



# GASTROENTEROLOGY RESEARCH NEWS

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## MEET OUR NEW TEAM MEMBERS

The BCCH IBD Research Program is pleased to welcome Seerit Boparai, Karman Gill, and Osho Chandra to our team!

- **Principal Investigators**  
Dr. Kevan Jacobson and Dr. Sally Lawrence
- **Research Coordinator**  
Olga Radivojevic
- **UBC Co-op Students**  
Seerit Boparai, Karman Gill, Osho Chandra

Our team also has a **new office space**, you can now find us in **Room 2C66** by the MDU.

## ACTIVE STUDIES

### OVATION

PFIZER

**Investigational Product: Tofacitinib (Xeljanz)**

**Goal:** To determine if tofacitinib is safe and effective in inducing remission in children with moderate to severe UC.

**Eligibility:**

- Patients aged 2 to <18 years old with moderately to severely active UC with a baseline PUCAI of  $\geq 35$
- Clinical diagnosis of UC for at least 12 weeks prior to baseline without a history of dysplasia or colon cancer
- Shown an inadequate response or intolerance to at least one of the following prior therapies: oral or IV corticosteroids, AZA or 6-MP, or TNF inhibitors or anti-integrin therapy.

### KEPLER AND WEBB STUDIES

TAKEDA

**Investigational Product: Vedolizumab (Entyvio)**

**Goal:** To explore if vedolizumab is safe and effective in children with CD and UC by randomizing participants to high and low treatment groups.

**Eligibility (UC):**

- Patients age 2 to 17 with moderate to severely active UC with a modified Mayo score of 5 to 9.
- Failed, lost response to, or been intolerant to treatment with at least 1 of the following agents: corticosteroids, immunomodulator, and/or TNF- $\alpha$  antagonist therapy
- Weight of <30 kg

**Eligibility (CD):**

- Patients age 2 to 17 with moderate to severely active CD with a PCDAI > 30 and SES-CD > 6
- Failed, lost response to, or been intolerant to treatment with at least 1 of the following agents: corticosteroids, immunomodulator, and/or TNF- $\alpha$  antagonist therapy





Crohn's and Colitis Canada  
Crohn et Colite Canada

## TRANSITION TRIAL (PACE)

CROHN'S AND COLITIS CANADA

### Intervention: Transition program

This unblinded randomized controlled clinical trial aims to evaluate the clinical and implementation efficacy of an intervention to improve the transition from pediatric to adult care in adolescents and young adults with IBD. The intervention consists of 4 core components: individualized needs assessment, skill-building, education, and a transition navigator facilitator (nurse practitioner or social worker).

**Recruitment update:** Recruitment target of 25 participants reached!

## AMBITION-CD

CIDSCaNN and CHILD Foundation

### Observational Study

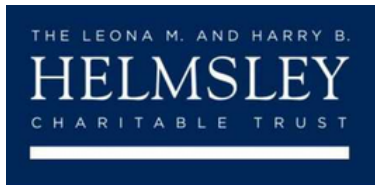
The multi-center Canadian Children IBD Network (CIDSCaNN) brings together investigators across Canada to understand why IBD affects so many Canadian children. We will study children at the time of IBD diagnosis, exploring environmental factors and exposures; obtaining blood for assessment of genetic risk; and stool for assessment of microorganisms that might be important in the development of IBD. With this prospective cohort study, the goal is to compare outcomes of CD patients with ustekinumab versus anti-TNF as first biologic.

### Eligibility:

- CD patients <17 years old who are anticipated to initiate anti-TNF or ustekinumab as treatment
- The duration of CD diagnosis should be ~<18 months
- Perianal disease is NOT the primary or co-primary indication for biologic



## UPCOMING STUDIES



## PIONIR

The Leona & Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust

### Intervention: Tasty Diet Protocol

**Goal:** To evaluate if the Tasty&Healthy diet is an effective intervention to lower risk of developing CD.

**Eligibility:** Healthy first degree relatives of children with CD who previously completed the GEM study and were identified as being at risk of developing CD.

## UPCOMING PUBLICATIONS

### The Remicade-Renflexis Switch Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine the safety and effectiveness of switching from the original infliximab, Remicade to the biosimilar, Renflexis. By reviewing the data collected, we would like to know how many patients are still on Renflexis 12 months after starting on it, and if there is a difference between infliximab drug levels/anti-drug antibodies in the blood while you were on Remicade vs after the switch on Renflexis.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

### Outcomes following acute severe colitis at initial presentation: a multi-centre prospective paediatric cohort study

Jasbir Dhaliwal, Dominique Tertigas, Nicholas Carman, Sally Lawrence, Jennifer C deBruyn, Eytan Wine, Peter C Church, Hien Q Huynh, Mohsin Rashid, Wael El-Matary, Colette Deslandres, Jeffrey Critch, Amanda Ricciuto, Matthew W Carroll, Eric I Benchimol, Aleixo Muise, Kevan Jacobson, Anthony R Otley, Bruce Vallance, David R Mack, Thomas D Walters, Michael G Surette, Anne M Griffiths; Canadian Children IBD Network

DOI: [10.1016/j.jpeds.2023.113403](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpeds.2023.113403)

### Spatial Cluster Mapping and Environmental Modeling in Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease

Mielle Michaux, Justin M Chan, Luke Bergmann, Luis F Chaves, Brian Klinkenberg, and Kevan Jacobson

DOI: [https://10.3748/wjg.v29.i23.3688](https://doi.org/10.3748/wjg.v29.i23.3688)



We reached out to some previous members of the Division of Gastroenterology research team to see where they are now, and how their experience here helped shape their journey!

## Sandy Wu

After my time with the BCCH GI team as a research coordinator, I went back to school for my medical degree at UBC and am now completing my residency in Family Medicine in Calgary. I have many fond memories working with the GI team, the patients, and their families. These experiences have shaped who I am, and how I intend to practice medicine. That being said, I definitely do not miss handling everyone's poop samples from our many research projects!



## Matthew Smyth

As a chemistry student who knew they were too chatty for a lifetime in the lab, I was very fortunate to land a Co-op job as Dr. Jacobson's research assistant and IT consultant (a job I proudly maintained long after my co-op term ended). In this role I learned how clinical research can have a huge impact on patient care, developed a love of complex excel formulas, and often found myself wondering why people would specialize in IBD- instead of the glory of trauma surgery, the intrigue of robotic surgery, or the cleanliness of pediatric endocrinology. 10 years later I once again find my work entirely focused on IBD, except this time I know exactly why people specialize in IBD...

## Hira Gill

After completing my Bachelor's of Science Degree/Co-op program in 2013, I attended medical school at UBC. I completed my medical degree in 2017, followed by a Family Medicine residency in 2019, also at UBC. I worked as a full-service family physician for 6 months before furthering my medical training by completing an enhanced skills fellowship in hospitalist medicine in 2020, also at UBC. My primary medical interests include hospital medicine, and long-term care. I currently work as a hospitalist at VGH and UBCH, and I have a panel of long-term care patients.



# RECENT EVENTS

This past November we held an IBD Family Day event! This was the first patient support and education day hosted since 2019 and we welcomed families both in-person and virtually to hear presentations from IBD experts and participate in activities. Thank you to all of our sponsors, presenters, and volunteer team that made this event possible!

Stay tuned for future events this year!






# RECENT AWARDS

## Co-op Supervisor Awards

Congratulations to **Dr. Kevan Jacobson** and **Olga Radivojevic** for winning co-op supervisor awards for the second year in a row!

These awards are given based on nominations from co-op students and are awarded to supervisors who provide a meaningful and quality work experience for co-op students, excellent mentorship, and go above and beyond employer expectations.

## CONTACT US

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