



Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada, presented the Member insignia of the Order of Canada to Robert Stephen Hogg, C.M. (Sgt Johanie Maheu, Rideau Hall © OSGG, 2018)

## Celebrated BC-CfE researcher Dr. Robert Hogg named to Order of Canada

Dr. Robert ("Bob") Hogg was officially inducted into the Order of Canada on February 1st, an accomplishment he doesn't just see as an award but as a national responsibility. "It's very humbling, especially when you start to meet other people who have been inducted, to be a part of that group," he said.

Dr. Hogg's work has strongly influenced our understanding of barriers to accessing HIV testing, treatment and care in Canada and the world. "[The BC-CfE] has always had a role of providing research not just for research's sake, but research that will have an impact. I want to make sure that the research I do will have an impact for those living with HIV in BC and even across Canada," said Dr. Hogg, during a small break between meetings at his downtown BC-CfE office.

In some ways, the hardworking Dr. Hogg is unexpectedly following his father, Dr. James Hogg, who received the Order of Canada for influencing medical understanding of the lung condition COPD. Ever humble and modest, Dr. Bob Hogg says filling in his father's footsteps was never part of the plan.

Nonetheless, from his start as a postdoctoral fellow, Dr. Hogg has had a profound influence on the infrastructure supporting people living with HIV in BC. In 1992, as a demographer with an interest in the population aspects of HIV, Dr. Hogg helped establish the database for the BC-CfE's Drug Treatment Program (DTP). At first, this was simply a filing cabinet to house clinical trial records. Dr. Hogg helped guide the DTP's transformation into a secure database of individuals from across the province who are accessing HIV treatment, which still informs a wealth of studies.

Dr. Hogg, who also serves as a professor in the Simon Fraser University Faculty of Health Sciences, is a prolific researcher and a well-respected mentor. Throughout his career, he has taught over 3,000 students and supervised more than 50 graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

As Director of BC-CfE's Population Health and Epidemiology program from 1992 to 2014 and Senior Scientist since 2015, Dr. Hogg has been awarded more than \$50 million in grants for province- and Canada-wide studies. In over 500 articles, his published research has laid the groundwork for transforming how we perceive, research and treat HIV.

Trained in anthropology, demography and epidemiology, Dr. Hogg has investigated barriers to HIV treatment, health and mental health challenges faced by marginalized people living with HIV, the unique needs and challenges of women living with HIV, and the increasingly emerging issue of people aging with HIV. Dr. Hogg's study in the leading medical journal *The Lancet* was among the first to demonstrate that lower socioeconomic status decreased length of survival among men living with HIV. Even in his earliest research, Dr. Hogg was crafting questionnaires and surveys "to see [HIV] as more than just a clinical condition, but to see it from a broader social, cultural point of view."

"Dr. Robert Hogg is a world-leading scientist and his contributions are among those that helped to create and refine new approaches to HIV treatment and care," said Dr. Julio Montaner, Executive Director and Physician-in-Chief of the BC-CfE.

Dr. Hogg's research provides important support to the case for expanding access to HIV treatment, supporting the made-in-BC **Treatment as Prevention**® (TasP®) strategy as the most effective means of curbing the global HIV epidemic.

Strategies inspired by TasP® can now be applied to other contagious or socially contagious diseases, such as hepatitis C and substance use, to achieve **Targeted Disease Elimination**® (TDE®). For example, the BC-CfE's BOOST initiative is looking to apply similar methods to increasing engagement in lifesaving opioid agonist treatment (read more on reverse page).

Dr. Hogg says the most significant progress since he started researching HIV at the epidemic's peak in the 1990s is that people with HIV are living longer due to modern antiretroviral treatment. "Often, you would meet [people living with HIV] at one meeting, and then the next meeting they would be in hospital, and the next they would be dead," he said.

Even in light of such important progress, it's crucial scientists are dedicated to dispelling myths and misconceptions. "When you talk to people that are in the general community, they just assume that people [living with HIV] are being treated and cured," said Dr. Hogg.

"HIV is not going away, and the TasP® approach, pioneered by the BC-CfE, ensures that we have an opportunity to significantly reduce the burden for future generations, said Dr. Hogg. "In an exciting advance, the lessons we have acquired through TasP® can now be applied to TDE®."

» "Bob instills a desire to 'do good work with great people' in all of his mentees (a mantra he has said to me many times over the years). His humble nature and desire to see his trainees succeed is just one of the countless reasons he is among the best researchers in his field."

— Dr. Kate Salters BC-CfE Research Scientist



## Teams from across the province share ideas to BOOST engagement in lifesaving OAT



BC-CfE's provincial BOOST Collaborative is following on the heels of the successful Vancouver-based BOOST Collaborative. BOOST is inspired by the made-in-BC Treatment as Prevention® strategy and supports a Targeted Disease Elimination® (TDE®) approach. This means using tools and strategies that have been proven through the work of the BC-CfE in curbing HIV transmissions. The TDE® strategy can address contagious diseases and diseases with a social contagion factor, such as substance use disorders.

The first phase of the BOOST Collaborative doubled retention rates in the lifesaving opioid agonist treatment (OAT) for substance use disorders. Among participating Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) clinics, the number of individuals retained at three months made a significant jump — from three out of ten to seven out of ten.

The provincial expansion of BOOST has its eye on even greater goals, aiming to ensure that 95% of people with opioid use disorder have an active OAT prescription and 95% of those on OAT are retained at three months (or longer).

On February 14th, BOOST Collaborative teams from across the province—including Prince George, Kelowna, Chilliwack, Victoria, Nanaimo, Surrey and Vancouver's Downtown Eastside—met for the first learning session in Vancouver. Teams have been tasked with creatively generating tactics and strategies, and even morale-boosting team names, in order to enhance their OAT treatment programs.

Dr. Laura Knebel was part of the pilot BOOST team at the Downtown Community Health Clinic (DCHC) in the heart of the Downtown Eastside. There was trepidation among her staff in the early days of the initiative. Quality improvement tasks, while only intended to take less than 10% of a clinic's staff time, seemed overwhelming given competing demands.

Looking back on the year-long pilot, Dr. Knebel said the data collected for its quality improvements efforts helped pinpoint needs, while also showing encouraging signs of success. After finding that about half of DCHC

clients did not have active OAT prescriptions, clinicians worked to identify a number of clients that could possibly be re-engaged in treatment. DCHC staff are now applying the learnings from BOOST to help clients with other conditions.

BOOST Lead and BC-CfE Senior Medical Director Dr. Rolando Barrios urged teams to take small steps wherever they saw opportunity, rather than waiting for reams of data. "You don't need perfect data to act," said Dr. Barrios.

### Provincial BOOST Collaborative

In 2010, the BC-CfE launched the STOP HIV/AIDS® Structured Learning Collaborative (the "Collaborative") to improve the quality of HIV care and services, improve patient engagement & increase sustainment in care, and strengthen partnerships in care. As a result of the BC-CfE's Collaborative, all participating teams saw improvements: namely, they implemented their learnings to deliver proactive and organized needs-based HIV care, with supports for patient self-management. The STOP HIV/AIDS® Collaborative provided the model for the BC-CfE's BOOST Collaborative to work with provincial Health Authorities to help engage more individuals in treatment for opioid use disorder through opioid agonist treatment.

Research supports the BOOST approach, showing the risk of morbidity and mortality decreases by 80% for individuals on effective OAT. Further, access to OAT has also been shown to drastically reduce levels of crime associated with drug use.

The concept of BOOST is reminiscent of the fable about the tiny mouse who pulled the thorn out of the elephant's foot. The provincial BOOST Collaborative Teams are taking on the work of implementing small programmatic changes to improve access to and sustainment in care—and these can have a big impact. This could include administrative tasks of improving intake forms or adding reminder calls to clients.

## NEWS

## New St. Paul's Hospital receives \$1 billion in funding from the BC Government

On February 16th, the BC Government announced \$1 billion in funding for the new St. Paul's Hospital, set to open in 2026 at 1002 Station Street. The business case for the new hospital has been approved by the government, cementing the future of the innovative facility to serve as model for hospital care in the province.

"For over 125 years, people in Vancouver and across British Columbia have benefited from the health care provided by St. Paul's Hospital," said BC Premier John Horgan. "Today, we are safeguarding these life-saving services by taking action to build a brand new St. Paul's Hospital that will serve more people and offer better access to the specialized care people need."



BC Premier Hon. John Horgan and Dr. Julio Montaner

The new \$1.9 billion facility will provide integrated, innovative and patient-centred care. Carried forward from the current St. Paul's, research and innovation will play key roles. Specialized HIV care will continue to be

offered, along with chronic disease management, mental health and substance use disorders, end-of-life care, Indigenous health, community care and outreach programs, and more.

"We are very excited to see how a new St. Paul's facility with cutting-edge technology will build the capacity of the BC-CfE to provide clinical care and medical research," said Dr. Julio Montaner, Executive Director and Physician-in-Chief with the BC-CfE.

The new hospital will be located in Vancouver's False Creek Flats area, three kilometres from the current hospital site on Burrard Street. It will continue to serve residents of Vancouver and BC, with a capacity for up to 548 beds. The site will be home to several leading provincial programs and referral centres, including heart and lung care, renal, eating disorders and specialty surgeries and transplants.

## Dr. Julio Montaner receives Senate 150th Anniversary Medal



Dr. Julio Montaner and Senator Mobina Jaffer

On February 2nd, BC-CfE Executive Director and Physician-in-Chief, Dr. Julio Montaner received the Senate 150th Anniversary Medal for his exemplary leadership and lifelong contribution to improving the health and lives of British Columbians. The Senate 150th Anniversary Medal commemorates the first time senators came to Ottawa to sit in Parliament, on November 6, 1867. Medals are awarded to Canadians or permanent residents who make their communities, provinces or territories a better place to live.

Senator Mobina Jaffer, a human rights activist and accomplished lawyer representing the province of British Columbia in the Senate of Canada, championed Dr. Montaner for the award.

At a December 2018 event, Senator Jaffer joined Dr. Montaner and other advocates to call for global government leaders to step up their fight against HIV and AIDS, by increasing their contributions to the Global Fund.

## LECTURES & EVENTS

### HIV Care Rounds

**Title: Update on BC-CfE Clinical Laboratory Testing Programs**

Speaker: Dr. Chanson Brumme

Wednesday, March 27, 2019, 12–1PM

Conference Room 6, Providence Level 1, St. Paul's Hospital

### Spring HIV/Antiretroviral Update

Monday, May 6, 8:30AM–4:45PM

Grand Ballroom-North Tower Sheraton Wall Centre

Online registration: <http://www.cfenet.ubc.ca/events/spring-hivantiretroviral-update-2019>

For more information, contact us at [Education@cfenet.ubc.ca](mailto:Education@cfenet.ubc.ca) or visit our website at <http://education.cfenet.ubc.ca>

## BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS

- > Improve the health of British Columbians with HIV through comprehensive research and treatment programs;
- > Develop cost-effective research and therapeutic protocols;
- > Provide educational support programs to health-care professionals;
- > Monitor the impact of HIV/AIDS on B.C. and conduct analyses of the effectiveness of HIV-related programs.

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1.800.665.7677

St. Paul's Hospital Pharmacy Hotline  
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