



# Breaking Through

The newsletter of the University of Ottawa Institute of Mental Health Research

## IMHR Welcomes New Schizophrenia Research Unit Director



Dr. Northoff

The University of Ottawa Institute of Mental Health Research (IMHR) is delighted to announce that **Dr. Georg Northoff** from the University of Magdeburg, Germany, has accepted the position of **Research Unit Director** of the **IMHR Schizophrenia Research Unit**. **Dr. Northoff** brings world-class leadership in clinical neuroscience pertaining to mind and behavior, brain imaging and neuroethics, as well as the integration of psychiatry and functional

neuroimaging. With his focus on brain imaging and its application to psychiatric disorders, **Dr. Northoff** will catalyze development in this area which is critical to the IMHR's strategic plan. **Dr. Northoff** has over 100 scientific publications in prestigious journals and holds numerous peer-reviewed operations grants totaling over \$2.3 million (CAD). In addition, he has fostered an array of international collaborations with top researchers in the field of neuroimaging. **Dr. Northoff** is scheduled to begin his tenure at the IMHR in the spring of 2009. A full feature on **Dr. Northoff** will appear in the spring edition of *Breaking Through*.

## Another Successful Research Day



Panel members (from left to right): Drs. Marie France Rivard, Jeremy Grimshaw, Simon Davidson & John Lyons

The **29th Annual Research Day** of the Department of Psychiatry and **12th Annual Y.D. Lapierre Resident Research and Academic Day** took place on **December 5, 2008**. Both scientific papers and poster presentations were included in the Program. Presentations

encompassed a wide variety of research topics and included lectures by several keynote speakers.

**Dr. John Lyons** and **Dr. Jeremy Grimshaw** spoke extensively regarding the role of program evaluation and knowledge translation, respectively, in shaping mental-health care and policy. **Dr. Simon Davidson** spoke of the **Mental Health Commission of Canada** with respect to priorities surrounding the mental health of youth and adolescents. Likewise, **Dr. Marie France Rivard** spoke of the **Mental Health Commis-**

sion of **Canada** in the context of mental-health priorities for seniors. Following these keynote addresses, **Drs. Lyons, Grimshaw, Davidson** and **Rivard** took part in an extensive panel discussion moderated by **Dr. Kathy Gillis**. This panel discussion focused on building bridges between program evaluation, knowledge translation and policy formulation in the context of mental-health. The **IMHR** and **ROHCG** are absolutely delighted to have two members (**Drs. Davidson and Rivard**) occupy lead positions within the **Mental Health Commission of Canada**.

As well, **Jennifer Phillips** and **Frank Chenu** were winners of the first annual **IMHR Young Investigator Award**. The awards will be officially presented to the recipients at the **Royal Ottawa Foundation for Mental Health Inspiration Awards**. In addition, awards were given to **Dr. Andrea Bardell** (PGY-4) for "Best Resident Presentation", **Dr. Lisheng Du** for "Best Basic Science Poster Presentation" and **Dr. Sharman Robertson** for "Best Clinical Poster Presentation". Sincere thanks to all panel members, presenters, attendees, judges and organizers for their contributions towards another successful **Research Day!**

## Canadian Mental Health Research Network

The **IMHR** has been championing an initiative to create a **Canadian Mental Health Research Network**. Such a network would provide a unified voice on behalf of researchers to ensure that health research dollars, particularly those allocated to mental health, are used most effectively. The **IMHR** is happy to announce that there are now partners in place for this initiative across Canada including B.C., Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes. Importantly, the **Mental Health Commission of Canada** has endorsed the creation of a **Canadian Mental Health Research Network**. This coming year will see the formation of a secretariat located at the **IMHR** to begin work in priority areas including defining mental health research priorities, coordination of national trials, sharing of research findings and facilitation of internal collaborations.

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# Launch of New Strategic Directions



The BEST CARE  
ADVANCING DISCOVERY  
STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS  
An INNOVATIVE WORKPLACE  
A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

In late January, the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group launched its new Strategic Plan. *Inspiring Care: Together to 2012* was developed with

input from more the 100 patients and clients, families, employees, physicians, researchers, volunteers, board members and other partners who participated in focus groups, brainstorming sessions and review processes. [Myrna Barwin](#), Past IMHR Board Chair, [Dr. Zul Merali](#), President and CEO, University of Ottawa IMHR, Research Unit Directors and other IMHR staff were among the participants.

"I would like to thank all staff involved in the process and development of this plan. It is the first plan of this magnitude for our organization," noted [George Weber](#), President and CEO, ROHCG. "Over the next three years, its five Strategic Directions and 15 ensuing goals will guide us in everything we do."

**Strategic Direction #2 – Advancing Discovery** - relates directly to the vision of [University of Ottawa Institute of Mental Health Research](#). "This Strategic Direction will support enhanced opportunities for the integration of research, educa-

tion, clinical care and partnerships," noted [Dr. Merali](#). "This direction also closely aligns with the IMHR's vision to increase our recognition as a world leader in research."

To continue the close partnership of the IMHR with the ROHCG strategic planning process, [Dr. Merali](#) is the Chair of this ROHCG Strategic Direction Task Force and [Drs. Owen Kelly](#) and [Nicola Wright](#) will be the Co-Leads of the working group to address its three goals.

Now the real work begins and everyone at ROHCG (and the IMHR) is invited to be involved. The five Strategic Directions will be applied to the **Care**, **Advocacy**, **Research** and **Education** that takes place every day within our facilities and communities.

If you have an idea or questions, email [strategic.plan@rohcg.onca](mailto:strategic.plan@rohcg.onca) or contact [Dr. Susan Farrell](#), Project Director, Strategic Planning at ext. 6922.

If you would like to attend a brainstorming session (60-90 minutes) on any of the goals, email [strategic.plan@rohcg.on.ca](mailto:strategic.plan@rohcg.on.ca) to let us know. We will be setting up these groups over the next couple of weeks. Please ensure your manager has approved your time to participate.

## Young Researcher's Forum: Announcement



1st Annual IMHR  
Young Researchers'  
Conference  
BREAKING BARRIERS

THE CHANGING  
FACE OF MENTAL  
HEALTH

In collaboration with the [University of Ottawa Institute of Mental Health Research \(IMHR\)](#), the IMHR Young Researchers' Forum, is pleased to invite you to our [First Annual Conference](#). This exciting event will be held on [April 3, 2009](#) at the [Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre](#) in Ottawa, Ontario. The theme of our first conference is breaking the barriers between disciplines to increase our capacities as multidisciplinary researchers. The recent integration of fields and focus on translational research approaches highlight the changing face of mental health research. With topics from the fields of psychology, psychiatry, neuroscience and neurology we will examine how basic research can inform clinical care and how clinical challenges can spark new laboratory investigations.

Our mandate is to provide an enjoyable and valuable resource for young researchers. To facilitate the participation of young scientists, we have waived registration fees and offer an incredible lineup of invited lecturers, oral presenta-

tions, educational workshops and poster presentations free of charge to all conference registrants. The overall conference programme will serve as a forum for attendees to learn and network with their peers and to showcase their own research findings. We encourage all interested young researchers to submit abstracts for consideration for oral or poster presentation at this year's conference.

Please check our conference website (see link below) regularly over the coming months as we will be posting more information as it becomes available. If you have any questions regarding the conference or abstract submission, please contact the [Organizing Committee](#) at [yrf.conference@gmail.com](mailto:yrf.conference@gmail.com). We hope you will take advantage of this excellent opportunity and we look forward to seeing you there.

Website: <http://www.imhr.ca/research/youngresearch-e.cfm>

## Recent Publications, Awards & Announcements

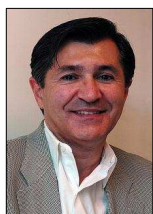
Brookes, N., Tansey, M., & Murata, L. (2009). The Canadian context. In P. Barker (Ed). *Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing. The craft of caring*. 2nd Ed. (Chapter 82, pp. 716-720.) London: Hodder & Stoughton Limited

Calderwood, K and O'Brien A-M (2009). Sustaining the Social Work Profession. Society for Social Work Research, 13th Annual Conference, New Orleans LA January 15-19.

Lafond, V. (2008). Dreaming ... in celebration of Social Work and Families in Mental Health. *Bulletin of the Ontario Association of Social Workers (Eastern)* (2008 (Vol. 34 No. 3)

Mary Louise Gifford recently completed a M.Sc. in Health Ergonomics through the [European Institute of Health and Medical Sciences](#) at the [University of Surrey](#) in Guildford, UK. Her thesis title was "[Factors Influencing Nurses' Decision Whether, Or Not, To Report Violent Incidents At Work: A Qualitative Approach](#)". Mary Louise's role at the ROMHC is Employee Injury Prevention Consultant in Occupational Health and Safety Services.

## Continued Funding Success!



Dr. Milin

Dr. Robert Milin and colleagues Dr. Smita Thatte, Dr. Judy Makinen, Dr. Nicole Varshney and Selena Walker of the Youth Psychiatry Program have received \$50,000 in funding from Telus for their grant "Early Identification and Intervention Program for Youth". This grant, which was secured with the help of Tim Kluge

of the [Royal Ottawa Foundation](#), will facilitate implementation of a psychoeducation program designed to increase awareness and identification of mental illness and the stigma that surrounds it. The [Early Identification and Intervention Program](#) for Youth also aims to increase access to appropriate services. Congratulations!

## Research Bootcamp

In a recent survey conducted by the [IMHR](#), 180 individuals from the [ROHCG](#) expressed interest in undertaking further training to enhance research skills. Based on survey results, the [IMHR](#), in partnership with the [ROHCG](#), is developing a series of dedicated workshops or "Research Bootcamps" aimed at building on and expanding current research capacity and expertise within our organization. The

research boot-camps will address the following areas: qualitative research, program evaluation, research and clinical practice, database management and navigating research ethics. Stay tuned to [Breaking Through](#) for upcoming announcements regarding the [Research Bootcamp](#) and thank-you for your enthusiastic response!

## Reminder: CIHR Operating Grant Deadline



A reminder that the application deadline for [CIHR operating grants](#) is [March 2, 2009](#). An internal deadline preceding [CIHR's](#) deadline will be announced shortly in order to procure the necessary signatures in a timely manner.

tion of new knowledge and its translation into improved health for Canadians, more effective health services and products and a strengthened Canadian health care system

[CIHR's](#) contribution to the amount available for this initiative is subject to availability of funds voted annually to [CIHR](#) by parliamentary appropriations, and the conditions that may be attached to them.

### About CIHR Operating Grants

The [CIHR Operating Grant Program \(OGP\)](#) provides operating funds to support research proposals in all areas of health research.

The mandate of [CIHR](#) is to excel, according to internationally accepted standards of scientific excellence, in the crea-

Through the [Operating Grant Program](#), grants will usually be awarded for a period of two to five years. Equipment will not be funded. [CIHR](#) will not be funding equipment through its Open Operating Grant competitions until further notice.

## Comments & Suggestions

The University of Ottawa [IMHR](#) welcomes any suggestions on improving our newsletter and making it more informative. To submit suggestions or material to appear in future editions of [Breaking Through](#), please contact [Dr. Owen Kelly](#), Research Associate, at 613.722.6521, ext. 6727, or by email at [okelly@rohcg.on.ca](mailto:okelly@rohcg.on.ca).