biosensors that have the power to revolutionize and disrupt lab testing.



10:00 [Jessica Hu](#), CEO, [Gene Biomedical](#), which provides molecular diagnostics, drugs detection, genomics, proteomics and bioinformatics, technologies

## 10:15 AM - Break and Partner Networking

Chair: [Rajiv Nair](#), Consultant physician, NHS



10:30 [Piyush Kumar](#), President & CEO, [WWiKY BioSciences](#) (Edmonton) is developing cancer theranostics that exploit hypoxia, which leads to metastatic progression and resistance



10:45 [Aneal Khan](#), CEO, [Discovery DNA](#) (Calgary) provides accredited genetic testing for medical decisions, providing tools for early detection and treatment of diseases



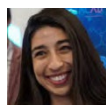
11:00 [Mohammad Rahim](#), Founder and CSO, [RANE Pharmaceutical Inc.](#), a chemistry CRO in Edmonton developing scalable synthetic methods for complex medicinal chemistry targets and natural products

## 11:15 AM - Break and Partner Networking

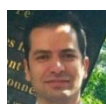
Chair: [Ken Hein](#), Management Consultant



11:30 [Amol Karnick](#), President & CEO, [KA Imaging Inc.](#) (Waterloo) is developing X-ray imaging technologies and systems for medical, veterinary, and non-destructive test industrial markets



11:45 [Mirna Damergi](#), Product Manager, [Rapid Infection Diagnostics Inc.](#) (Calgary) also Lead Speaker Coordinator, YYC Data Convention and U Calgary grad



11:40 [Ali Pormohammad](#), CEO, MHCombiotic Inc. which is combating the issue of antimicrobial resistance by pioneering groundbreaking antimicrobials (Combiotic)

## The award for best pitch is \$5,000 worth of free services at NAIT's Center for Advanced Medical Simulation (CAMS)

Judging Panel:

**Sunil Rajput**, Director, Research, Alberta Innovates

**Bindi Ferguson**, Director, Commercialization, Alberta Innovates

**Efrem Violato**, Research Associate, NAIT-CAMS

# NRC Workshop: Cell & Gene Therapies

**1:00 PM to 2:30 PM**

**Description:** Cell and gene therapies (CGT) are transforming healthcare's approach to disease management and treatment. This session will focus on Canada's strengths in the CGT space, as well as how the NRC is working to support the development of accessible and affordable cell and gene therapies to treat, and potentially cure, chronic diseases and rare genetic disorders. Panel experts will discuss on emerging innovations and opportunities, and comment on what the future holds in the deployment of these impactful therapies. The audience is encouraged to participate in the conversation and provide their feedback on gaps and requirements within Alberta.



## **Workshop Chair**

**Stacey Nunes**

*Human Health Therapeutics and Team Lead, Business Development,  
National Research Council Canada*



## **Dr. Kevin Hay**

*Associate Professor of Medicine, Division of Hematology, University of Calgary; Affiliate Professor of Medicine, Division of Hematology, University of British Columbia; Associate Scientist, BC Cancer Research Institute; Medical Director, BC Cancer Conconi Family Immunotherapy Laboratory*

Dr. Kevin Hay is a Clinician Scientist at the University of Calgary and Foothills Medical Centre in Calgary, Alberta, and Associate Scientist in the Terry Fox Laboratory of BC Cancer Research Institute in Vancouver, British Columbia. He received a Master of Science in Immunology at the University of Manitoba (2008), followed by an MD (2011). After completing residency in Internal Medicine (2014) and a clinical fellowship in Hematology (2016) at the University of British Columbia, he was awarded a scholarship through the Clinician Investigator Program of UBC to pursue a postdoctoral fellowship in cellular immunotherapy which he completed



at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, Washington. He served as a staff physician with the Leukemia/Bone Marrow Transplant Program of BC in Vancouver from January 2018 – August 2023, where he also was Director of the BC Cancer Clinical Cellular Therapy Laboratory, overseeing the processing of cells for hematopoietic cell transplantation, and was instrumental in running early phase CAR-T cell studies. Dr. Hay's research focuses on the clinical translation and pre-clinical development of immune effector cell therapies, primarily chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cells. He also serves as Medical Director of the Conconi Family Immunotherapy Laboratory, a facility in British Columbia dedicated to the manufacturing of clinical grade cellular immunotherapies.

***Dr. Jailal Ablack***

*Business Development Manger, Entos™ Pharmaceuticals*



Dr. Ablack has ~20 years of expertise in the life sciences sector and is currently the Business Development Manager at Entos Pharmaceuticals. Before joining Entos, Dr. Ablack served as the Head of Preclinical Research at OncoSenX, Entos' Oncology focused spinout company, leading their pipeline development. He joined the Entos ecosystem in 2019 after several years of post-doctoral training at University of California, San Diego, focused on mechanisms of cancer growth and targeted antibody therapeutics discovery. Dr. Ablack obtained his PhD in Microbiology and Immunology from Western University in London, Ontario Canada.

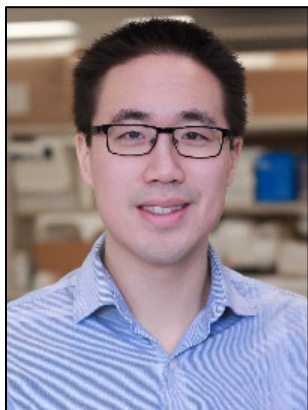
***Dr. Risini Weeratna***

*Director, Cell & Gene Therapy Program Human Health Therapeutics Research Center, National Research Council Canada*



Dr. Risini Weeratna is the Director of the Disruptive Technology Solutions for Cell and Gene Therapy Program at Human Health Therapeutics Research Center of the National Research Council Canada. Prior to joining the NRC, Dr. Weeratna was a Senior Principal Scientist at Pfizer Vaccine Research and Associate Director, Pharmacology at Coley Pharmaceutical Group. Dr. Weeratna is a Fulbright and a Killam scholar with 25+ years' experience in the biopharmaceutical industry and holds a MSc in bacteriology from University of Wisconsin-Madison and PhD in microbiology/immunology from Dalhousie University.



**Dr. Michael Chu**

*Clinician Scientist, Cross Cancer Institute; Assistant Professor, Oncology, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, University of Alberta*

Dr. Michael Chu is a clinician scientist at the Cross Cancer Institute. He completed his medical training including General Internal Medicine residency and Medical Oncology fellowship at the University of Alberta. Dr. Chu was then awarded a Leukemia and Lymphoma Society fellowship for a combined clinical and research fellowship at Stanford University. Upon returning to Edmonton, his clinical focus includes lymphoma, myeloma, and central nervous system malignancies. Academically, his research focuses on basic and translational cancer research with an emphasis on immune therapy (including monoclonal antibodies and cellular therapy). He also has a wide range of clinical research where he serves as principal investigator and sub-principal investigator on multiple phase I, II, and III clinical trials. Dr. Chu is actively involved in trainee education particularly with the local Medical Oncology fellows providing both didactic and bedside teaching.

## NRC Workshop: Biomanufacturing

**3:00 PM to 4:30 PM**

**Description:** The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted critical gaps in the nation's domestic biomanufacturing capacity, specifically regarding vaccine production. Emerging from the pandemic, all levels of government have recognized the need to bolster Canada's biomanufacturing capacity, making investments across the country to support the development of new and enhancement of existing biomanufacturing and bioprocessing infrastructure, manufacturing sites, and research facilities. This NRC-led panel will discuss some of the advancements made in this space – including building Canada's overall biomanufacturing and biologics production capacity – as well as comment on sectors within biomanufacturing where Canada can shine on the global market. The Human Health Therapeutics Research Centre is focused on helping our clients and collaborators accelerate the development of innovative biologic medicines in Canada – from discovery through clinical trials. The audience is encouraged to participate in the conversation and provide their feedback on gaps and requirements within Alberta.

### ***Dr. Nasha Nassoury***

*Research Council Officer, Human Health Therapeutics Research Centre,  
National Research Council Canada*



Dr. Nasha Nassoury is a Research Council Officer of the NRC's Human Health Therapeutics Research Centre. She holds a Ph.D. in molecular and cell biology from University of Montreal. Her research career began with the protein trafficking and cell targeting. Upon joining the NRC in 2008, Dr. Nassoury refocussed her research toward the application of cell targeting and gene therapy. Dr. Nassoury has been involved in a diverse portfolio of projects and programs, supported by the application of viral vectors for therapeutic applications such as production and purification of different viral vectors specifically Adeno Associated Virus (AAVs), Lentivirus (LVs), Virus Like Particles (VLPs) and Adenoviruses.

### ***Gayle Piat***

*Director, Alberta Cell Therapy Manufacturing (ACTM)*



Gayle Piat has a background in Medical Laboratory Technology and has over 30 years' experience working in the life science field with 12 years spent specializing in Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) and 12 years in Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP). She was instrumental in the development of a GLP Toxicology Contract Research Organization (CRO) at the Alberta Research Council in Vegreville, Alberta. While working there as the Quality Assurance Manager, she earned her designation as Registered Quality Assurance Professional in GLP through the Society of Quality Assurance. In 2011, Gayle joined the University of Alberta as Project Manager for the construction of a GMP cell and gene therapy manufacturing facility and is currently Director of Alberta Cell Therapy Manufacturing (ACTM). In 2016 she earned Regulatory Affairs Certification through the Regulatory Affairs Professionals Society. Gayle is an active member of the Canadian biomanufacturing ecosystem including serving as a Board Member for International Society of Pharmaceutical Engineers (ISPE), Canadian Affiliate and committee member in ISPE Canada's Women in Pharma Committee.



***Dr. Trina Racine***

*Director of Vaccine Development, Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO)*

Dr. Trina Racine possess a PhD in Microbiology and Immunology from Dalhousie University and is currently the Director of Vaccine Development at VIDO. Upon completion of her PhD, Dr. Racine joined the Special Pathogens Program at the National Microbiology Laboratory (NML), part of the Public Health Agency of Canada. While at the NML Dr. Racine worked on the development of vaccines and therapeutics for various emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, including Ebola, Zika and MERS. Dr. Racine coordinated clinical trials and provided diagnostic support to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2014-2016. Prior to joining VIDO, Dr. Racine was a Scientific and Regulatory Affairs Consultant for GeneOne Life Science, Inc., a South Korean based biopharmaceutical company. As Director of Vaccine Development at VIDO, Dr. Racine is responsible for guiding the development, manufacturing, and clinical/field testing of VIDO's internal products using a Stage Gate process. Dr. Racine is also responsible for VIDO's Vaccine Development Centre (VDC), a pilot scale, Containment Level 3 capable, GMP biomanufacturing facility capable of producing veterinary vaccines to North American licensure and human vaccines to Phase II clinical trials.



***Dr. Andrew MacIsaac***

*CEO, Applied Pharmaceutical Innovation*

Andrew MacIsaac is CEO at Applied Pharmaceutical Innovation (API), an industry-led not-for-profit organization that serves as a catalyst to support the development of life science products and companies. API combines Canadian research institutions, industry staff, and infrastructure to build highly qualified teams that can commercialize discoveries. With a background in economics and public sector management, Andrew MacIsaac was previously Assistant Dean at the University of Alberta's Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences and held various roles in the Alberta School of Business and UBC Sauder School of Business. Over his career, Andrew has worked tirelessly to build bridges between academia, industry, philanthropy, and government to further economic growth and societal impact. Projects that Andrew has worked on have led to close to \$700 million in economic impact and Andrew has been recipient of the 2022 Edifier Award for his work with API. In his spare time Andrew serves on the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, Policy Committee, the Province of Alberta Research Commercialization Working Group, the Calgary Life Sciences Innovation Hub Steering Committee, and the Edmonton Health City Steering Committee, and a number of company boards and advisory groups.



September 26, 2023

## Session 1: *Increasing participation and integrating research for better care*

**8:30 AM to 10:00 AM**

**Description:** This session will focus on the importance of increasing public/patient participation in clinical research. Individuals are often not aware of opportunities to participate, but there are additional barriers around equitable access that challenges the recruitment of a diverse and inclusive cohort. Alberta has launched awareness and engagement campaigns to promote participation in clinical trials, but there are additional mechanisms and considerations needed to ensure we reach the right populations with the right opportunities, at the right time.

### ***Dr. Wayne Clark – Keynote Presenter***

*Executive Director - Indigenous Health Program, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, University of Alberta*



Dr. Wayne Clark is an Inuk healthcare leader and early career researcher, leading the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry's Indigenous Health Program at the University of Alberta. He has worked closely with Inuit (Nunavut and Manitoba) in COVID-19 Inuit identified diagnostic tests and has contributed extensively to health and social policy for the Inuit in Manitoba. Dr. Clark also engaged Manitoba First Nations and other Indigenous communities on health system transformation and digital health to draft the Indigenous Partnership Strategy for Shared Health Manitoba. Dr. Clark is a member of the Accelerating Clinical Trials (ACT) Consortium Operating Committee, and the ACT Indigenous Peoples Champion.

### ***Blaine Penny*** *CEO, Lumio™*



Blaine Penny is the CEO of Lumio™, a global digital health company headquartered in Calgary that accelerates health outcomes through real-world data with programs spanning 18 countries. He has 20+ years experience founding/leading companies and non-profits in the health, technology, and engineering sectors, including co-founder and former CEO of MitoCanada. Blaine has 15 years of lived experience as a caregiver and rare disease advocate which was prompted by the sudden tragic onset of a mitochondrial disease in his then 4-year-old son. Motivated to help others going through similar experiences, Blaine co-founded the MitoCanada Foundation, which has raised over \$4 million to advance mitochondrial research,



patient support, education, and awareness. He currently serves on multiple Boards including MitoCanada and Caltaf, is an Executive Advisor to the Mitochondrial Innovation Initiative (a strategic initiative at the UofT) and was a former board member of the Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders.

***Jeffrey Narayan***

*Clinical Trials Project Lead, Clinical Trials Office, University of Alberta; BeTheCure*



Jeff completed an undergraduate degree in immunology and a Master's degree in molecular biology at the University of Alberta, before becoming a study coordinator and later a Quality Manager Clinical Trial Project Lead at the Clinical Trials Office of the University of Alberta for Quality Management in Clinical Research. The wide scope of this work exposed him to varied methods for conducting effective clinical research. Jeff is interested in implementing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives at Alberta's institutions, focusing on clinical research. He is also the Alberta Provincial Coordinator for CANTRAIN Clinical Trials Training Program.

***Dr. Tammy Mah-Fraser***

*Executive Director, Health Platforms, Alberta Innovates*



Tammy Mah-Fraser, DrPH, MSc is the Executive Director, Health Platforms at Alberta Innovates. She is well versed in research (basic, animal and clinical trials) as well as clinical care in Canada and the United States, with a focus on regulatory affairs. She completed undergraduate studies (BSc) at UofA, and graduate studies at the University of Pittsburgh (MSc in genetic counseling; DrPH in public health). As Executive Director, she tackles system barriers involving multiple organizations for better health outcomes, to enable a learning health system and to accelerate commercialization. She is project sponsor for the Alberta Clinical Research Consortium, ARECCI, Ethics of Innovation Consortium, and has active involvement in the Alberta SPOR SUPPORT Unit.

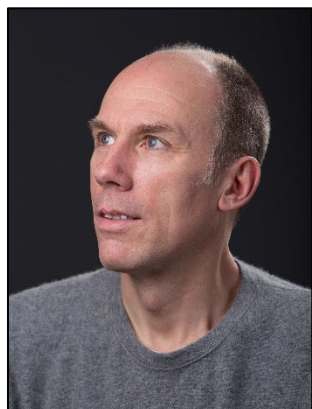
## Session 2: Data and digital health enabling future care

**10:30 AM to 12:00 PM**

**Description:** Data-enabled innovation and digital health technologies are actively transforming healthcare. Although not yet in widespread use, the adoption of artificial intelligence and digital technology will change the face of healthcare as we know it, from how patients access services, to how we monitor long term treatment response. However, how we determine which of these digital tools are acceptable for system use, and when and how we should be sharing data are critical issues before we can fully leverage these technologies to promote better patient and system outcomes. This panel will dive into the discussion around digital health transformation in Alberta, discussing the pros and cons for implementing emerging technologies provincially, while addressing key issues such as data privacy and security in the health care system.

### ***Dr. Ewan Affleck – Keynote Presenter***

*College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta. Senior Medical Advisor - Health Informatics*



Ewan Affleck has worked and lived in northern Canada since 1992. He is currently serving as the Senior Medical Advisor - Health Informatics, College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta, Strategic Advisor - Clinical and Informatics at the Canadian Institute for Health Information, and Chair of the Alberta Virtual Care Working Group. He is the past Chief Medical Information Officer of the Northwest Territories, was co-chair of the national Virtual Care Task Force, served on the Expert Working Group of the pan-Canadian Health Data Strategy, and is the Executive Producer and co-writer of *The Unforgotten* (2021), an award-winning film about inequities in health service for Indigenous people living in Canada. In 2013, he was appointed to the Order of Canada for his contribution to northern health care.

### ***Dr. J. Ross Mitchell***



*CIFAR Canada AI Chair; Fellow, Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute; Alberta Health Services Chair in Artificial Intelligence in Health; Professor, Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry; Adjunct Professor, Department of Computer Science, Faculty of Science, University of Alberta; Senior Program Director – Artificial Intelligence Adoption, Alberta Health Services*

Dr. Mitchell is a CIFAR Canada AI Chair and the inaugural Alberta Health Services (AHS) Chair in AI in Health. He is a Professor in the Department of Medicine, and an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Alberta. He is also a Fellow with the Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute and the Senior Program Director of AI Adoption with AHS. Dr. Mitchell was the inaugural AI Officer at the Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Florida from 2019 to 2021. He was also a Professor of Radiology at Mayo Clinic in Arizona from 2011 to 2019 and Professor of Biomedical Engineering, Radiology, and Clinical Neurosciences at the University of Calgary from 2000 to 2011. He received his PhD at the University of Western Ontario and has been working in the fields of biomedical imaging, artificial intelligence, and machine learning in healthcare for 30 years.

### ***Dr. Elena Lopatina***



*Senior Scientist, Alberta Virtual Pain Program and Alberta Pain Strategy, Strategic Clinical Networks™, Alberta Health Services; Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Community Health Sciences, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary*

Elena Lopatina MD, PhD is a Senior Scientist with the Alberta Virtual Pain Program and the Alberta Pain Strategy, Strategic Clinical Networks™, Alberta Health Services. She also holds an Adjunct Assistant Professor with the Department of Community Health Sciences, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary. Dr. Lopatina is a physician with specialty training in Internal Medicine and Cardiology. She received a PhD in Health Economics from the University of Calgary. Her postdoctoral Health System Impact Fellowship with Alberta Health Services aimed to design a sustainable evidence-based model of care that will enable timely access to appropriate, integrated, and effective chronic pain management for all Albertans. This work contributed to securing funding for the design and implementation of the Alberta Virtual Pain Program. Dr. Lopatina also completed a postdoctoral Health System Impact Fellowship with Alberta Health Services and a postdoctoral fellowship with the Institute of Health Economics, which focused on the evaluation of digital health technologies. Currently, Dr. Lopatina is a member of the provincial Digital Health Evaluation Working Group.



***Tim Murphy***

*Vice President, Health at Alberta Innovates*



Tim Murphy has 30 years of senior executive leadership experience in the health care sector. Currently, he is the Vice President, Health at Alberta Innovates. Tim was the inaugural Senior Vice President at the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research and has 10 years of executive leadership with two comprehensive academic oncology centres in Canada. Tim holds a Master of Health Administration from the University of Toronto (1992), a Master of Business Administration from Queen's University (2006), and a Certified Professional Accountant (CPA) designation. In 2023, Tim was awarded Digital Health Canada's Digital Health Executive of the Year.

## ***Session 3: National efforts in advancing clinical research***

**1:00 PM to 1:45 PM**

**Description:** This session will focus strategic opportunities and challenges that have emerged across Canada in relation to clinical research and clinical trials. National organizations will share recent and upcoming advancements they have made in making Canada an ideal destination for clinical research.

***Dr. Rachel Syme***

*Vice-Chair N2 Board of Directors; Program Director, Research, Cystic Fibrosis Canada*



Rachel Syme is the Program Director Research with Cystic Fibrosis Canada (CFC). She also serves as the Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors at N2. Prior to her role with CFC she was the Assistant Director with CIHR's Institute of Cancer Research. She received her BSc (Honours) at Queen's University, MSc (Medical Genetics) at the University of Calgary, and her PhD (Microbial Immunology) at the University of Calgary. She spent a number of years as manager of the Clinical Trials Unit at the Tom Baker Cancer Centre prior to moving to a provincial position as Operations Leader of the Alberta Clinical Cancer Research Unit and then as Executive Director of Research Administration with Alberta Health Services. She currently holds an adjunct assistant professor position with the Department of Oncology at the University of Calgary. She also remains a coordinator and lecturer with the University's Master of Biomedical Technology Program.





***Dr. Katherine Soltys***

*Director, Office of Clinical Trials*

*Pharmaceutical Drugs Directorate, Health Products and Food Branch, Health Canada*

Dr. Soltys is the Director of the Office of Clinical Trials in the Pharmaceutical Drugs Directorate of the Health Products and Food Branch, at Health Canada. In this role, she oversees all activities related to the approval and pharmacovigilance of clinical trials involving pharmaceuticals in Canada, as well as Health Canada's Special Access Program. She also represents Health Canada internationally as a member of ICH and the ACCESS Consortium. Before joining the Office of Clinical Trials in 2022, Dr. Soltys served as Director, Marketed Pharmaceuticals Bureau where she was responsible for the post-market surveillance of prescription pharmaceuticals in Canada. Prior to that, Dr. Soltys served as an Oncology Medical Evaluator, and then Manager, in the pre-market Oncology Pharmaceutical Review Division of Health Canada. In this role, Dr. Soltys represented Health Canada on several international regulatory initiatives regarding Patient Reported Outcomes, including the SISAQOL Consortium (Setting International Standards for the Assessment of Quality-of-Life data), led by the EORTC (European Organization for the Research and Treatment of Cancer). Dr. Soltys received her MD degree and completed her post-graduate training at the University of Saskatchewan. She also completed a Post Graduate Certificate in Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmacovigilance at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Dr. Soltys maintains part time clinical practice at The Ottawa Hospital Cancer Centre where she participates in the care of patients with lung cancer and gastrointestinal cancer.



***Stacey Nunes***

*Human Health Therapeutics and Team Lead, Business Development, National Research Council Canada*

Mr. Stacey Nunes is the Team Lead for Business Development at the National Research Council of Canada (NRC) in the Human Health Therapeutics portfolio. He has over 30 years experience in research and development and has been involved in the commercialization and transfer of technology from government laboratories for over 15 years. He helps manage a portfolio of over 100 patent families, and is responsible licensing these technologies, and developing collaborations with industry, academia, and other organizations. He has written numerous papers and presented at international conferences on the commercialization of R&D from government labs, led two start-up initiatives at NRC, and was the first Canadian invited to present his patented technology at the National Association of Seed and Venture Funds' (NASVF) World's Best Technologies Showcase.

Mr. Nunes holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from York University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Ottawa, and studied International Business at Reims University in France.

## Session 4: *Alberta's strengths in clinical research*

**1:45 PM to 2:30 PM**

**Description:** As captured by the ACRC provincial report released last spring – [Alberta's Clinical Research Ecosystem: Driving Innovation for Care](#), the province holds many advantages as an ideal destination for conducting clinical trial and clinical research programs. This session will give you the opportunity to hear firsthand through a series of flash presentations about how the provincial ecosystem is here to support your clinical research needs and why Alberta should be your go-to destination for clinical research. Note, this session will immediately follow with a networking period to allow interested individuals to ask more discrete questions not featured in the discussion.



### ***Becky Wong***

*Director - Health System Access, Health Evidence & Innovation, Alberta Health Services*

Becky is currently Director, Health System Access within the Health Evidence & Innovation department at Alberta Health Services. She leads a team of Advisors and Coordinators to facilitate researchers' access to the province's health system resources such as data, systems, facilities, staff and patients. The HSA team works collaboratively with NACTRC, CSM Legal and CCCR offices to streamline processes for study initiation. Health research and innovation has always been a keen interest for Becky. She joined AHS in 2012 with over a decade of experience spanning various roles in business development and technology commercialization, from the fast-paced world of startups to the rigorous environment of a multinational pharmaceutical company. She completed her BSc and MSc at the Cummings School of Medicine, University of Calgary and her MBA at McMaster University. Becky has spent the past 20 years at the intersection of healthcare, business, and innovation in pursuit of improving patient care and outcomes based on evidence and research. She was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal in 2023 in recognition of her work to influence and shape the health research administration landscape in Alberta.

### ***Mari Boesen***

*Provincial CTMS Implementation Project Manager, University of Calgary*



As the Provincial CTMS Project Manager, Mari is dedicated to the implementation and integration of the OnCore Clinical Trial Management System in Alberta. Mari has a background in Pragmatic Clinical Trials with the Alberta Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research. While there, she worked on clinical trial training programs, patient-facing clinical research awareness campaigns (Be the Cure), and supported many tools and resources for clinical trial conduct in Alberta. She has an educational background in Medical Imaging Research with a BSc in Physics from the University of Victoria, an MSc in Physics from the University of Calgary, and a Project Management Professional designation through the Project Management Institute.

### ***Dr. Scott Klarenbach***

*Professor, University of Alberta; Director, Alberta Real World Evidence (RWE) Consortium*



Dr. Scott Klarenbach is a nephrologist, health economist, and professor at the University of Alberta. He is also the Director of the Alberta Real World Evidence Consortium that is comprised of an expert pan-provincial research team from the Universities of Alberta and Calgary, and the Institute of Health Economics. The Consortium leverages the world-class health system data in Alberta, and provides businesses in the health care sector the opportunity to support collaborative and timely real-world data-driven research that generates meaningful evidence from a trusted source, providing invaluable insights that contribute to advancing health outcomes and supporting the shaping of evidence-informed policies and decisions.

### ***Mary-Ann Clarkes***

*Manager – Covenant Health Research Centre (CHRC)*



Mary-Ann Clarkes is a Manager for the Covenant Health Research Centre, with over 16 years' experience supporting organization research and researchers. Associated opportunities contributing to various national and provincial-based initiatives with partner-organizations were integral to further expanding Mary-Ann's knowledge and perspectives beyond those of her own work experiences and education. And in addition, Mary-Ann also serves as a reviewer with the University of Alberta research ethics boards and has done for over 12 years. Other previous experiences range across a number of work and affiliated volunteer roles including in Emergency Medical Services (EMS) education and training; EMS trauma education



– communications, research granting and ancillaries development; and more broadly in general administration and human resources.

### ***Kim Kordov***

*Manager, Research Integrity Support; Research Ethics Officer, University of Alberta*



Kim Kordov is the Manager, of the Research Integrity Support portfolio at the University of Alberta. Graduating from the University of Alberta with a BSc in Nursing, Kim has spent most of her career in the clinical research space in varying capacities. She has worked as a clinical trial coordinator in various therapeutic areas as well as a clinical trial monitor for an Edmonton based biotech company in the oncology space. She was the first administrator of Alberta's Northern Alberta Clinical Trials and Research Center (NACTRC) in 1999 and also worked as a grants administrator at the Women's and Children's Health Research Institute (WCHRI). Kim has been at the University of Alberta's Research Ethics Office (REO) since 2009, where she has managed the administrative operations of the University's human and animal ethics committees. As the system expert for the University's online ethics and compliance platform, she has been a champion of the implementation of the REB Exchange, working behind the scenes on both the system development and change management processes required for a successful implementation. Currently, when she is not thinking about research ethics and compliance Kim is working to publish her first children's book, aimed at helping parents "streamline" the multitude of toys children leave out when playing!

### ***Jenna Dobry***

*Quality Assurance & Regulatory Compliance Professional, Calgary Centre for Clinical Research (CCCR), University of Calgary*



Jenna has served as the Quality Assurance and Regulatory Compliance Professional with the Calgary Centre for Clinical Research (CCCR) at the University of Calgary since 2021. Jenna received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Biological Sciences from the University of Calgary and earned a Master of Science Degree in Law from Northwestern University in Chicago, Illinois. Jenna has a thorough understanding of the complexity of clinical research regulations and her overall goal within her role with CCCR is to make compliance as seamless as possible to ensure that research teams can focus on keeping their participants safe and producing quality data to improve medical care.



## Session 5: Resources and supports along the pathways to implementation

**3:00 PM to 4:00 PM**

**Description:** Looking to take your research beyond the lab or clinic? Unsure of how to navigate Alberta's ecosystem? Or simply have an idea, and are looking for resources to support development? This panel features leaders from different corners of Alberta's health innovation ecosystem to discuss some of the many supports available to researchers and innovators across our province. Discussions will describe existing resources for regulatory submissions, new sources of funding for clinical research and emerging priorities, and how the combined efforts of our ecosystem will enable promising health system transformation.



### ***Dr. Crespo'o Ndiabamoh***

*IMPACT at U of C, Associate Director, MD, MSc, DTM&H, ACCTMTH*

Dr. Ndiabamoh is a certified infectious disease specialist and most recently worked in Asia when COVID hit as lead doctor, overseeing global clinical trials. He has a vast experience with clinical trials conducted in multiple geographies, regulatory affairs, business development, and strategic initiatives. He is also a 2x founder.

Expertise & Background:

- MD, Infectious Disease and Tropical Medicine, Nagasaki University Japan.
- MSc/MTM, Joint LSHTM UK & Nagasaki University Japan.
- Clinical trial Design and Interpretation, Johns Hopkins University, USA.
- DTM&H, ASTMH USA approved at TMGH Nagasaki University.
- Business Certificate, EMICA, Quebec Canada.



### ***Christy Holtby***

*Vice President, Philanthropy - Alberta Cancer Foundation*

Christy leads a team focused on raising philanthropic support and maximizing donor impact for cancer care & research across Alberta. These efforts include the transformational \$250 million OWN. Cancer Campaign in Calgary in support of the Arthur J.E. Child Comprehensive Cancer Centre. And recently, the \$30 million We Cross Cancer campaign in Edmonton to double the capacity for Clinical Trials at the Cross Cancer Institute. Prior to this, Christy held the roles of Managing Director of Investment and Partnerships at the Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute, and Vice

President of Strategic Partnerships and Interim CEO at the University Hospital Foundation. Christy has built a career around innovative models of philanthropy bringing together industry, government and philanthropists through public private philanthropic partnerships (P4s) and venture philanthropy projects. Christy has benefited from being a member of both the Association of Fundraising Professionals and the Association of Healthcare Philanthropy. She has completed the Johns Hopkins Medicine Philanthropy Institute and her Community Shift Fellowship at Ivey Business School. In 2018, Christy was selected to join the inaugural class of the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy's 40 Under 40 Program. At work and at play Christy loves to surround herself with interesting people for powerful conversations about big ideas...ideally this also involves food and great wine.

### **Brooke Rose**

*Director of Development, College of Health Sciences & Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, University of Alberta*



Brooke Rose, MPNL, CFRE is a Development Director in the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry at the University of Alberta. She has worked in healthcare philanthropy for 13 years at organisations across Canada and Australia and loves seeing that matchmaking magic unfold when a worthy cause meets generosity in the right place at the right time. A passionate relationship-builder, Brooke excels in creating customised, strategic, data-driven fundraising programmes and campaigns. Brooke graduated with a BComm at the University of Alberta, a Master's in philanthropy and non-profit leadership from Carleton University and has received her Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE) credentials. When not meeting with donors or researchers, you can find Brooke on the ball diamond, in the bowling alley or travelling to new places (near and far).

### **Dr. Antonio Bruni**

*Director - Health System Transformation, Alberta Innovates*



Over the last 10 years, Antonio has been immersed in the health research and innovation ecosystem within Alberta, with his career spanning the private, public, and non-profit sectors. Currently serving as the Director of Health System Transformation at Alberta Innovates, Antonio is focused on a collaborative approach to develop, deploy, and support the development of novel care models that leverage digital health technologies through partnerships and programs. As an active member within the community, he volunteers as a Board Director for the Alberta Diabetes Foundation and Jasper Place Wellness Centre. He earned his doctorate from the University of Alberta, and completed his Master of Business Administration from the Ivey School of Business's Executive Program.

## *Special Thanks To*

### **The ACRC Conference Steering Committee**

Calla McKague (Alberta Innovates), Jeremy Beach (CPSA), Jenna Dobry (University of Calgary), Kim Kordov (University of Alberta), Mary-Ann Clarkes (Covenant Health, & Rebecca Barnes (N2 Canada)

**AND**

### **All Our Volunteers**

Alexandra Dixon

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Donna Pressick

Jenna Dobry

Katie Mertens

Marcella Erskine

Mary-Ann Clarkes

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