



# DEVOTION

Developmental Origins of Chronic Diseases in Children Network

***Together We can Dramatically Reduce The Burden & Costs Associated with Chronic Disease in Manitoba Children***



**Newsletters  
2017 Issue 2**

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## **Message from the Executive Director**

*“Spring is the time of plans and projects” Leo Tolstoy*

Spring is the time to make new plans and start new projects! With that in mind, the DEVOTION Network is announcing the **2017 Catalyst Grant Competition**. Using a two-tiered funding strategy with Seed Grants up to \$5,000 and Operating Grants up to \$40,000. The objectives of the Catalyst Grant Program are to enhance research capacity and expand understanding of the factors that program disease processes early in life. Types of research that fall under these objectives include discovery of pathways through which risk is transmitted from parent to child or developed early in life; the discovery of novel risk factors associated with chronic disease in children and youth using population-based research; and/or the development of interventions to prevent the long-term health consequences associated with prenatal and early life exposure to adverse conditions. The deadline for applications is **August 15, 2017**. Program guidelines and application forms can be found [here](#). Contact [kfung@chrim.ca](mailto:kfung@chrim.ca) for the password.

## **The 5th Canadian National Perinatal Research Meeting**

DEVOTION and the Children’s Hospital Research Institute of Manitoba are the proud organizers for the 2018 Meeting. We are expecting over 400 PIs and trainees at the Banff Centre between Feb 15 and 18 in 2018. An exciting line up of world-renowned visionary speakers will be featured at this year’s CNPRM. Details for the abstracts process will be announced by June, and registrations will be accepted shortly after. To stay current, please visit [cnprm.org](http://cnprm.org) regularly. For sponsorship and in-kind support, please contact Dr. Vernon Dolinsky via [vdolinsky@chrim.ca](mailto:vdolinsky@chrim.ca). For all other enquiries, please contact Tannis Erickson via [cnprm@chrim.ca](mailto:cnprm@chrim.ca).



## **Our events**

**DEVOTION Research Rounds** (May 25), Lynda Tjaden, Maureen Heaman and Rob Santos present "The policy implications of using data from PIIPC to influence changes in prenatal care in Winnipeg/Manitoba", 12 noon, Room 500, John Buhler Research Centre, Winnipeg MB

**DEVOTION 2017 Planning Retreat** (Jun 16-17), Hecla MB

**Child Health Research Day 2017** (Oct 3-5), Winnipeg MB

**DREAM Annual Symposium** (Nov 15-16), Bannatyne campus, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg MB

**The 5th Canadian National Perinatal Research Meeting** (Feb 15-18), Banff Centre, Banff AB

## Highlight — The Partners in Inner-City Integrated Prenatal Care (PIIPC) Project

Prenatal care is a commonly used health service with the potential to improve maternal and child health outcomes. Previous research demonstrated high rates of inadequate prenatal care (PNC) among women living in inner-city Winnipeg, and identified barriers, motivators and facilitators related to their use of PNC. Representatives of the **Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, Healthy Child Manitoba, Manitoba Health, and Nanaandawewigamig - First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba**, in collaboration with researchers from the University of Manitoba, developed the Partners in Inner-city Integrated Prenatal Care (PIIPC) Project in September 2012. The goal of PIIPC was to reduce inequities in use of PNC through implementation of four inter-related health system improvement initiatives: facilitated access to a PNC provider, involvement of midwives in Healthy Baby community support groups, street outreach to pregnant women through existing mobile van services, and a social marketing campaign. Incentives, transportation enablers and a pregnancy passport were important components of the project. The evaluation results of these initiatives indicate that the PIIPC project reduced barriers to care, improved communication and team work between providers and programs, and created positive changes in service delivery, resulting in improved use of PNC and better pregnancy outcomes for socio-economically disadvantaged inner-city women at risk of inadequate PNC. The results also suggest that the PIIPC intervention was associated with a decrease in inadequate PNC at a population level in the target areas. This project exemplifies how building successful partnerships involving researchers, clinicians, administrators, and policy makers can contribute to health system improvements.



Dr. Maureen Heaman's research interests include maternal health, utilization and quality of prenatal care, perinatal surveillance and epidemiology, risk factors for preterm birth, and psychosocial and behavioral aspects of pregnancy. Her program of research has the following aims: (1) to examine inequities and disparities in women's prenatal health, access to prenatal care, and quality of care, (2) to explore how these disparities intersect with other health determinants such as income, ethnicity, migration, and geography, and (3) to study the association of disparities in women's prenatal health and inequities in access to prenatal care and quality of care with adverse pregnancy outcomes. She is co-presenting with Lynda Tjaden and Rob Santos on May 25 at the DEVOTION Research Rounds.

### Researcher Highlight

**Dr. Maureen Heaman  
RN, PhD**



## CHILD Study — DEVOTION contributes to the Manitoba focus groups

The Canadian Healthy Infant Longitudinal Development (CHILD) Study is a national 5-year study following children from before birth to 5 years of age with a focus on the environment's impact on children's health. The Manitoba site of the CHILD study has an exceptional retention rate and we hope to figure out why this is and what we can do to maintain it. CHILD is conducting focus groups with a subset of participants to get an insight into their experiences with the study. The 2-hour long focus groups will contain 10 parents with children enrolled in the study. In a semi-structured discussion lead by an unbiased moderator, the parents are given an opportunity to discuss what they liked and didn't like, what they wish to see in possible future visits and how the CHILD study impacted their lives. This knowledge gained from the focus groups can serve as a platform to continue the study and provide a structure for other studies to follow.

## More Researchers' successes



Congratulations to Dr. Vern Dolinsky's new funding in \$287,702 from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada for his project entitled "***Regulation of cardiac mitochondrial homeostasis in heart failure by SIRT3.***"



Congratulations to Dr. Grant Hatch as the recipient of a \$298,366 Operating Grant from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada for his project entitled "***Regulation of cardiolipin biosynthesis in the heart***" from 2017 to 2020.

Congratulations to Dr. Andrew Halayko to the renewal of his **Chair in Chronic Lung Disease Pathology and Treatment**. This Chair's research will support the identification of unique markers of lung disease and the development of new therapies for chronic lung diseases, such as asthma.

Congratulations to members of the DEVOTION network on their recent publication in Molecular Metabolism entitled "***Uncoupling protein 2 regulates daily rhythms of insulin secretion capacity in MIN6 cells and male mice***". Drs. Christine Doucette and Vern Dolinsky are members of the DEVOTION network that contributed to this publication along with six other authors.

Congratulations to Dr. Meghan Azad of her recent publication in European Respiratory Journal entitled "***Breastfeeding, maternal asthma and wheezing in the first year of life: a longitudinal birth cohort study***". The research shows that breastfed babies have a reduced rate of wheezing, putting them at a lower risk for asthma later on. Lorena Vehling is the co-researcher, and the Sketch document can be found [here](#).

## Knowledge Translation Blog — Your Audience Knows Best, so Start Listening

As a Knowledge Exchange Coordinator, my job is intricately linked to communication. Some days I'm helping clinicians find ways to recruit new people to join a patient advisory group; other days I'm helping to disseminate research findings from a study. My experience (so far) has taught me that the knowledge end user (i.e. your audience) can offer you guidance before and while you're creating any type of communication material - so my advice is to start listening before you've finished a polished product that might or might not be the best way to reach your audience. An example is when I had to support the communication work for the **Aboriginal Youth Mentorship Program (AYMP)**. Originally these beautiful (but generic) postcards were made for sharing information about the program across all sites and recruit more kids. After the research team had a meeting with various community partners they realized that although people like what had been created, they wanted something more specific to their own community. The contact from one local community offered us guidance and advice for revamping their own postcards. Suggestions included replacing the general program logo with one that was locally made; exchanging a stock photo of an anonymous woman for a photo of youth who participated in the program, and including information about the history of how things got started and the local schools involved. Although we're currently still in the stages of developing this, it's been repurposed from its original version to better reflect the program locally. Within the context of Knowledge Translation, this type of adaptation is important for responding to local needs and preferences, increasing ownership and involvement and promoting relevance within research.

- Content provided by Leanne Dunne, DEVOTION's Knowledge Exchange Coordinator

## Trainees

Congratulations to Laetitia Guillemette for her DEVOTION-related manuscript, titled "*Intensive gestational glycemic management and childhood obesity: A systematic review and meta-analysis*", has been accepted by the International Journal of Obesity.

The manuscript can be accessed [here](#). Dr. Jon McGavock and Dr. Brandy Wicklow are the two other authors that are part of the DEVOTION network. Laetitia just presented in the CHRIM/DEVOTION Rounds in April on "Impact of maternal diabetes on child cardiometabolic health and potential protective factors: Preliminary results".



## Boldness Project

Nanaadawewigamig has entered into a partnership with the Winnipeg Boldness Project to create a tool called the North End Wellbeing Measure (NEWM) to measure wellness in the Point Douglas area with the North End of Winnipeg. The intent is to complement the Early Development Instrument. This commitment was made in response to direction provided through community and guide group conversations that indicated the need for a tool that could measure holistic success in addition to school readiness. Nanaadawewigamig developed wellbeing measurement tools for on-reserve communities, which has the potential to be adapted for use in urban contexts. Based on these existing measurement tools through the NEWM will be adapted to the context of families living in the neighbourhood and then validated/refined by community stakeholders through series of circles. The adapted tool will:

- \* Outline the purpose for measuring children's wellbeing;
- \* Identify an index outlining subjective and objective domains needing measurement;
- \* Produce objective and subjective questions reflecting a child-centred model that is holistic and inclusive of the perspectives of children, youth, mothers, fathers, extended family and other caregivers.

- *Content provided by Leona Star,  
DEVOTION's Indigenous Program  
Director*

## Other events

**Nibi (Water) Gathering** (May 24-27), Whiteshell Provincial Park MB

**Canadian Paediatric Society 94th Annual Conference** (May 31-Jun 3), Vancouver Convention Centre, Vancouver BC

**Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing Launch** (Jun 2), Bannatyne campus, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg MB

**3rd Annual Northern Great Plains Lipids Conference** (Jun 3-4), St. Boniface Albrechtsen Research Centre, Winnipeg MB

**US-DOHaD 2017 Meeting** (Sept 25-27), Detroit, Michigan

**10th World Congress on Developmental Origins of Health and Disease** (Oct 15-18), Rotterdam, the Netherlands

**Children's Hospital Research Institute of Manitoba Research Rounds**, Thursdays, Room 500 John Buhler Research Centre, Winnipeg MB

## DEVOTION

519 John Buhler Research Centre

715 McDermot Ave, Winnipeg MB, R3E 0W3, Canada

[terickson@chrим.ca](mailto:terickson@chrим.ca)

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