



THIS YEAR'S 4TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE IS SHAPING UP TO BE BIGGER AND BETTER THAN EVER BEFORE. JOIN US AT THE INTERCONTINENTAL TORONTO CENTRE HOTEL! TO REGISTER, GO TO: [CANVECTOR2019.CA](http://CANVECTOR2019.CA)

## CONNECT, COMMUNICATE & COLLABORATE

4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
Toronto, ON | October 17-18, 2019

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*CanVECTOR is a pan-Canadian, patient-oriented, Community Development Program centered on venous thromboembolism-related research, training, and knowledge translation.*

## Message from the Directors

Hello CanVECTOR Family,

Summer has come and gone way too quickly. We hope that you enjoyed some relaxing times with your loved ones!

We are pleased to highlight network members' recent achievements. **Five new projects led by CanVECTOR PIs were awarded CIHR Project Grants this past spring, for a total of almost \$10M!** This is a truly remarkable achievement. Also, an ever-increasing number of our patient partners were engaged in various steps of these successful grants, from writing letters of support to participating in calls and reviewing proposals. Please join us in congratulating our grantees and thanking our patient partners for their contributions. You can see the projects listed on page 3.

Our External Advisory Board convened in Spring 2019. They strongly recommended that we strengthen our network's Acknowledgment Policy. After further discussion with the Scientific Steering Committee and several brainstorming sessions, we have revised our policy. The new version provides detailed guidelines and examples of how to harmonize acknowledgment of CanVECTOR in all network-supported publications and presentations. **You can access the revised Acknowledgment Policy through the members' portal or [here](#).**

The Patient Partners platform has been working hard to develop a VTE Priority Setting Partnership, supported by the James Lind Alliance (JLA). Patients, their families and clinicians will work together to identify areas for improvement in VTE prevention, treatment, diagnosis and other VTE research.

**The VTE Priority Setting working group has begun gathering suggestions through the #ClotTop10**

**survey, available on their [website](#).** We encourage patients, caregivers and healthcare professionals to complete this brief survey and share their thoughts and experiences.

As autumn nears, we are preparing our second **CIHR-ICRH mid-term report, due in November 2019.** To prepare for this process, over the last few months we completed a series of check-in calls with each of our six platforms. We are pleased to report that all platforms have attained their objectives beyond expectations foreseen in the original CIHR grant. Successes include cross-platform collaborations, mentoring junior investigators and trainees, and engaging patient partners in research activities.

We look forward to seeing you all on **October 17-18 in Toronto for the 4<sup>th</sup> CanVECTOR Annual Conference** themed **[Connect, Communicate & Collaborate](#)**. The Conference Planning Committee has designed an interactive program including a keynote talk, trainee presentations and a workshop aimed at fostering effective collaboration. There will be many opportunities for members and network partners to interact and catch up with colleagues over poster sessions and social gatherings.

Finally, we wish to extend our sincere gratitude and best wishes for the future to Maryam Ebrahimi, who will be leaving her position as Montreal-based network manager at the end of August. See Page 4 to learn more about her successor, Jessie Micholuk.

As always, don't hesitate to drop us a line if you want to get involved in any aspect of CanVECTOR.

*Susan R. Kahn*



Susan and Marc

# Trainees Spotlight:

We are pleased to announce the Spring 2019-2020 Fellowship & Studentship award recipients. The network received several strong applications this past spring. The review committee granted two fellowship awards and one studentship award. Congratulations to the awardees and thanks to all who applied.



**Dr. Keerat Grewal**  
Schwartz/Reisman Emergency Medicine Institute,  
Mount Sinai Hospital  
*Awarded CanVECTOR Fellowship, in partnership  
with SREMI*

**SUPERVISORS:** Dr. Kerstin de Wit, Dr. Bjug Borgundvaag,  
Dr. Clare Atzema

**PROJECT TITLE:** Venous thromboembolism in patients  
discharged from the emergency department with ankle fractures:

## A population-based cohort study

Venous thromboembolism (VTE) is a significant source of morbidity and mortality worldwide. Although lower limb immobilization is associated with the development of deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism, it is still a relatively rare occurrence. There are limited data available to assist emergency physicians to evaluate the risk of VTE after an ankle fracture that requires lower limb immobilization. Current practice in Canadian emergency departments does not include offering anticoagulation prophylaxis. As a result, patients are diagnosed with VTE after immobilization and in the worst cases, present to the emergency department with fatal embolism. This important health-care associated morbidity is understudied. Using population-based administrative data from ICES, we have a unique opportunity to identify the scale of the problem in Ontario, Canada and to evaluate the magnitude of association between previously identified risk factors and the diagnosis of VTE after an ankle fracture in the emergency department.



**Amy Wong Strilchuk**  
University of British Columbia  
*Awarded CanVECTOR Studentship*

**SUPERVISOR:** Dr. Christian Kastrup

**PROJECT TITLE:** Gene therapy to weaken disease-causing thrombi

The current standard therapeutics to prevent thrombosis (which manifest as heart attacks, strokes, and pulmonary embolism), are anticoagulants. These have major limitations, including frequent

administration and risk of uncontrolled bleeding. Using a strategy that weakens clots rather than preventing coagulation altogether, we aim to maintain a safer hemostatic balance between clot formation and degradation. Gene therapy allows us to accomplish this with high specificity, easy reversibility, and a half-life on the order of weeks. RNA interference (RNAi) is a natural process, recently harnessed as a form of gene therapy, whereby small RNA sequences are engineered to specifically target the precursors of a particular protein for degradation. We will use RNAi to reduce the production of a protein that makes clots resistant to degradation, thereby still allowing clots to form at the site of wounds, but allowing the body's clot clearance system to do so much easier in the case of pathological thrombi. With the support of CanVECTOR, we are currently testing the safety, reversibility, and efficacy of this therapeutic in multiple disease models of thrombosis.



Congratulations to Dr. Miriam Kimpton,  
Dr. Aurélien Delluc and Dr. Marc Carrier  
on receiving 2019 CanVECTOR Pilot Trial Funding!

**PROJECT TITLE:** Thromboprophylaxis with apixaban in patients with JAK2-positive myeloproliferative neoplasms.

We will be conducting a multi-centre pilot randomized controlled trial evaluating the feasibility of a randomized controlled trial assessing the superiority of apixaban compared to aspirin for the thromboprophylaxis of patients diagnosed with a JAK2-positive myeloproliferative neoplasm. Although aspirin is the current standard of care, strong evidence is lacking regarding its efficacy in reducing thrombotic events in this patient population. Furthermore, with aspirin, these patients remain at an unacceptably elevated risk for both arterial and venous thrombotic complications. This CanVECTOR funding opportunity will allow us to gather information on feasibility objectives such as the monthly rate of recruitment, retention of patients, and adherence to the study medication, as well as clinically meaningful outcomes (rates of arterial thrombotic events, venous thrombotic events, and major bleeding). This information will be invaluable for the planning of a full-size randomized controlled trial on this research topic in a rare patient population.

**Dr. Miriam Kimpton is also the recipient of the Spring 2019 Thrombosis Canada CanVECTOR Fellowship Award.**

## Did you know...

- CanVECTOR must be acknowledged in the funding section if a study or researcher has received direct financial support from CanVECTOR.
- Non-financial support from CanVECTOR should be acknowledged as well.
- The CanVECTOR logo must be used on all CanVECTOR-supported oral and poster presentations.

To read the newly revised CanVECTOR Acknowledgment Policy (Version 2.0) and see examples and recommendations, go to Member Portal>CanVECTOR Documents or click [here](#).



Registration for the 4<sup>th</sup>  
CanVECTOR Annual Conference  
will close on September 30th.

To register go to  
[canvector2019.ca](http://canvector2019.ca).

# The Patient's Perspective: Canadian Venous Thromboembolism (VTE) Priority Setting Partnership (PSP) launched its survey!

The goal of the VTE PSP is to engage with patients, caregivers and clinicians to identify uncertainties about the prevention, diagnosis, management and long-term impact of VTE and its associated treatments on patients, caregivers, and their families.

The process starts with asking patients, clinicians and caregivers for their top questions related to VTE. The questions will be categorized and checked against existing research evidence to see if these questions are already answered.

The shortlisted questions will then be reviewed and finalized by a group of patients and clinicians from across Canada. Their final shortlist will then be brought to an in-person workshop where patients, clinicians, and caregivers review and rank the proposed questions into a top 10 prioritized list. The top 10 prioritized list will be shared publicly and used to guide future patient-oriented research.



This past spring, CanVECTOR's Patient Partners collaborated with some of the network's investigators in reviewing their research proposals and providing feedback.

This valuable experience taught us that engaging patient partner(s) at the earlier stages of writing research proposals results in productive conversations between researchers and patients.

We invite you to follow these easy steps as you plan to include CanVECTOR's Patient Partners in your future grant applications.



Plan early! The Patient Partners platform aims to support CanVECTOR's researchers and facilitate communication between patient partners and researchers. If you are planning for a grant submission in September, contact us immediately to allow time for patient contributions.



Send us an email at [info@canvector.ca](mailto:info@canvector.ca) with your project title and the number of patients required to review your research proposal.

## Project updates

Congratulations to CanVECTOR's investigators who were awarded CIHR Project grants in Spring 2019!

	<b>EPCAT III RCT</b>	<b>Study title:</b> Extended Venous Thromboembolism Prophylaxis Comparing Rivaroxaban and Aspirin to Aspirin Alone Following Total Hip and Knee Arthroplasty	<b>PI:</b> Sudeep Shivakumar <b>Patient Partner:</b> Carol West
	<b>SAVER RCT</b>	<b>Study title:</b> Statins for Venous Event Reduction in Patients with Venous Thromboembolism	<b>PIs:</b> Aurélien Delluc, Marc Rodger <b>Patient Partner:</b> Jacqueline Russell
	<b>SOME 2 RCT</b>	<b>Study title:</b> Screening for Occult Malignancy in Patients with Unprovoked Venous Thromboembolism: a Randomized Controlled Trial using 18F-Fluorodeoxyglucose Positron Emission Computed Tomography. SOME-2 Trial	<b>PIs:</b> Aurélien Delluc, Marc Carrier <b>Patient Partners:</b> Suzanne Dubois, Jacqueline Russell
	<b>PARTUM RCT</b>	<b>Study title:</b> Postpartum Aspirin to Reduce Thromboembolism Undue Morbidity	<b>PIs:</b> Leslie Skeith, Marc Rodger <b>Patient Partners:</b> Jessica Zambito, Suzanne Dubois
	<b>VTE-COS</b>	<b>Study title:</b> Establishing an International Core Outcome Set for Clinical Trials of Interventions for Venous Thromboembolism in Adults (VTE-COS)	<b>PI:</b> Grégoire Le Gal <b>Patient Partners:</b> Carol West, Suzanne Dubois

# News & Updates



We thank the Schwartz/Reisman Emergency Medicine Institute (SREMI) for their contribution to support a CanVECTOR Fellowship award in the Spring 2019 competition. We look forward to partnering together for future competitions!



The UBC Centre for Blood Research will provide travel and accommodation awards to support up to 15 trainees to attend the Annual Earl W. Davie Symposium, to be held on November 13, 2019 in Vancouver, Canada. This full-day symposium celebrates the important contributions made by Dr. Earl W. Davie, the discoverer of the clot cascade. The symposium program focuses on latest advances in the understanding and treatment of thrombosis, hemophilia and bleeding disorders. To register [click here](#).



**Save the date!** The Training, Mentoring and Early Career Development platform will hold its next workshop on October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in Toronto, just before the annual conference. The workshop program will cover “strategies to present and communicate research”, and include an interactive panel discussion with speakers. Registration is open on the [conference website!](#)

## In the loop: Announcements

Say hello to:

**Jessie Micholuk, MPH**



*“I’m very excited to be joining the CanVECTOR team as the Research Network Manager for the Montreal Office. With my mix of fundamental science and public health management*

*background from Canada and the United States, I look forward to learning more about the thrombosis research community and applying my skills to bring continued success to the project. See you all in person at the upcoming 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference!”*

Say congratulations to:

**Dr. Leslie Skeith**



*“I am excited to be the new co-lead of the Training, Mentoring, and Early Career Development platform. I look forward to applying the knowledge and skills that I*

*have gained in my Masters of Health Professions Education to meaningfully contribute to the growth and success of trainees and early career investigators in thrombosis medicine.”*

A sincere thank you to Dr. Marc Carrier for co-leading this platform from 2015 to 2019.

See you later:

**Maryam Ebrahimi**



*“Working as the Network Manager has been a valuable experience for me. Coming from a Neuroscience background, I got the opportunity to work with,*

*and acquire greater knowledge of the VTE research community. A big part of my journey has been to witness the role CanVECTOR network played in bringing together clinicians, patient partners and investigators from across Canada. I am proud to have taken part in making this connection happen. While I am excited to embark on a new chapter in my career, I am positive that I will benefit from the extensive guidance and advice I’ve received over this past year.”*

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