



Dr. Julio Montaner,
Director, BC-CfE

Dr. Montaner to be inducted into Canadian Medical Hall of Fame for leadership in combatting HIV/AIDS

One of Canada's 'medical heroes' for his contribution to health in Canada and the world, says organization's chair

BC-CfE director Dr. Julio Montaner is to be inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame for his international leadership and clinical advancements in combatting HIV/AIDS.

The Canadian Medical Hall of Fame is dedicated to "celebrating the accomplishments of medical heroes." Dr. Montaner, Director of the BC-CfE and past president of the International AIDS Society, will join the company of notable Canadians who have made their mark in improving global health outcomes, including Drs. Fred Banting, Norman Bethune, Charles Best and Michael Smith.

"The Canadian Medical Hall of Fame is proud to count Dr. Julio Montaner among Canada's illustrious medical heroes," says Dr. Jean Gray, chair of The Canadian Medical Hall of Fame. "His contribution to health in Canada and the world is well documented and a wonderful example of the kind of passion, diligence and innovative thinking displayed by our laureates."

The Canadian Medical Hall of Fame laureates are individuals whose outstanding contributions to medicine and the health sciences have led to extraordinary improvements in human health. Laureates are considered pioneers in their field, role models to young Canadians to pursue careers in health

science, as well as a source of inspiration for all Canadians for their important contribution to global health.

Of special note, Dr. Montaner joins one of his mentors as a laureate, the namesake of The James Hogg Research Centre at St. Paul's Hospital. Then director of UBC-St. Paul's Pulmonary Research Laboratory, Dr. Hogg spoke at a medical conference that Dr. Montaner was attending in Uruguay in 1979. Dr. Hogg offered the young Argentinian student a fellowship at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver. Dr. Montaner was in B.C. by the summer of 1981, became the hospital's chief resident in 1984, and took the position of director of AIDS research in 1985.

Dr. Montaner was recognized for a career dedicated to the care and management of HIV infected individuals and those at risk of HIV, creating advancements in the treatment and prevention of HIV and AIDS.

"I am very honoured and humbled to be chosen for this award," says Dr. Montaner. "I am convinced with the help of my colleagues, our government and the public, we can bring this epidemic to its knees, not just in B.C. but worldwide. Indeed, we are on our way in B.C. and our strategy is the model the rest of the world is adopting. I share this acknowledgment with my colleagues at the BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS, whose contributions helped to create and refine new

approaches to HIV and AIDS treatment. Our success in reducing new HIV infections, reducing morbidity and mortality would not be possible without them, and the support of our B.C. government, the University of British Columbia, Providence Health Care Research Institute, and Providence Health Care. All are partners in the fight against HIV and AIDS."

In 1996, Dr. Montaner led the research team that reported the success of triple drug therapy at the International AIDS Conference in Vancouver. Triple drug therapy (also known as highly active antiretroviral therapy - HAART) and viral load monitoring became the new international standard of care. The New York Times called triple drug therapy a "clear watershed in the treatment of AIDS."

A decade later, Dr. Montaner's presentation of HAART as a means to not only treat a patient but to prevent transmission made headlines at the 2006 International AIDS Conference in Toronto.

The successful implementation of the Treatment as Prevention strategy (TasP) in B.C. was heralded as the "scientific breakthrough of the year" by *Science* (2011); one of the top breakthroughs by *Time* (2011) and *Reader's Digest* (2012).



» This is a very inspiring recognition of our research to advance social and health equity at home and abroad. I hope to build on my continuing work with the BC-CfE and UBC to push forward science-driven policy and practice in sexual health and HIV/AIDS."

- Dr. Kate Shannon, Director of the Gender and Sexual Health Initiative at BC-CfE, on appointment to Canada Research Chair in Global Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS at the University of British Columbia. See story page 2.



Dr. Shannon named Canada Research Chair

Dr. Kate Shannon, Director of the Gender and Sexual Health Initiative (GSHI) at BC-CfE, has been given the prestigious honour of being named the Canada Research Chair in Global Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS at the University of British Columbia (UBC). Dr. Shannon is an Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of AIDS and Associate Faculty in the School of Population and Public Health at UBC. Her research on HIV/AIDS, gender, policy, and health equity has been recognized nationally and internationally.

As Director of GSHI, under the leadership of Dr. Julio Montaner, Director of the BC-CfE, Dr. Shannon leads a research program on gender inequities, sexual health, HIV and sexually transmitted infections and barriers to care among marginalized populations – including sex workers, youth and women.

Dr. Shannon's research has received international recognition for promoting evidence-based policy changes. Dr. Shannon has contributed expert evidence and legal interventions in the Missing Women's Commission Inquiry and the Canada v. Bedford case at the Supreme Court of Canada. The court made a

unanimous decision to strike down federal anti-prostitution laws to ensure the safety, health and human rights of sex workers.

"I offer my most sincere congratulations to Dr. Shannon on being named Canada Research Chair," said Dr. Montaner. "Her dedication to highlighting gender issues in the study of the care and treatment of those with HIV and AIDS has made an invaluable impact to the public health field. Her research in these areas has helped to inform policy to benefit the wellbeing of some of the most marginalized populations in Canada and the world."

In the global health field, Dr. Shannon has made significant contributions. She has acted as a consultant with the departments of reproductive health and HIV with the World Health Organization (WHO) and was a member of the WHO 2012 Guidelines Group for HIV Prevention, Treatment, and Care among Sex Workers in low- and middle-income countries. Dr. Shannon was lead author on a landmark paper about the potential of decriminalization of sex work in Kenya, India and Canada to reduce rates of HIV among sex workers and clients that was widely cited by media, including *The Washington Post*.

Hogg-led research team awarded \$2.7M for major study on HIV and aging

BC-CfE's Dr. Robert Hogg and a team of investigators from across the country have been awarded a \$2.7 million grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) to expand Canada's only longitudinal study of more than 10,000 HIV-positive individuals accessing antiretroviral therapy in Canada.

The study, known as Canadian Observational Cohort (CANOC) Collaboration, has been examining data from patient databases across B.C., Ontario, and Quebec. The national research team has been studying regional differences in viral load testing between provinces, issues of co-infection with HIV and hepatitis C, and factors associated with late initiation of antiretroviral treatment, among other clinically relevant topics. The team has identified a gap in national active surveillance of HIV disease and co-morbid conditions, and will use the new funding and resources to establish the CANOC Centre.

New projects will assess the impact of HIV on aging-related co-morbidities, including cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, liver disease, and cancer, and will include new research teams and patient data from Saskatchewan.

"We are delighted to be able to continue the work established by CANOC through the newly funded CIHR CANOC Centre," said Dr. Hogg, principal investigator of the CANOC Centre research team, as well as director of BC-CfE's Drug Treatment Program. "Our large and productive team of researchers will continue to monitor the impact and outcomes of modern antiretroviral therapy (ART) on individuals living with HIV in the Canada, while exploring co-morbidities associated with aging on ART."



Dr. Robert Hogg

The Centre will also provide new mentorship opportunities for students and community investigators.

"CANOC is well-situated to respond to future research questions related to the Canadian HIV/AIDS epidemic," says Dr. Hogg. "Over the next five years, we will continue to gain valuable new insights into the long-term effects of antiretroviral therapy in people living with HIV."

Breaking the glass ceiling in HIV

Women comprise more than 50% of people living with HIV worldwide, yet remain under-represented in the HIV response. The authors of a recent study collected qualitative data from women living with HIV across B.C. to explore the benefits and challenges to the meaningful involvement of women with HIV in the design and delivery of HIV services.

The study was led by, with, and for women with HIV, in collaboration with allied researchers, clinicians, and community partners, as part of the Canadian HIV Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health Cohort Study (CHIWOS).

Study participants expressed strong desires to contribute their expertise and leadership to the HIV services they access. Women also emphasized the value of peer-driven care in helping to cope with an HIV diagnosis and navigate health and social care systems.

Study findings also revealed numerous structural barriers impeding women's meaningful involvement, including organizational policies against hiring clients, disempowering attitudes regarding women's capacity to contribute, and inadequate remuneration.

"Collectively, these barriers yield a glass ceiling, which prevents many of us from rising as peer leaders within our care communities, and compromises our access to HIV care and our health," said Valerie Nicholson, study

co-author, CHIWOS Peer Research Associate, and herself a woman living with HIV.

Several recommendations are offered to address these barriers, including ending employment discrimination against an agency's own clientele and advocating for equal pay for equal work without discrimination by gender, HIV status, or other forms of social difference.

The paper, published in *Health Care for Women International*, was led by Allison Carter, CHIWOS Research Coordinator. Dr. Angela Kaida, CHIWOS BC Principal Investigator, Assistant Professor and Canada Research Chair at Simon Fraser University is the senior author.

For more information, please visit www.chiwos.ca.



(l to r) Dr. Angela Kaida, Valerie Nicholson and Allison Carter

Collaborative congratulates innovations in delivery of care

The provincial HIV Continuum of Care Collaborative, under the leadership of Dr. Rolando Barrios, Assistant Director of the BC-CfE and Collaborative Medical Director, presented Peer Innovation Awards to teams making key progress towards realizing an HIV- and AIDS-free generation in B.C.

The Collaborative is part of the BC-CfE's STOP HIV/AIDS program, or "Seek and Treat for Optimal Prevention of HIV/AIDS," which was initially launched as a pilot in 2009 as part of Treatment as Prevention (TasP) strategy. The Collaborative aims to apply evidence- and experience-based interventions to close gaps across the HIV Continuum of Care in communities in need across B.C.

Dr. Rolando Barrios presented the awards to six teams that have made important contributions in the Collaborative including the BC Centre for Disease Control team, St. Paul's Hospital Pharmacy team, Fraser Health regional public health team, Oak Tree Clinic at BC Women's, Northern Health regional team, and the Positive Wellness North Island team.

Examples of success include work by Positive Wellness North Island was chosen by Collaborative Planning Group members for successfully re-engaging people previously lost to care, seeing a 20% increase in patient engagement. In a tie with the Fraser Health ST/BBI Regional Team, the St. Paul's Hospital Pharmacy team was also awarded in the category "Retention, Adherence, and Suppression" for shifting resources to provide clinical services for remote patients who received little or no pharmacy support, while at the same time implementing a more convenient antiretroviral refill system for more stable patients. Another success story celebrated was the BC Centre for Disease Control's rapid referral pathway, connecting patients to HIV specialist care and support within 48 hours of an acute HIV diagnosis at the BC CDC clinic.

LECTURES & EVENTS

Fall HIV/Antiretroviral Update

An open educational event sponsored by BC-CfE and accredited by the College of Family Physicians of Canada. A light breakfast, lunch and refreshments provided.
Monday, November 24
8:30 am - 5 pm, Grand Ballroom-North Tower Sheraton Wall Centre Hotel (located across from St. Paul's Hospital in Downtown Vancouver)

What's New in Addiction Medicine

"A Public Health Approach to the Regulation and Control of Currently Illegal Drugs"
Mark Haden, Adjunct Professor, UBC School of Population and Public Health
Tuesday, November 25
12-1 pm, Hurlburt Auditorium, St. Paul's Hospital

To register for events, please visit www.cfenet.ubc.ca/events

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.

Physician Drug Hotline

1.800.665.7677

St. Paul's Hospital Pharmacy Hotline

1.888.511.6222

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