



A Newsletter from the CIHR Institute of Nutrition, Metabolism and Diabetes

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INMD *Connections*

Helping you make connections and stay connected

INMD Welcomes New Institute Advisory Board Members

INMD is pleased to announce two new Institute Advisory Board members: Ms. Deirdre Freiheit and Dr. Bruce Verchere

Deirdre Freiheit is currently the Executive Director of the Health Charities Coalition of Canada (HCCC), which she joined in 2006. Her priorities at HCCC include advocacy on issues related to health research and health policy, facilitating networking opportunities for CEO's and senior employees in the charitable health sector and representing the coalition at national meetings, events and conferences. Deirdre has been involved in the not-for-profit and



charitable health sector since 1994. Prior to joining HCCC, Deirdre spent ten years at the Canadian Lung Association where she held a variety of management positions which led to her tenure as President and CEO. Previously, she worked for the Canadian Council for Tobacco Control and served as Constituency and Parliamentary Assistants to Members of Parliament. Internationally, Deirdre belonged to the Alliance of Lung Associations and the Global Lung Cancer Coalition. She is a recipient of the Heather Crowe Award for her contributions to tobacco control. Deirdre is recognized as a leader in the charitable health sector. She frequently speaks to organizations, Boards of Directors, governments and groups about the role of national health charities in relation to research and health policy, and the enormous impact of the contributions of health charities to society.

Bruce Verchere is a Professor in the Departments of Surgery and Pathology & Laboratory Medicine at the University of British Columbia (UBC), head of the Diabetes Research Program at the Child & Family Research Institute at BC Children's

Hospital, and the Irving K. Barber Chair in Diabetes Research. His research aims to understand how pancreatic islet beta cells function and why they are killed or are dysfunctional in both type 1 and type 2 diabetes and in transplanted islets, with the goal of developing therapeutic approaches for enhancing beta cell survival and function. Bruce has published close to 100 manuscripts in the field of islet biology and diabetes and has been invited to give presentations of his work worldwide. Dr. Verchere was a Senior Scholar of the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR) from 2006 to 2011 and was awarded the UBC Outstanding Young Alumnus award in 2000 and the Canadian Diabetes Association (CDA) Young Scientist award in 2006. His research is funded by CIHR, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, CDA, and the Stem



Cell Network. Until recently, Dr. Verchere served as Chair of the CIHR Diabetes Obesity, Lipid and Lipoprotein Disorders panel, Chair of the National Research Council of the CDA, and Chair of the MSFHR Research Advisory Council. He was co-chair of the CDA Clinical & Scientific Session National Conference in 2007 and 2008. He currently sits on the Editorial Board of the Canadian Journal of Diabetes as well as the Scientific Advisory Board of Sirona Biochem Corp.

Welcome, Deirdre and Bruce!

Philip M. Sherman, MD, FRCPC

CONTACT US

[Philip M. Sherman, MD, FRCPC](#)
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[Mélanie Bergeron](#)
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RESEARCHER PROFILE



Raylene A Reimer, PhD, RD

Associate Professor, University of Calgary

2012 Canadian Nutrition Society-Centrum New Scientist Award recipient

Dr. Reimer obtained her PhD in Nutrition & Metabolism from the University of Alberta and spent 2 years at the Nestle Research Centre in Switzerland as a postdoctoral fellow. In May 2000, Dr. Reimer joined the University of Calgary. Dr. Reimer's research focuses on the role of diet in regulating energy intake and gut microbiota in the context of obesity and type 2 diabetes. As a member of the Alberta Children's Hospital Research Institute

for Child and Maternal Health at the University of Calgary, Dr. Reimer has developed animal models to study how maternal diet during pregnancy and early postnatal diet in offspring influence satiety hormone production and ultimately obesity risk. Her studies have identified prebiotic fibre as a potentially valuable dietary component in establishing a new lower set point for energy intake and adiposity in both obese and non-obese animal models. Translating findings from animal models to human clinical studies is a key way in which Dr. Reimer spans bench to bedside

discovery and application. In addition to ongoing peer-reviewed funding, she holds several industry research contracts that help take evidence-based findings into application. Dr. Reimer has a keen interest in nutrition education and works in various capacities to promote healthy eating and the achievement of healthy body weights. She was honored this spring with the Centrum New Scientist Award for Outstanding Research at the Canadian Nutrition Society meeting.

Media Relations: How CIHR Can Help



Health researchers usually think about articles in academic journals and chapters in textbooks when they think of publishing. However, there are other important audiences that never read these specialized media, but rely on television, radio, newspapers, magazines, internet, and social media. That is, they get their information, including health information, from the mass media. These people, your neighbours and fellow Canadians, not only support health research through taxes and charitable donations, but are keen readers and users of health information provided by the mass media. The Communications and Public Outreach Branch at CIHR specializes in "getting the message out" on what's new in health research by Canada's health

researchers. Media relations is a collaborative effort, with reporters, public affairs officers, and researchers all contributing.

To help get the most out of this collaboration, CIHR Communications support CIHR researchers and their institutions in a variety of ways, including:

- Alerts and pitches to reporters on newsworthy health topics
- Workshops on newsworthy research, such as nutrition (May 2008), the human microbiome (May 2011), nutrition and aging (scheduled for November 2012), where journalists spend a full day in face-to-face lectures and discussions with Canadian researchers
- Café Scientifiques, where INMD researchers discuss their work with the public in informal settings such as restaurants or cafés
- Social media outreach, including videos, to reach audiences worldwide
- Web profiles of researchers whose work touches on key health themes of interest to Canadians
- Synapse, an award winning CIHR engagement program involving Canadian youth

These tips only scratch the surface of the complex interaction between the research community and the mass media. To help researchers become more comfortable with the media, [our website](#) offers some extra advice.

Connect with Companies Through Your Research!

[Mitacs-Accelerate](#) is a national program that connects highly-skilled graduate students and post-docs, through a university faculty member, with companies through short or long-term research projects aimed at addressing a company's need. For each four-month internship, the company provides \$7,500 which is matched dollar-for-dollar by Mitacs to form a research grant of \$15,000 for the faculty member. Please visit the Mitacs website for more information.



INMD Funding Opportunities

Please visit the [INMD website](#) for current funding opportunities including the [Health Challenges in Chronic Inflammation](#), and [Planning](#) and [Dissemination](#) grants.

Speaking of Aging Tour



The CIHR Institute of Aging has begun a multi-stage strategic planning process to define its priorities for the next five years. Those who are involved in research on aging, and anyone whose focus of study or interest touches on aging, are invited to participate in meetings in September and October 2012 being held in cities across Canada. For details and to RSVP please go to the [Speaking of Aging Tour](#) website.

The Institute of Nutrition, Metabolism and Diabetes (INMD) supports research to enhance health in relation to diet, digestion, excretion, and metabolism; and to address causes, prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, support systems, and palliation for a wide range of conditions and problems associated with hormone, digestive system, kidney, and liver function.

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