Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network Newsletter

Summer 2026

Sponsor:

CIHR IRSC
Canadian Institutes of Health Research | Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada

Newsletter Content:

Co-PIs:

- **Dr. Joy MacDermid (NPI)**
- **Dr. Trevor Birmingham**
- **Dr. Laurent Bouyer**
- **Dr. Deborah Marshall**
- **Dr. Rebecca Moyer**
- **Dr. Jean Sebastien Roy**
- **Dr. Aliki Thomas**
- **Catherine Hofstetter**

Announcements

Building Impactful MSK Health Research: Knowledge Mobilization Summer School

From July 6 to July 10, 2026, 39 graduate students and postdoctoral fellows representing 15 universities across 9 Canadian provinces came together at Western University for the ***Building Impactful MSK Health Research: Knowledge Mobilization (KM) Summer School***.

This national training initiative was presented by the **Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network** in collaboration with the **Western Bone and Joint Institute** and the **MSK Innovation Factory**, with additional trainee support from **OsNET** and **CAS Care Anywhere**.

The immersive five-day program featured 31 educational sessions delivered by 22 expert speakers and panelists, combining presentations, interactive workshops, panel discussions, networking opportunities, and hands-on activities. Trainees explored practical approaches for translating research into meaningful improvements in healthcare, policy, education, and community practice. Topics included:

- Foundations of Knowledge Mobilization
- Working with Persons with Lived Experience
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization
- Lay Writing, Health Literacy, and Research Communication
- Artificial Intelligence in Knowledge Mobilization

(Patient Representative)

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- Social Media and Research Websites
- Infographics and Arts-Based Knowledge Mobilization
- Scientific Presentation Design
- Knowledge Mobilization Plans for Grants
- Technology Transfer, Commercialization, and Entrepreneurship

By bringing together trainees, researchers, patient partners, knowledge users, communication specialists, and innovation experts from across Canada, the Summer School fostered **cross-disciplinary learning, collaboration, and practical skill development**.

More information: KM Summer School

MSK Rehab Research Network Meeting at The World Congress of Biomechanics 2026

On July 13, 2026, the MSK Rehab Research Network brought members together during the ***World Congress of Biomechanics 2026*** in Vancouver for an engaging discussion on current initiatives and the future of the Network.

Led by Michael Hunt, the meeting included updates on GaitNET and OpenWear, two collaborative initiatives aimed at supporting multicentre biomechanics research, improving access to wearable technologies, and promoting open and standardized research practices. Trainees also shared experiences from international exchanges, highlighting the value of technical training, mentorship, networking, and collaboration across institutions. The meeting concluded with a discussion on the Network's future priorities, including trainee support, funding opportunities, clinical and industry partnerships, knowledge translation, sustainability, and ways to strengthen the impact of MSK rehabilitation research.

Thank you to our presenters Michael Hunt, Janie Astephen Wilson, Jesse Charleton, Cinthuja Pathmanathan, Emma Ratke and all participants who contributed their ideas and helped guide the Network's next steps.

Innovative Technologies for the Assessment and Management of MSK Pain

On May 2, 2026, the Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network hosted an interactive symposium at the **Canadian Pain Society Annual Scientific Meeting**, bringing together researchers, clinicians, and trainees to explore emerging technologies in MSK pain rehabilitation and care.

The symposium, ***Innovative Technologies for the Assessment and Management of MSK Pain***, highlighted innovative approaches designed to enhance the assessment, management, and delivery of care for people living with MSK pain. Topics included:

- Virtual reality tools for persistent pain
- The ARISE augmented reality system for sensorimotor training
- Co-designed digital education approaches to support remote care

The symposium provided a valuable opportunity to connect researchers, clinicians, and trainees around the growing role of digital innovation in MSK pain care.

Thank you to our speakers, Jean-Sebastien Roy, Stevie Folgia, Joy MacDermid, and Felix Fiest; symposium chair Ronessa Dass; and attendees for contributing to the engaging discussions and making the session a success!

Recruiting Raters for REHAB+

Rehab+ is a free email alerting service and searchable database that can bring high-quality evidence to your attention.

Please help us identify the best evidence for you and your peers! If you are currently practicing as an occupational therapist or physical therapist in a clinical setting or as a clinical practice leader or manager directly supervising clinical care, we invite you to become a rater for the McMaster Online Rating of Evidence (MORE) system. The MORE system collects your vote on the relevance and newsworthiness of hot-off-the-press articles within your clinical specialty. We supply online articles according to your clinical interests, and you rate the articles on 2 simple scales. This takes about **5 to 10 minutes**. You can tell us how often you are willing to receive articles.

Benefits to becoming a MORE rater:

- Stay current with the best evidence that has been critically appraised by methodology experts at McMaster's HiRU.
- See what your peers are saying about the same article.
- Help build an evidence-based information service for you and your colleagues (**Rehab+**).
- Receive an annual summary of your ratings activity to include in your professional practice portfolio.

If you would like to join us as a rater, please click on this link and provide your name and email address. You can also include the names and email addresses of any colleagues whom you feel would also be interested in joining us as a MORE rater.

Visit REHAB+ here: Rehab+
If you have any questions about MORE Rehab: morerehab@mcmasterhkr.com

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Recent Award Winners

CIHR Project Grant Supports the ExRX Study

Congratulations to **Dr. Jill Hayden** (NPI, Dalhousie University) and her research team, including several MSK Rehab Research Network members, on receiving a CIHR Project Grant (Fall 2025) for the project *"Development and implementation of an exercise prescription toolkit for the management of chronic low back pain (ExRX Study)."*

The ExRX Study will develop, test, and evaluate an exercise prescription toolkit for healthcare providers and patients to support the use of exercise in the management of chronic low back pain. The project aims to provide practical, easy-to-use tools that help healthcare providers and patients confidently incorporate exercise into care.

Recent Honours & Recognition

We are delighted to celebrate **Dr. Deborah Marshall**, who will be officially inducted into the Royal Society of Canada (RSC) this year. Election to the Royal Society of Canada is one of Canada's highest academic honours, recognizing outstanding achievements and contributions to research and scholarship. Congratulations to Dr. Marshall on this exceptional achievement and well-deserved recognition!

We are pleased to congratulate **Dr. Heidi Cramm** on being elected as a 2026 Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS). This prestigious recognition celebrates her outstanding contributions to advancing the health and well-being of Veteran, military, first responder, public safety personnel, and their families.

We are pleased to congratulate **Dr. Julie Richardson** on being elected as a 2026 Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS). This prestigious recognition celebrates her contributions and achievements in health sciences.

Congratulations to **Dr. Jill Hayden** on receiving the 2025 Barer-Flood Prize in Health Services and Policy Research. The prize recognizes research excellence among Canadian senior-career investigators and is awarded to the highest-ranking Senior-Career Investigator in CIHR's Project Grant competition whose research falls within the mandate of the CIHR Institute of Health Services and Policy Research. This recognition accompanies Dr. Hayden's successful Fall 2025 CIHR Project Grant for the ExRX Study.

Current Network Plans – How to Get Involved

Trainee Committee

The Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network consists of over 160 trainees, and this number is growing. The purpose of the Trainee Committee is to provide a trainee perspective on Network initiatives including summer school content, trainee support opportunities, and planning new initiatives that will enhance and engage trainees within the Network. During the winter months, the Trainee Committee has assisted in planning the Writing and Publication Webinar Series, and the Building Impactful MSK Health Research: Knowledge Mobilization Summer School.
The Trainee Committee is accepting new members! If you are interested in joining the Trainee Committee, please reach out to the Network Coordinator at rehabnet@uwo.ca

Knowledge Translation Committee

The purpose of the Knowledge Translation (KT) Committee is to mobilize knowledge produced by Network members and to disseminate information about MSK rehab research in general. The KT Committee currently consists of 4 members and a patient partner from across Canada, who are passionate about KT. The KT Committee is looking for ways to leverage AI in lay summaries and augmenting REHAB+. In addition, the KT Committee has formed a Patient Partner Review Committee to assist in reviewing the AI lay summaries.
The KT Committee and Patient Partner Review Committee are always accepting new members! The KT committee meets virtually on an ad-hoc basis to plan and implement KT initiatives. If you are interested in joining the KT Committee or Patient Partner Review Committee, please email the Network Coordinator at rehabnet@uwo.ca

MSK Network Working Groups Highlights

GaitNET

The two main objectives of the initiative were to: 1) provide mechanisms and supports to enhance multi-centre, collaborative research in the area of human movement biomechanics, and 2) enhance the visibility and impact of the research being conducted in this area.

To the first objective, a number of standardized data collection and analysis procedures have been developed that will facilitate multi-centre biomechanics research. This includes analysis pipelines that are flexible in inputs but result in the ability to generate the same data outputs. These advances have already been implemented in at least three ongoing studies (including one that has received CIHR Project funding), and training in their use has been delivered at three sites across Canada (UBC, Western, Dalhousie).

To the second objective, a number of online and in-person events have been held over the past few years to bring members together to learn and discuss network initiatives. These include planning meetings and opportunities to share research ideas. A further network meeting is planned for the 2026 World Congress of Biomechanics in Vancouver. Finally, members of the GaitNet initiative have taken on leadership roles in the Human Movement Biomechanics Discussion Group within the Osteoarthritis Research Society International. This group is a natural evolution of GaitNet, with a wider scope and reach than GaitNet, but adhering to the same principles of collaboration and support.

2025 Team Development Supports

Developing Arthrogryposis Rehabilitation Expert Guidance - Dissemination through Partnership (DARE – Partnership)

Arthrogryposis multiplex congenita (AMC) is a rare musculoskeletal condition that can significantly affect mobility and daily functioning. Due to its rarity, access to specialized rehabilitation care and evidence-based guidance is often limited, placing additional burden on patients and families. This project aims to improve access to rehabilitation knowledge by supporting the dissemination and uptake of consensus-based recommendations for children and youth with AMC.

A multidisciplinary team across Canada, the United States, and Spain - comprising experts in rehabilitation, physiatry, developmental pediatrics, neurology, orthotics, and caregivers and adults with AMC - was established to advance dissemination of rehabilitation recommendations for children and youth. Between September and December 2025, the team refined e-learning modules on the rehabilitation recommendations integrating clinical and lived-experience perspectives. Priority audiences were identified to guide dissemination efforts, ensuring meaningful reach and impact. This collaboration generated multiple national and international conference abstracts and expanded partnerships with community organizations to deliver education sessions, strengthening knowledge translation across professional and community networks.

The Inclusive Rehabilitation Equity Assessment & Consensus Hub (iREACH) for Improving Cultural Safety Among Rehabilitation Providers in Canada

Since the funding was awarded, the project has progressed as planned, and several key foundational milestones have been achieved. The full study protocol has been completed, and the interview guides have been developed. The consent forms, participant information sheets, and recruitment materials are being finalized, with submission to research ethics anticipated by the end of this month. To support project implementation, a research assistant has been hired, with additional support from a Work Study student. In addition, members of the research team have met with the institutional research ethics office to discuss the planned submission and to ensure alignment with institutional requirements. The finalized study protocol is being prepared to be submitted for publication. Grant funds to date have been used primarily to support research personnel and essential project development activities. The research team meets on a biweekly basis to review progress, coordinate tasks, and plan next steps, supporting effective collaboration and timely advancement of the project.

2023 Team Development Supports

Working Group on Wearable Technologies for Movement Analysis (OpenWear)

In 2020, a national working group on wearable technologies for movement analysis was established to evaluate and support the integration of wearable sensing technologies in biomechanics and rehabilitation research. The group brings together experts from across the country (i.e., Quebec City, Vancouver, London, Sherbrooke) representing the fields of movement science, rehabilitation engineering, and biomedical technology. The subcommittee has met regularly since 2020, at intervals of 1 to 3 months, to advance work structured around three major activities: 1. A multicenter pilot study on spatiotemporal gait assessment using wearable sensors, 2. Development of custom hardware and software for long-term use in the network, and 3. Establishment of a community of practice to ensure sustainability and knowledge exchange.

Since the establishment of the OpenWear working group, several initiatives have advanced across the network. These include pilot testing of standardized protocols for spatiotemporal gait assessment using wearable sensors, development of in-house hardware and software solutions for movement analysis, and the creation of the OpenIMU data storage structure to facilitate standardized data sharing across research sites. The group has also contributed to grant submissions, obtained ethics approval for project activities, and supported the organization of the Wearables and Biomechanics Summer School (2025) in collaboration with the MSK Network and the Canadian Society of Biomechanics.

2022 Team Development Supports

A Multi-Centre Feasibility Study Assessing Shoe-Worn Insoles to Improve Clinical and Biomechanical Features of Knee Osteoarthritis

Knee osteoarthritis is a common and costly condition that can cause pain, reduced mobility, and long-term disability. Because many people with knee osteoarthritis also experience foot pain, this project was designed to examine whether shoe-worn insoles could serve as a practical, low-cost intervention to improve both clinical symptoms and biomechanical features of knee osteoarthritis in a multi-centre study. The project also aims to strengthen infrastructure for future collaborative trials across sites.

Recruitment of the proposed 30 participants has been met at the UBC site, and data collection there will be complete by Spring 2026. Approvals are being finalized to onboard the Western site by Summer 2026, with a proposed 5 additional participants necessary to finalize infrastructure and data collection and analysis procedures at the second site. This project will capitalize on shared resources and analysis pipelines developed as part of the GaitNet initiative.

A Pilot Feasibility Multicenter Study to Identify Risk Factors for Rapid Progression in those with Early Mild to Moderate Knee Osteoarthritis

The original objectives of this catalyst research were to develop the infrastructure and framework for a centralized gait data processing platform and repository to facilitate

members of the Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network to complete multi-center studies through GaitNET OA. Gait studies of lower limb osteoarthritis were the focus of this project to develop this initial framework, and the original focus area was intended to be to further refine standardized gait studies for early to moderate knee OA using traditional lab-based protocols across multiple sites across Canada. However, since the time of writing the catalyst application, markerless motion capture has advanced to the point where it is becoming the dominant potential technology for multi-site knee OA gait studies. Further to this, there have been advancements in establishing multi-site collaborative knee OA cohort gait studies in more advanced stages of knee OA before and after arthroplasty surgery. Specific to this catalyst grant and the transfer of PI to Dr. Wilson, from a feasibility perspective, the infrastructure and framework are now being developed for a multi-site knee OA gait cohort study of patients during the perioperative period for arthroplasty surgery.

Since the transition of project leadership in 2024, the project has advanced substantially toward establishing infrastructure for multi-site gait analysis using markerless motion capture technology. Markerless motion capture systems have been installed at clinical sites in Nova Scotia to enable standardized gait assessment within orthopaedic clinic environments. Feasibility and repeatability studies have been completed, with results demonstrating strong reliability of gait outcomes and publications appearing in the *Journal of Applied Biomechanics* and *Journal of Biomechanics* in 2025. The work has also supported the development of centralized data processing systems and data-sharing agreements to facilitate expansion of multi-site knee osteoarthritis gait cohort studies across Canada and internationally.

Do Psychosocial Factors Predict the Persistence of Shoulder Pain?

This funding made it possible to bring together researchers from Quebec and British Columbia in rehabilitation and psychology who shared a common interest in tendinopathy and psychosocial factors. Meetings were held to define a set of psychosocial factors to be used in tendinopathy research, and subsequently to define the methodology to test these variables in individuals with shoulder tendinopathy. In total, 143 participants were recruited with shoulder tendinopathy. The objective was to determine whether psychosocial factors—such as resilience, perceived stress, catastrophizing, anxiety, depression, pain self-efficacy, and social support—could explain the persistence of pain and disability. This work sheds light on the role of psychosocial factors in persistent tendinopathy and highlights the importance of positive pain-related beliefs in pain management. Notably, pain self-efficacy emerged as a key factor associated with recovery.

The project is now completed, and all funds have been fully expended. This work has resulted in four peer-reviewed publications, further advancing understanding of the role of psychosocial factors in the persistence and recovery of shoulder tendinopathy.

Previous Initiatives – Webinars and Resources

See below for a list of recent webinars and resources available to MSK Network members via our website:

Webinars

From Experience to Evidence: Partnering with Patients in Rehab Research

https://mskrehabnet.com/from-experience-to-evidence-partnering-with-patients-in-rehab-research/

From Data to Discovery: Writing the Results Section

https://mskrehabnet.com/from-data-to-discovery-writing-the-results-section-webinar/

Writing Smarter: Leveraging Technology for Impactful Publications

https://mskrehabnet.com/webinars/writing-smarter-leveraging-technology-for-impactful-publications-webinar/

Resources

AI Lay Summary Tool

https://mskrehabnet.com/patients/ai-lay-summaries/

Slideshow Presentations from the Building Impactful MSK Health Research: Knowledge Mobilization Summer School 2026

https://mskrehabnet.com/trainee-support-opportunities/building-impactful-msk-health-research-knowledge-mobilization-summer-school-2026/

List of Programs Curated to Assist the Journal Writing Process

https://mskrehabnet.com/research/program-list-journal-writing-process/

AI Lay Summary Assistance Tool

The MSK Network has updated its AI Lay Summary process to reflect recent advances in AI technology. The previous AI Lay Summary Tool relied on an older model and has now been replaced with a simpler and more flexible workflow that uses modern AI platforms such as Microsoft Copilot, ChatGPT, Gemini, or Claude.

Instead of uploading articles into a dedicated tool, members can now generate lay summaries by copying the full text of their research article and using the MSK Network

lay summary prompt with one of these AI platforms. If you would like assistance generating a lay summary, requesting patient partner review, or hosting a lay summary on the Network website, please contact the Network Coordinator at rehabnet@uwo.ca.

The Network Coordinator will create the lay summary and send it to you for review. Please also inform the Network Coordinator if you would like to host the lay summary on the Network website.

Lay summary procedure:

1. Copy the full text of the research article.
2. Use the MSK Network lay summary prompt.
3. Paste the article text and prompt into Copilot (https://m365.cloud.microsoft/chat) or another AI platform.
4. Review and edit the generated lay summary carefully for accuracy.
5. Create an AI-generated image via Gemini, ChatGPT, Canva, or another platform.
6. Send the lay summary to the authors of the article to have them review for accuracy and appropriateness.
7. Reach out to the Network Coordinator rehabnet@uwo.ca to be connected to the Patient Partner Review Committee to review the lay summary and image.
8. Make any final edits and include the required acknowledgement statement.
9. All summaries produced using the MSK Network AI lay summary process must include the acknowledgement statement:
    - "*This summary is based on a scientific paper that was summarized with assistance of AI language and image support, and then revised by researchers, content experts, and patient partner.*"

For detailed instructions and accessing the prompt please visit:
https://mskrehabnet.com/patients/ai-lay-summaries/

The Network is currently creating lay summaries for all MSK rehab articles in REHAB+. To access these lay summaries please visit our website:
https://mskrehabnet.com/patients/ai-lay-summaries/

Network Support Opportunities

Trainee Conference Travel Support – June 2026

The second cycle of the Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network's 2026 Trainee Conference Travel Support opened in June to support trainees presenting their MSK rehabilitation research at conferences through poster, oral, or other presentation formats.

The application period closed on August 31, 2026, and submitted applications are now being reviewed. Successful applicants will receive support toward eligible conference-related expenses based on the program's reimbursement tiers.

Thank you to all trainees who applied. We look forward to supporting Network trainees in

sharing their research at conferences across Canada and internationally.

More info: Call for Trainee Conference Travel Support 2026 (June)

Network Membership

We are happy to welcome the new members: Rose-Marie Bourget, Jade Kiss, Tania Lam, Alicia Wright, Siobhan Schabrun, Angelica Lang, Ryan Degan, Jean Michel Acquin, Jamon Couch, Laurent Ballaz

We are always accepting new memberships from researchers, partners, patients, and trainees who are involved in MSK health research. See the link below for details and the application form:

https://mskrehabnet.com/about/

We encourage our current Network Members to invite colleagues, partners, or team members who may be interested in joining the Network. Membership is open to researchers, collaborators, partners, trainees, or anyone with an interest in MSK rehab research.

Inquiries or applications can be forwarded to the network coordinator at rehabnet@uwo.ca

Network Members

A complete list of network members can be found at: i-memo - MSK Network Members

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External Opportunities

PhD Student Opportunity – Low Back Pain & Lumbar Spine Osteoarthritis

A research-based PhD opportunity at **Laval University** in Quebec City is available for a candidate interested in understanding the mechanisms underlying **low back pain and lumbar spine osteoarthritis**.

The project aims to improve our understanding of why some individuals with lumbar spine osteoarthritis experience pain while others do not. The research will involve comprehensive assessments of brain and spinal function, pain sensitivity, spinal mobility, inflammatory biomarkers, and other factors associated with the pain experience.

The successful candidate will join the **Neurodos Research Laboratory**, located within the **Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Rehabilitation and Social Integration (Cirris)** and directed by **Professor Hugo Masse-Alarie**, a physiotherapist and researcher whose work focuses on trunk motor control, the effects of pain on motor control, and non-invasive and non-pharmacological approaches to chronic low back pain.

Location: Laval University, Quebec City, Canada
Program: Research-based PhD degree
Research areas: Low back pain, lumbar spine osteoarthritis, pain mechanisms, motor control, and rehabilitation

Interested candidates can contact:
Professor Hugo Masse-Alarie: hugo.masse-alarie@fmed.ulaval.ca

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PhD Student Opportunity – Integrative Biomechanics for Osteoarthritis Prevention and Treatment

The Applied Musculoskeletal Biomechanics Lab at the University of British Columbia (UBC) School of Kinesiology is seeking a PhD student to join the team in September 2027.

The PhD project will focus on using biomechanics to advance osteoarthritis prevention and treatment. Potential research areas include personalized biomechanical and neuromusculoskeletal modelling, wearable sensing, gait modification, joint mechanics and pain, and individual responses to biomechanical treatments.

The successful candidate will work under the supervision of **Dr. Jesse Charlton** in an interdisciplinary environment spanning biomechanics, rehabilitation, engineering, pain science, clinical research, and health technology.

Position Details:

Funding: ≥ $40,000 CAD/year for up to four years
Start date: September 2027
Application deadline: October 15, 2026, at 11:59 PM PT
Location: UBC School of Kinesiology, Vancouver, Canada

Application: Application Link

Applicants should have a strong interest and experience in human biomechanics, motion capture, and biomechanical modelling of gait. Experience with wearable sensing, programming, signal processing, and clinical research is considered an asset.

For questions about this opportunity, please contact **Dr. Jesse Charlton** at jesse.charlton@ubc.ca.

Help Shape the Future of Post-Traumatic Osteoarthritis (PTOA) Research

The MSK Network is pleased to share an opportunity to participate in an international research study led by researchers at the **University of British Columbia**, in collaboration with **La Trobe University** and the Osteoarthritis Research Society International (OARSI) Post-Traumatic Osteoarthritis (PTOA) Discussion Group.

The study aims to identify the most important research priorities for post-traumatic osteoarthritis (PTOA) - osteoarthritis that develops after a joint injury. The findings will help guide future research and care to better reflect the needs and perspectives of those affected by or involved in PTOA.

The research team is seeking diverse perspectives, including people who have experienced a joint injury or are living with PTOA, caregivers, healthcare providers, researchers, policy-makers, and representatives from relevant organizations.

Participation involves two online surveys (~1 hour total), completed 2–3 months apart.

Learn more and check your eligibility: Poster

If you are interested in participating: Survey Link

Questions? Contact jenna.schulz@ubc.ca.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jackie Whittaker, University of British Columbia.

Share Your Perspectives on Biomechanics in Osteoarthritis Research and Clinical Care

The **Osteoarthritis Research Society International (OARSI) Human Movement Biomechanics Discussion Group** is conducting a global survey to understand how researchers and healthcare professionals perceive and use biomechanics in osteoarthritis research and clinical care.

The survey aims to identify priorities for future research, training, and resource development, and explore factors that influence the use or non-use of biomechanics.

Researchers conducting osteoarthritis research and healthcare professionals involved in osteoarthritis care are invited to participate. You do not need to be a biomechanist or currently use biomechanics - perspectives from both users and non-users are equally important.

Global survey | Approximately 10–20 minutes

Learn more: Poster Announcement

If you are interested in participating: Survey Link

Please consider participating and sharing this opportunity with relevant colleagues and professional networks.

Prospective Student Seeking Research Position – Dr. Norio Tomita

Dr. Norio Tomita recently completed a PhD in Biomedical Engineering at the Université de Montréal, with research focused on the mechanical and acoustic properties of the thoracolumbar fascia in individuals with non-specific low back pain.

Dr. Tomita's work uses quantitative ultrasound methods to investigate the thoracolumbar fascia and its potential applications in evaluating interventions such as manual therapy and acupuncture. Dr. Tomita has also recently published findings from this work in European Radiology Experimental.

With a background in engineering and ultrasound diagnostic equipment development, Dr. Tomita is interested in continuing research related to fascia, musculoskeletal health, and ultrasound-based assessment methods and is currently seeking opportunities to collaborate with or join a research team.

For more information or to connect with Dr. Tomita: norio.tomita@gmail.com

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Training or Professional Development Opportunities

Introductory Course on Responsible Research Assessment

The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) has launched a free, self-paced online course introducing the principles of responsible research assessment. The course explores how research quality and impact are evaluated and provides practical guidance on improving assessment practices in funding, hiring, and promotion processes. This topic aligns with ongoing discussions around research evaluation in major funding agencies such as CIHR.

Learn more: Introductory Course on Responsible Research Assessment

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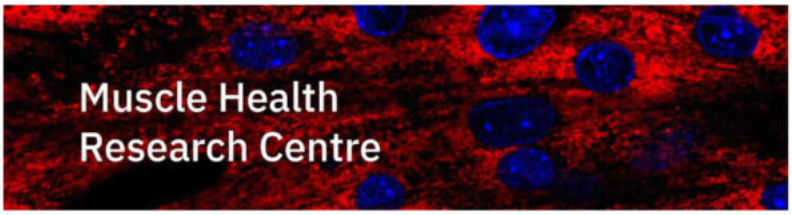
Muscle Health Research Centre Seminar Series

The Muscle Health Research Centre at York University will be hosting a variety of Zoom seminars. All seminars begin at 3pm ET unless otherwise stated.

Registration information is available here: MHRC Seminar Series



MHRC Seminar Series Zoom Academic Year 2026/ 2027 Schedule

(all Seminars start at 3:00 pm EST unless otherwise specified)

Friday Date	Presenter	Affiliation	Seminar Title
Sept 18	Dr. Fabio Rossi	UBC	Stromal cells and muscle regeneration: from basic mechanisms to therapeutic targeting
Oct 30 (in person and ZOOM)	Dr. Emanuela Pannia	Toronto Hospital for Sick Children (Sick Kids)	TBD
Nov 20 (in person and ZOOM	Dr. Dmitry Rozenberg	University Health Network	TBD
Dec 4	Dr. Troy Hornberger	University of Wisconsin	TBD
Jan 22 9:30AM	Dr. Ferdinand von Walden	Karolinska Institute	TBD
Feb 26	Dr. Sarah Dick	Queen's University	TBD
Mar 12	Dr. Robert Lakin	York University	TBD
April 16	Dr. George Mochizuki	York University	TBD

VIVA Feasibility Study: Advancing Rehabilitation After Vertebral Fracture

Vertebral fractures are the most common type of fracture due to osteoporosis, yet evidence to guide non-pharmacological management following a vertebral fracture remains limited. The Virtual Intervention for Vertebral FrActures (VIVA) feasibility study explored the feasibility of a future full-scale randomized controlled trial evaluating a virtual rehabilitation intervention for people with vertebral fractures.

Conducted between January 2025 and March 2026, the study randomized 34 participants to either receive the VIVA intervention immediately or join a waitlist control group. The study successfully met its feasibility criteria for recruitment, adherence, and retention. Participants attended 97% of scheduled rehabilitation sessions, and 31 of 34 participants completed the final assessment.

These findings support the feasibility of a future full-scale randomized controlled trial and provide important insights to guide its study design and outcome selection.

The VIVA feasibility trial was funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR; reference SCT-191277).

VIVA Investigator Team: Alexandra Papaioannou, Suzanne N. Morin, Jennifer A. Watt, Raheem B. Kherani, Sheila Brien, Larry Funnell, Lehana Thabane, Lauren A. Beaupre, Jenna C. Gibbs, Heather Keller, Caitlin McArthur, Matteo Ponzano, Sonia Singh, Sharon Straus, Jenny Thain, Zachary J. Weston, Timothy H. Wideman, and Christopher D. Witiw.

The team also acknowledges its partner organizations: Osteoporosis Canada, Ontario Osteoporosis Strategy, and the Seniors' Health Division of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association.

MSK Research in the News: Supporting Caregivers After Fragility Fracture

Research led by **Dr. Joanna Sale** and colleagues at Unity Health Toronto is drawing attention to the emotional burden experienced by caregivers of individuals with fragility fractures and the need for greater support for caregivers.

The research, funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), was recently featured by Unity Health Toronto and received national media coverage on Global News. The Global News story featured study authors Kathryn Hodwitz, Joanna Sale, and Jennifer Watt, discussing the experiences of caregivers and the importance of recognizing and addressing caregiver burden.

More info about the research: Research paper

Watch the Global News coverage: Global News Video

Publications and Presentations

Recent Publications

Eden Daniel, Luciana Macedo, Ayse Kuspinar, Lisa C. Carlesso.
The association of movement-evoked pain with cognitive and emotional factors: A cross-sectional study
Journal of Osteoarthritis and Cartilage Open
2026
Doi: 10.1016/j.ocarto.2026.100855

Tomita N.
Investigating mechanical and acoustic properties of the thoracolumbar fascia in non-specific low back pain.

Université de Montréal
2026
https://umontreal.scholaris.ca/items/2ebb7094-9f54-41e1-8d66-ad1801317206

Tomita N, Croteau D, Roy-Cardinal M-H, Choinière M, Benhaïm L, Raby S et al.
Quantitative ultrasound evaluation of the thoracolumbar fascia after manual and acupuncture therapies: an exploratory mechanistic randomized controlled trial with a sequential within subject phase.
European Radiology Experimental
2026
https://doi.org/10.1186/s41747-026-00754-7

Labban W, Forero J, Westover L, Sommerfeldt M, Nathanail S, Beaupre L.
Dynamic postural stability in individuals with ACL reconstruction versus healthy controls with insights into sex differences: A cross-sectional study.
PLoS One.
2026
Doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0351496. PMID: 42284358

Christoffel L, Beaupre L, Nathanail S, et al.
Clearance Criteria for Determining Eligibility for Force Plate Testing After Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction: A Scoping Review.
Journal of Medicina (Kaunas)
2026
Doi: 10.3390/medicina62030503 PMID: 41901584

Hopkins C, Herrmann K, Vette AH, Michael Goplen C, Beaupre L.
The association of objective gait measures with patient-reported outcome measures and physical performance following total knee arthroplasty: A systematic review.
Journal of Knee
2026
Doi: 10.1016/j.knee.2026.104471.