

Duncan Stewart, President and Scientific Director



Duncan is a pioneering Canadian cardiovascular researcher who is recognized for his many important discoveries in blood vessel biology, as well as his dedication to translating these discoveries into benefits for patients and society. After beginning his career in academic cardiology at McGill University in Montreal, he moved to Toronto as Head of Cardiology at St. Michael's Hospital and later became Director of the Division of Cardiology and Executive Director of the McLaughlin Centre for Molecular Medicine at the University of Toronto. He was recruited to lead the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute in 2007.

Duncan has made a number of seminal discoveries elucidating the importance of endothelial factors in health and disease, notably the role of the nitric oxide system in angiogenesis and of endothelin-1 in pulmonary hypertension.

Duncan is also a leader in developing cell and gene based therapies for cardiovascular disease. He led the first Canadian clinical trial to test an angiogenic gene therapy – using VEGF to try to stimulate heart repair in people who had suffered heart attacks. He also led the world's first clinical trial of a gene-enhanced cell therapy for pulmonary hypertension, using endothelial progenitor cells engineered to over-express the endothelial nitric oxide synthase. He also leads the world's first clinical trial of a similar therapy for post heart-attack repair, and he has played a key role in initiating the world's first trial of mesenchymal stem cells for the treatment of septic shock.

Duncan has published more than 200 peer-reviewed manuscripts and has received a number of distinctions and prizes, including the Dexter Man Chair of Cardiology and Research Achievement Award of the University of Toronto, and the Research Achievement Award of the Canadian Cardiovascular Society. Throughout his career, Dr. Stewart has demonstrated leadership in bringing diverse groups of clinicians and scientists together to put Canada on the world stage for translational cardiovascular and regenerative medicine research.

As well as serving as President and Scientific Director of the Ontario Institute for Regenerative Medicine, Duncan is Executive Vice-President of Research at The Ottawa Hospital and CEO and Scientific Director of the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, an active senior scientist in The Ottawa Hospital's Regenerative Medicine Program and holds the Evelyne and Rowell Laishley Chair. He is also a Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Ottawa, Scientific Director of the Canadian Vascular Network and a practicing cardiologist.

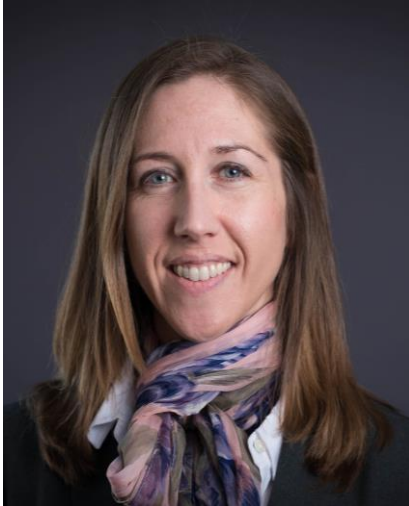
Sandra Donaldson, Vice President, Strategy and Partnerships



Sandra has over 25 years' experience in network development and scientific research. Prior to working with the OIRM, she was the Program Manager for the Ontario Stem Cell Initiative where she expanded a Toronto-based initiative into a virtual network of over 145 stem cell research programs across the province. Sandra has also managed a clinical research program in spinal deformity, benign bone tumors and clubfoot deformity in Orthopaedic Surgery at the Hospital for Sick Children. During this time she collaborated to develop a North American Clinical Trials Network in paediatric orthopaedic surgery and managed its first international, multi-centre clinical trial across 50 institutions, overseeing all scientific, ethical and regulatory approval processes.

Previously, Sandra worked in research programs at several Ontario hospitals including Women's College, Mount Sinai, Princess Margaret and London Health Sciences Centre. She has published research in a variety of orthopaedic journals and was also a health columnist for CBC News Online. Sandra has a B.A. from the University of Western Ontario, a Certificate in Medical Writing and Editing from the University of Chicago, and is a member of the Canadian Society of Association Executives.

Penney Gilbert, Director, Education and Outreach



Penney is an Assistant Professor in the Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering (IBBME) and holds cross-appointments in the Department of Biochemistry and the Donnelly Centre at the University of Toronto. Penney obtained her BSc (1999) from Haverford College and her PhD (2006) from the University of Pennsylvania in the area of cell biology and mammary oncogenesis. Following this she switched research focus and became a postdoctoral fellow with Helen Blau at Stanford University in California working in the field of skeletal muscle stem cells under the support of an NIH Pathway to Independence K99/R00 Award.

In 2012, Penney was recruited to the University of Toronto where her research program is focused on skeletal muscle endogenous repair. Her team engineers and studies three-dimensional models of human skeletal muscle and explores muscle stem cell mechanobiology with the goal of identifying signaling pathways that can be tweaked to boost the function of skeletal muscle stem cells in the body. Her lab was supported by grants from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation, Connaught Fund, and U of T Faculty of Medicine Dean's Fund. The Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, Ontario Research Fund, Medicine by Design CFREF, and an Early Researcher Award from MRI currently support her work.

At the University of Toronto Penney is Chair of the IBBME Distinguished Seminar Series, and she is a member of the IBBME Curriculum Committee, the Collaborative Program in Developmental Biology Steering Committee, and Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy Animal Care Committee. Penney has been involved with OIRM as a member of the Governing Council and is an Associate Member of the American Society for Cell Biology Women in Cell Biology Committee.

Cheryle Séguin, Director, Research



Cheryle is an Associate Professor in the Department of Physiology and Pharmacology at The University of Western Ontario and a Scientist with the Lawson Health Research Institute and Children's Health Research Institute. She obtained her BSc (1999) and MSc (2001) from The University of Western Ontario and her PhD in the area of cell biology and tissue engineering from the University of Toronto (2005). Following this, Cheryle became a postdoctoral fellow with Dr. Janet Rossant at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto ON, working in the field of early mammalian development and stem cell biology.

In 2009, Cheryle was recruited to The University of Western Ontario where her research program is centered on understanding stem cell fate and function. Her primary interest is examining cell fate determination within the intervertebral disc and the development of strategies to exploit the role of tissue specific stem cells for spine and skeletal tissue regenerative medicine. Her lab has been supported by operating grants from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, the Canadian Foundation for Innovation, and the Chordoma Foundation. She is a previous recipient of a Canadian Arthritis Network Scholar Award and is currently supported by a CIHR New Investigator Award and an Early Researcher Award from MRI.

At Western, Cheryle was co-Director of the Joint Motion Program, a CIHR Strategic Training Program in Musculoskeletal Health Research and Leadership and currently co-directs the Collaborative Training Program in Musculoskeletal Health Research. Since 2011 she has served as Chair of the Stem Cell Network Training & Education Committee and has been involved with both OSCI and OIRM as a member of Governing Council.

Harry Atkins, Director, Clinical Translation



Harold Atkins, MD is a physician of the Ottawa Hospital Blood and Marrow Transplant Program, an Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Ottawa, a scientist in the Center for Innovative Cancer Research and the medical director of the Regenerative Medicine Program at the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute.

He received his Bachelor of Medical Science degree and Medical Degree from the University of Ottawa followed by a rotating internship year at the Victoria General Hospital in Victoria BC. Specialty training in internal medicine was done at the University of Ottawa. Clinical and research fellowships in Hematology, Stem Cell Transplantation and Experimental Hematology followed at the University of Washington and at the Ontario Cancer Institute.

Harry specializes in the management of patients requiring stem cell transplantation and he has spearheaded the use of stem cell transplantation for immune repair to treat patients with severe autoimmune diseases, including multiple sclerosis, myasthenia gravis and stiff person syndrome. He has also developed clinical trials exploring the role of dose escalated radiation therapy to treat refractory blood cancers. Harry's laboratory research includes a longstanding and fruitful collaboration with Dr. John Bell developing oncolytic viruses particularly for the treatment of hematological cancers as personalized cancer cell vaccines.