

# INTERPROFESSIONAL PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH ANNUAL REPORT



# 2023

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# OUR PROGRAM LEADERS



**Jane Topolovec-Vranic**  
(IPBR Program Director)

We are excited to introduce our inaugural IPBR annual report. Through the report we are highlighting the achievements, accomplishments and contributions of practice-based research at Unity Health Toronto. The IPBR program provides our frontline nursing and health disciplines clinicians with tools, resources and guidance to pursue a practice based research question. Our metrics for the year signal that we continue to touch on a need and gap identified by our clinicians: in the year, we have consulted over 240 times with over 185 different clinicians and hosted many more at our manuscripts writing boot camps. We offered our flagship research skills workshop series four times throughout the year with 55 attendees. Thank you to all our clinicians and teams who work to grow our culture of discovery at Unity Health Toronto.

The IPBR program is perfectly aligned with our collaborative practice model. It advances our interprofessional strategic care plan which has three priority areas of patient care, education, and research. The IPBR program supports our goal to continually learn from and about other disciplines. I think the program provides a really unique way to bridge research and practice in a very meaningful and tangible way. It also demonstrates our commitment to academic practice and best practice by providing opportunities for clinicians to engage with researchers and research staff to answer their clinical questions. Congratulations to our clinicians and teams for all of your practice-based research achievements in 2023.



**Sonya Canzian**  
(Executive Vice President, Clinical  
Programs, People and Chief Nursing  
& Health Disciplines Officer)

# MEET THE IPBR TEAM



JANE TOPOLOVEC-VRANIC



DANIELA BELLICOSO



NATALIE WEISER



MELANIE DISSANAYAKE



MAAHA FARRUKH



RACHEL DEVITT

# PROGRAM PROFILE

Unity Health Toronto recognizes that our frontline clinicians are best able to identify knowledge gaps and opportunities to advance clinical practice. Through various initiatives, the IPBR program is helping to empower our clinicians to carry out research projects relevant to their practice.

## DSAA-IPBR Fellowship

We offer clinicians a 6 month competitive research fellowships to carry out a data-driven study of relevance to their clinical units

## Research Skills Workshops

Prepare participants to engage in practice based research and generate evidence by providing strategies to devise a research question and plan.

## Small Grants Competition

\$5,000 are awarded to interprofessional teams to carry out a practice-based research project over a 2 year period with mentorship from IPBR.

## Practice-Based Researchers

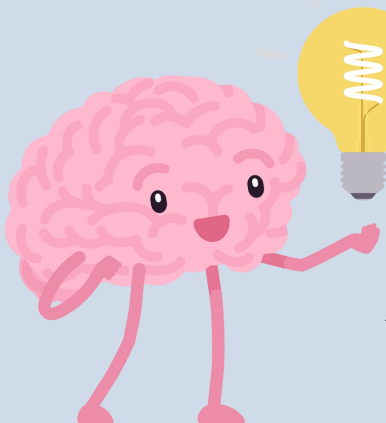
Formalized research appointments to help integrate research/clinical practice, recognize our clinicians engaged in research activity, and reduce barriers.

## Rapid Review Initiative

Provides an opportunity to learn about conducting a rapid review and go through the steps with the support of trained researchers.

## Manuscript Writing Workshop

A peer-support forum designed to help our clinicians publish a manuscript in peer-reviewed journals through a didactic lecture.



Did you know IPBR offers consultation services to assist with research? Email them by clicking [here](#).

# PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCHERS

The PBR Li Ka Shing appointments are a formalized research appointments process for our clinicians who are engaged in research. This appointment process aims to help integrate research and clinical practice, recognize our clinicians engaged in research activity, and reduce barriers to supporting our nursing and health disciplines in research.

33

## Practice-Based Researchers

| Health Discipline                | Total |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Registered Dietitians            | 5     |
| Social Workers                   | 4     |
| Occupational Therapists          | 4     |
| Physiotherapists                 | 3     |
| Nurse Practitioners              | 3     |
| Clinical Pharmacists             | 3     |
| Speech-Language Pathologists     | 2     |
| Pharmacists                      | 2     |
| Registered Nurse                 | 1     |
| Registered Respiratory Therapist | 1     |
| Psychologist                     | 1     |
| Nursing Practice Manager         | 1     |
| Clinical Leader Manager          | 1     |
| Collaborative Practice Manager   | 1     |
| Chiroprapist                     | 1     |

*"Going through the process of putting together a research study has been eye-opening. As a clinician, it has provided me with a deeper appreciation for the value that research can bring to our practice and programs as we strive to provide excellent care"*  
- Peggy So (Occupational Therapist)



As of December 2023



# RESEARCH SKILLS WORKSHOPS

The workshops series prepare nursing and health disciplines clinicians to engage in practice based research and generate evidence for evidence based practice by providing strategies to devise a sound question, and create a study plan. The workshops are offered seasonally via zoom.

55

## Workshop Participants



### Workshop Topics

1. Where to Find Evidence for Evidence-Based Practice
2. Understanding Levels of Evidence and How to Read an Article
3. Searching for Literature
4. How To Implement Evidence into Practice
5. Developing a Practice-Based Research Question
6. Using Different Methods to Answer your Research Question
7. Components of a Research Protocol
8. Developing a Research Study Action Plan

The Interprofessional Practice Based Research team is an incredibly valuable team at Unity Health Toronto as they help bridge the gap for front-line health care staff to participate in research in order to create and sustain meaningful change in our health care system. Through their various programs including the research skills workshops and the IPBR small grant competition, staff have the opportunity to develop new skills and experience beyond their assigned role. The IPBR team has provided me with invaluable professional development opportunities through their personalized support and guidance to help achieve our research goals - Jenna Richards (Clinical Nurse Specialist)



5

Sign up now!



# SMALL GRANTS COMPETITION

16

## Active Small Grant Projects

Through a competitive selection process, the IPBR Small Grants (\$5,000) are awarded annually to interprofessional teams to carry out a practice-based research project over a two-year period. Teams are linked with mentors and provided with guidance for each step along the way. Congratulations to the recipients of our 2024-2025 small grant competition, the following projects have been selected...

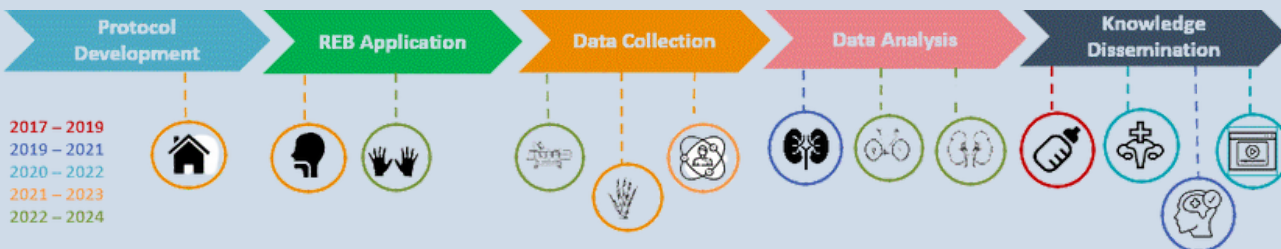
Exploring the Factors Contributing to Geriatric Homelessness and its Impact on Emergency Department Utilization: A Retrospective Chart Review

Staff perspectives from Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists on Feasibility and Readiness with a Task-Oriented Approach to Geriatric Rehabilitation

Assessing Diabetes Distress in Adults with Cystic Fibrosis Related Diabetes

“The Interprofessional Practice Based Research team has been instrumental in our ability to both progress our research goals and improve our research knowledge and skills. This has been accomplished through guidance with respect to securing Research Ethics Board approval, scope of our research and sequencing of our work. The IPBR team has been available for consultation as needed and set a meeting cadence that was supportive and appropriate throughout our journey. The contributions of the IPBR team and the funding opportunity through the IPBR initiative has been invaluable” - Kim Grootveld (Director Quality Improvement & Operational Excellence, Care Experience & Equity)

### Status of Ongoing Projects





# MANUSCRIPT WRITING WORKSHOP

The workshop is a peer-support forum designed to help our clinicians publish the results of their research and quality improvement initiatives in peer-reviewed journals. These regularly held sessions are intended to provide members with a didactic lecture to help publish a manuscript in a scientific journal.



## Manuscript Writing Workshop

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   | <b>IPBR Manuscript Writing Workshop</b> |  |
| <b>Save the Date</b>  |   | <b>Publish Your Research</b>   |
| Join us for virtual Manuscript Writing sessions on Zoom!    |   | <b>Sessions Include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A didactic lecture about preparing a manuscript for publication</li></ul> |
| To RSVP, email <a href="mailto:ipbr@smh.ca">ipbr@smh.ca</a> |   |  |

## Manuscript Writing Workshops

1. Didactic Lecture - steps for manuscript preparation
2. A Creative Activity
3. Dedicated Writing Time
4. Manuscript Publication Support



# PRACTICE COUNCILS

The IPBR team regularly attend several practice council meetings where nursing and health disciplines staff review/revise policies as well as procedures and standards of care. These meetings are also a great way to incorporate evidence-based research findings into clinical practice and consult on interdepartmental issues that impact patient care. IPBR members present journal club article infographics as well as provide resources and news about research at UHT.

## Practice Councils

1. Clinical Educator Nursing Network Meeting (SMH)
2. Clinical Nurse Specialists (SMH)
3. Clinical Educator Nursing Network (SJHC)
4. Nursing Practice Council (SJHC)
5. Social Work Council (SMH)
6. Research Interest Group (PHC)
7. Speech Language Pathologists (SMH)
8. Registered Dietitians (SMH)
9. Audiology (SMH)
10. Mission Champion Community of Practice (SMH)

## Practice Councils

Attendees

355

Meetings

30

## Journal Club infographics from previous practice councils.



The Relationship between Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence as a Protective Factor for Healthcare Professionals: Systematic Review

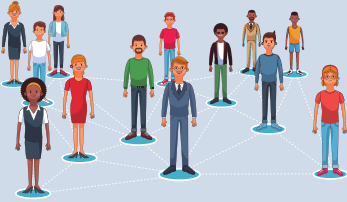


Perspectives of Healthcare Practitioners: An Exploration of Interprofessional Communication Using Electronic Medical Records



The Face of Workplace Violence: Experiences of Healthcare Professionals in Surgical Hospital Wards

# CANADIAN PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH AND INNOVATION NETWORK



## CP-BRAIN Partners



CANADIAN  
PRACTICE-BASED  
RESEARCH AND  
INNOVATION  
NETWORK

While individual practice-based programs have been successfully established across the country, members agreed that there was immense value in establishing an overall Canadian network to advance practice-based research. Through the exchange of ideas, experiences, practices, and the identification of collective priorities, the CP-BRAIN will promote an innovative, impactful, scalable, and sustainable approach to embedding research into clinical practice.

Our Website



Publications



Join Network



# RAPID REVIEW INITIATIVE

This initiative provides nursing and health disciplines clinicians an opportunity to learn about the process of conducting a rapid review and go through the steps with the support of trained researchers. Topics relate to various broad issues within healthcare that are relevant to clinicians and can affect patient care. This initiative typically runs for approximately 3-4 months.

## Sleep and Burnout Among Healthcare Workers

### Rapid Review Team

Interprofessional team of clinicians/health disciplines staff consisting of 3 members from SMH, 1 from PHC and 1 from SJHC.

“Participating in this IPBR initiative brought me ‘joy at work’ and rejuvenation. It provided me with new learning and experiences, at a time when I was feeling a bit stagnated. The IPBR program significantly contributed to my knowledge of research. Without participating in the IPBR initiative, I would not have considered participating in another research project” - Shelan McCreery (Clinical Educator)



# IPBR-AFP RESEARCH SHOWCASE

Held each year in November, the IPBR-AFP Showcase is our opportunity to share and celebrate the wonderful research, clinical and education projects carried out by our nursing and health disciplines professionals across the hospital. This forum also provides IPBR Small Grant awardees an opportunity to share the progress of their research.

60

## Showcase Attendees



## Showcase Agenda and Participants

Introduction (Dr. Jane Topolovec-Vranic)  
Opening Remarks (Sonya Canzian)  
Salima Bano Virani (IPBR)  
Jenna Richards (IPBR)  
A Word from our CEO (Dr. Tim Rutledge)  
Akachukwu Nwakoby (AFP)  
Shazeen Suleman (AFP)  
Comments (Dr. Kenneth Pace)  
Closing Remarks (Dr. Ori Rotstein)

Our virtual gallery features 20 poster presentations from interprofessional nursing and health disciplines staff from all UHT sites



# LUNCH WITH LEADERSHIP

Every year the IPBR team are proud to organize a lunch with leadership event with Sonya Canzian (EVP Clinical Programs, Chief Nursing and Health Disciplines Officer). This is a great opportunity to connect with Sonya for an intimate group discussion relating to research and innovation for nursing and health disciplines staff. This year we held the event virtually and in-person across all three sites of Unity Health Toronto.

28

Participants across 3 sites



## Event Highlights

- We had valuable discussion with nursing and health disciplines staff about building research capacity as well as fostering a culture of research and innovation at Unity Health Toronto
- Staff shared their research milestones and accomplishments



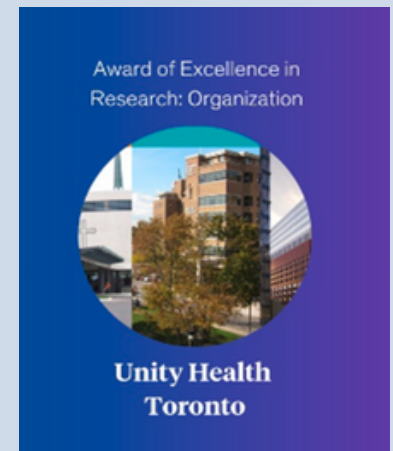
Subscribe to our newsletter to learn about upcoming events!



# UHT's Collaboration with WeRPN

IPBR has worked closely with the Registered Practical Nurses of Association of Ontario (WeRPN) this year and has been recognized for several research milestones.

This award is presented to an organization that has contributed in a significant way, or on an ongoing basis to the creation, utilization and/or participation in research that supports or informs practical nursing in Ontario



The IPBR team secured a grant to fund a project titled "Impact of a Novel Nursing Shift Assignment Toolkit on Interprofessional Role Clarity and Collaboration on Acute Care Inpatient Units with a Newly Introduced Registered Practical Nursing (RPN) Role."

Natalie Weiser was a participant on a keynote panel on behalf of the IPBR team at the annual WeRPN Research Symposium. The discussion centered around "Why is RPN-Focused Research Important?"



# Professional Models of Care

Unity Health Toronto embarked on a multi-year Professional Models of Care initiative which included an evidence-informed assessment of nursing and health professions workforce needs and evaluation of current models of care. To support the assessment, the IPBR team conceptualized and developed the Interprofessional Patient Care Needs Assessment Tool (IPPCNAT) to gather an understanding of unit level patient care needs. Throughout this initiative, the IPBR team was successful in knowledge dissemination, obtaining a publication and invitation to present the findings of this work at several conferences.



The tool was piloted at SMH and received positive feedback, being spread to SJHC, and further adapted to understand the rehabilitation needs at Providence Healthcare.

Melanie Dissanayake presented a poster titled “Implementation of the IPPCNAT in a Canadian Community-Based Inpatient Acute-Care Setting” on behalf of the IPBR team at The Canadian Association of Health Services and Policy Research Conference in Montreal.



The IPBR team presented “Implementation of the Interprofessional Patient Care Needs Tool in 12 Acute-Care Inpatient Units” at the International Congress of Nursing conference

# RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT

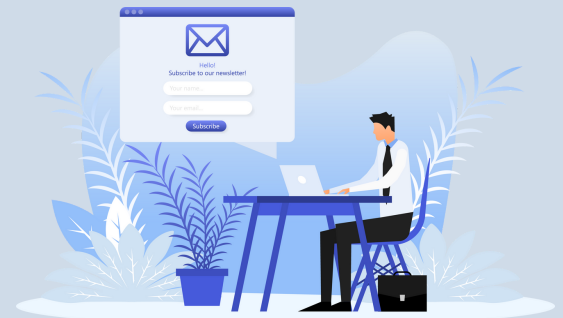
The IPBR team is committed to fostering a culture of discovery and innovation through our various research initiatives. We also provide research consultations, resources and opportunities for nursing and health disciplines staff at Unity Health Toronto to engage in research relevant to their practice. Be sure to subscribe to our monthly newsletter and social media accounts for news and updates.

## Consultations

Clinicians 185

Consults 240

## Monthly Newsletter



Subscribe now!



## 10 Blog Posts



Check it out!



## Social Media



Twitter Impressions 4800+

Twitter Followers 320



Instagram Followers 90

# PUBLICATIONS

7

## Publications this year

### Published

Romano, D., Weiser, N., Santiago, C., Sinclair, C., Beswick, S., Espiritu, R., & Bellicoso, D. (2022). An organizational approach to improve staff resiliency and wellness during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Medical Imaging and Radiation Sciences*

Topolovec-Vranic, J., Dissanayake, M., Chalklin, K., Dimmock, S., Davie, S., Jeffs, L. P., & Canzian, S. (2023). The interprofessional patient care needs assessment tool (IPPCNAT): Conception and development. *Journal of Interprofessional Education & Practice*.

Dryden, L., Song, J., Valenzano, T.J., Yang, Z., Debnath, M., Lin, R., Topolovec-Vranic, J., Mamdani, M., Antoniou, T. (2023). Evaluation of Machine Learning Approaches for Predicting Warfarin Discharge Dose in Cardiac Surgery Patients: Retrospective Algorithm Development and Validation Study.

Sanne, KM., Langlois, S., Bartlett, S., Friesen, F., Ng, S., Bellicoso, D & Rowland, P. (2024). A Critical Interpretive Synthesis of Interprofessional Education Interventions. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*.

### Under Review/In Press

Weiser, N., Dissanayake, M., Santiago, C., Harrington, F., Benny Gerard, N., Dimmock, S., Canzian, S., Topolovec-Vranic, J. (2023). Barriers and Facilitators to the Practice of the Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) Role in an Academic Acute Care Hospital. *Journal of Nursing Management*.

Weiser, N., Topolovec-Vranic, J., Dissanayake, M., Harrington, F., Canzian, S. (2023). Building Research Capacity: A Framework for a Registered Practical Nurse's Research Fellowship. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Leadership*.

Lucas, P., Weiser, N., Aguirre, J., Bellicoso, D. (2023). Examining the Meaning and Value of Prayer Shawls for Patients and Their Support Networks in Acute Care. *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counselling*.

# PRESENTATIONS

9

## Presentations this year

**The Relationship Between Resilience and Burnout Among Healthcare Staff in an Inner City Hospital at the Onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic. (2023). International Congress of Nursing. Montreal, Quebec.**

**Building Research Capacity: A Case Study of a Registered Practice Nurse's Research Fellowship Experience. (2023). International Congress of Nursing. Montreal, Quebec.**

**the Implementation of the Interprofessional Patient Care Needs Assessment (IPPCNAT) Tool. (2023). International Congress of Nursing. Montreal, Quebec.**

**Barriers and Facilitators to the Practice of the Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) Role in an Academic Acute Care Hospital. (2023). International Congress of Nursing. Montreal, Quebec.**

**Implementation of the Interprofessional Patient Care Needs Tool in 12 Acute-Care Inpatient Units. (2023). Canadian Association for Health Services and Policy Research. Montreal, Quebec.**

**Building Research Capacity: A Framework for a Registered Practical Nurse's Research Fellowship and it was part of a Keynote Panel called: Why is RPN-focused research important? Facilitating RPN engagement in research –why and how? (2023). WeRPN Research Symposium. Toronto, Ontario.**

**Understanding Role Clarity in the Practice of the Registered Practical Nurse (RPN) Role in a Community-Based Acute-Care Setting. (2023). Nursing Leadership Network of Ontario.**

**The Assessment of Nursing Patient Care Needs in a Rehabilitation Setting Through the Utilization of the Northwick Park Dependency Scale Tool. (2023). Nursing Leadership Network of Ontario.**

**Nursing Advisory Council Evaluation – Our Road to Shared Governance across a Multi-Center Organization. (2023). Nursing Leadership Network of Ontario.**

# NOTABLE MENTIONS

Unity Health Toronto was awarded “The Award of Excellence in Research” through WeRPN.

One of our small grant recipients (Jenna Richards) was awarded the “Culture of Discovery” award for research and innovation at Unity Health Toronto.

One of IPBR’s small grant research teams were successful in securing the St. Joe’s Seed grant (\$25,000) for their research project about PIP Joint injuries.

## Research

**Number of Participants: 466**

**Number of REB Submissions: 6**

**Number of Ongoing Projects: 38**



IPBR developed a research skills workshop series for the Keenan Research Summer Student Program and launched the new training during the summer of 2023.

One of our small grant teams (Mekhala Casey and Deane Walker) presented their preliminary research findings at Unity Health Toronto’s Mental Health Rounds.

The IPBR team participated at the annual Providence Rehabilitation day!