

## Creativity + real-world examples = fun

**Mixing real-world examples with creativity, energy and ideas combined** for an interactive – and fun – workshop for trainees on patient-engagement in research. Michael McGillion, co-lead, along with Rebecca Gann, and Carley Ouelette from McMaster University's Faculty of Nursing and Tara McCready, Population Health Research Institute, discussed his team's approach.

"Our goal was to make it fun, to demystify patient engagement. How do we make it happen, make it authentic and enjoyable for people? I think we succeeded."



### The Spark

I was one of the guest editors of the [CMAJ Supplement](#). There is a lot of theoretical information about patient engagement but people struggle with the practical aspect. So we thought we could use the supplement as a training tool to share practical lessons on how to do patient engagement.

### Audience

The workshop was targeted to trainees in southwestern Ontario, including graduate students from nursing, medicine and other health disciplines as well as research coordinators.

### Interactive format

We used the *CMAJ* supplement to set the context and moved into a discussion of how to do it, with people presenting learnings from several IMPACT projects.

### "Fireside chats"

We wanted trainees to hear from patient partners about ideal practices on how to help patient engagement be successful. "Keeping up with the Joanses" featured two patient partners from the hospital to home transition seniors project. It is really important that the patient partner voice is front and centre. They spoke about things like "make sure there is enough time, comfortable seating, and about appreciating a patient partner: if you elicit feedback from a patient, make sure you design follow up and show how feedback was integrated into the research – show it was valued." That was fun and the students had lots of questions.

### Hands-on

Students were given a case study and asked to create a patient engagement plan, considering challenges and how to mitigate. After they presented their plans, we then told them what actually happened as the cases actually came from the supplement.

In a "Three-minute theses game", complete with a big countdown clock, students had three minutes to present their ideas followed by a three-minute brainstorm. It was a great exercise because the trainees had wonderful ideas.

### Takeaway message

It's okay to be creative. Patient engagement should be authentic. There aren't prescribed ways to involve people, there is no template, but a variety of ways to involve patients.

### What's next?

A workshop in Ottawa, with more planned for other parts of province.

### The last word

People were really engaged, we had tons of interaction, activity and ideas. It was a great day.



## Gender equity pioneer

**Dr. Sharon Straus, Provincial KTE Lead with OSSU, is the first female Physician-in-Chief (Interim) at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto, a prominent prolific researcher and a [strong advocate](#) for women in medicine and research.**

"I'm incredibly privileged to do what I get to do every single day. I think the reason many women take on

leadership positions is to effect change and to make things different for future generations."

Dr. Straus recently co-authored a [study](#) in *The Lancet* on gender gaps in research funding, showing that women researchers are less likely to secure funding as compared with male researchers. She was also coauthor of a 2018 [editorial](#) on #MeToo in medicine in *CMAJ*.

# New OSSU Research Centre brings expertise in healthy aging



Patient engagement at the McMaster Institute for Research in Aging

**Older adults make up a significant portion of Canada's population;** but despite a broad range of ages, health and social expectations, they are often grouped in the same category.

In fact, there is no typical older person, says Dr. Parminder Raina, Scientific Director of the McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA). "This is the largest demographic ranging from 65 years to over 100," he says. "That would be akin to comparing a 10-year-old to a 45-year-old. Their experiences and perspectives are incredibly diverse."

To support optimal aging in Ontario, a new [OSSU Research Centre](#), the **MIRA | Collaborative for Health & Aging**, brings together MIRA and the McMaster School of Nursing's Aging, Community and Health Research Unit (ACHRU) to build capacity in aging research and strengthen patient-research-policy-practice connections.

Through the Collaborative, more than 100 researchers are exploring a range of topics related to older adults, their caregivers and communities, such as bone health, mental health, social isolation, living with multiple chronic conditions, aging in place and more.

"The focus of the Collaborative is on supporting patient-oriented research — you have to look at people as individuals, particularly when conducting research," added Dr. Raina.

Researchers, trainees, health professionals, administrators and policy makers from across the province will benefit from the new Centre's expertise.

"It is exciting to have aging as a focus of OSSU," says Dr. Maureen Markle-Reid, Scientific Director of ACHRU. "We are looking forward to working with stakeholders across Ontario to develop a robust research agenda that engages patients and their families and improves the health and well-being of older people."

## EMPOWERing Ontario

**Eye cancer research, chronic pain in children** and other key health care challenges will receive a funding boost through OSSU's EMPOWER (Engaging Multi-stakeholders for Patient Oriented research Wider Effects & Reach) Awards. These awards aim to extend the impact of patient-oriented research in Ontario. By leveraging OSSU's expertise and infrastructure, they can create meaningful change for patients, policy

and practice. Congratulations to Dr. Helen Dimaras, *EMPOWER Retinoblastoma*, and Dr. Jennifer Stinson, *#PartneringForPain*, SickKids Hospital; Dr. Kerry Kuluski, Participatory ALC, Sinai Health System and Dr. Manoj Lalu, *Partner early, Partner often*, Ottawa Hospital Research Institute.

See the full project [list](#).

## NEWS



A new [study](#) by Dr. Douglas Lee on his OSSU IMPACT Award on [heart failure](#) was recently published in the *Canadian Journal of Cardiology*. The paper noted that patients in Northern Ontario experienced higher readmission rates and repeat hospitalizations than those in Southern Ontario, but no differences in 30-day mortality.

"Our study highlights some of the differences in outcomes and the need for new strategies to try to reduce readmission rates for cardiac disease patients in the North," said Dr. Lee, a researcher at ICES and the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre, University Health Network.

The study was a partnership between the Northern School of Medicine and ICES.



OSSU's **Ottawa Outreach event** — Researchers and patients provided practical tips to researchers in eastern Ontario in May about how OSSU and its Research Centres can support their research. The engaging and interactive session highlighted examples from IMPACT Awards and more to engage the audience.

**Patient Partners Working Group Inaugural Webinar** — featured Jennifer Johannesen speaking about her OSSU-funded, patient-developed white paper on the 'ladders of engagement' from the patient perspective. Visit [ossu.ca](#) for the next webinar.



Happy 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to the **McMaster Health Forum!** Read more about the [Forum](#).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 29 – 31** 2019 Annual CAHSPR Conference, Halifax, NS
- May 30 – 31** KT Canada Scientific Meeting, Winnipeg, MB
- June 5** Trillium Primary Health Care Research Day, Toronto, ON
- Sep 9 – Nov 25** Virtual Masterclass, McMaster Health Forum, via Webex

Click [here](#) for details on future patient-oriented research events.

## CONTACT US

**Ontario SPOR SUPPORT Unit**  
MaRS Centre, West Tower,  
661 University Ave, Suite 405  
Toronto, ON  
M5G 1M1

T: 416-673-8451  
E: [ossu@ossu.ca](mailto:ossu@ossu.ca)

W: [www.ossu.ca](http://www.ossu.ca)  
@OSSUtweets