

LETTERS

“...it is curiosity, initiative, originality, and the ruthless application of honesty that count in research—much more than feats of logic and memory alone.” — Julian Huxley

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) celebrated its fifth anniversary on March 8, 2003. The past five years have proven to be both challenging and exceptionally rewarding for the Research Program.

We can look back at the years since the merging of our four founding partners and recognize the opportunities that we realized, even in the context of uncertainty in the early days. During this time, our research staff and scientists continued to do what they do best: investigate, explore and discover.

One of our goals following the merger was to create and implement a new departmental structure for the CAMH research program, to recognize biological, clinical and social levels of analysis, while also integrating mental health and addiction research. Although this was a challenging task, it was well worth the endeavour.

Over the past year, CAMH researchers have been awarded over \$28 million in extramural funds—and over the past five years, more than \$120 million—for research projects, studies, major equipment and other awards. As always, we are grateful to the hundreds of agencies, partnerships and philanthropic donations that have made this possible.

As we look forward to the coming years, we have set our sights on our goal of translating our research successes and findings into action for patients and clients. We will try to translate our discoveries from the bench to deliver new options and treatments at the bedside. We will also use our findings to inform our community work, health-care delivery and policy development. With these goals in mind, we hand the baton of this effort to our new incoming Vice-President of Research, Dr. Shitij Kapur.

Dr. Kapur is a psychiatrist and neuroscientist, a Canada Research Chair and a Professor of Psychiatry, recognized internationally for his work in understanding the mechanisms of antipsychotic action. His work extends from preclinical models in the laboratory to clinical research in the community. His research, which has made an important difference in the lives of people with schizophrenia, is a model for our translational efforts. His background, training, enthusiasm and energy will be ideal attributes as we take our research to the next level. Please join us in welcoming Dr. Kapur to this important leadership role.

It gives us great pleasure to acknowledge the excellent work of our researchers, and we are delighted to share with you this report that documents their achievements.



Franco J. Vaccarino, PhD
Executive Vice-President, Programs



Paul E. Garfinkel, MD, FRCPC(C)
President and Chief Executive Officer

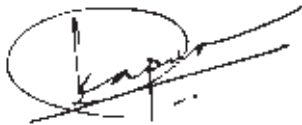


All times are interesting, but some times are more interesting than others—the field of mental health and addiction is in especially interesting times. The mapping of the human genome, the unprecedented power of neuroimaging technologies, the development of information technology that allows community-scale endeavours and the evidence-based approach to social and policy research promise great advances in the way we understand, prevent and care for substance use and mental health problems. It is thus an honour and a privilege to be chosen to lead our research efforts at such a time.

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) has always been committed to research. This commitment edged a notch higher when, in our strategic plan, CAMH committed to “discovering, sharing and applying new knowledge” as one of our core goals. In meeting this goal, our researchers have kept up their efforts. Our scientists brought in close to \$29 million in extramural funding for grants, contracts and awards. This accomplishment was spearheaded by two new Canada Research Chairs, awarded to Drs. Susan George and Anne Bassett. Dr. Art Petronis and I were the two recipients of the Ontario Mental Health Foundation’s Special Initiative Grants, a province-wide competition addressing special opportunities in the new millennium. We enhanced our research infrastructure, by installing the world’s highest resolution PET camera (HRRT) for clinical studies and by installing a new confocal scanning microscope with the help of the Ontario Innovation Trust and the Canada Foundation for Innovation. The Krembil Foundation and the CAMH Foundation provided a million-dollar award that led to the creation of the new Krembil Family Epigenetics Research Laboratory, under the direction of Dr. Art Petronis. These are just a few of the many notable accomplishments that are detailed in the pages that follow.

These successes did not happen by accident. They reflect the dedication of our scientists as well as the exemplary leadership provided by our outgoing Vice-President, Dr. Franco Vaccarino. Through a period when the four founding institutions merged to form CAMH, Dr. Vaccarino’s leadership provided a steady helm as our research program organized itself, retained its scientific leaders, built capacity and secured our future. For all these contributions, thank you Franco!

This report documents the research highlights of the past year, the grants and awards received by CAMH scientists and the publications of our findings. It is a testimony to the achievements of our scientists and their dedication to discovering and applying new knowledge. The strength of their achievements and the depth of their commitment give me confidence that research at CAMH will continue to flourish—we will continue to make a difference in the lives of patients, clients, families and communities.



Dr. Shitij Kapur
Vice-President, Research

