

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Submitted by Eduardo L. Franco, O.C., MPH, DrPH, PhD (Hon), FRSC, FCAHS
James McGill Professor and Minda de Gunzburg Chair
Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology

Annual Report prepared by Gayle A. Shinder, PhD, Chair's Senior Advisor for Academic Programs, Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology.

Foreword by the Chair

In 2020 I created two task forces to address pressing needs in cancer control and care both locally and globally. The McGill Task Force on the Impact of COVID-19 on Cancer Control and Care was chaired by **Wilson Miller**. The goal of this task force was to prepare a contingency plan to mitigate risks for individuals with cancer in the McGill health network. The Task Force on Global Oncology was chaired by **Tarek Hijal**. The mandate of this task force was the development and implementation of a vision for global oncology education, research, policy, and service. I created this task force in response to a broader call for action in global health from the Faculty's School of Population and Global Health, and we shared information with them regarding the task force's activities. In January 2022, I restructured the two Task Forces as permanent programs in the department with their own funding lifelines. Wilson Miller continues as Director of the COVID-19 and Cancer Program while **Argerie Tsimicalis** was appointed as the Director of the Global Oncology Program when Tarek Hijal stepped down to take on a major ministerial role overseeing radiation oncology across the province.

On June 21, 2022, we held the Inaugural Celebration of Research and Training in Oncology (CORTO) at the Sofitel Hotel. The afternoon was dedicated to oral and poster presentations from oncology trainees. This was followed by a graduation ceremony and dinner. Additional information about this event is described further on in this report.

The 6th Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology Distinguished Lecture and Awards Ceremony was held on November 28, 2022, at the Faculty Club. This year's Distinguished Lecturer was John Ioannidis, Professor of Medicine, Stanford University. Departmental merit awards were presented to **Luke McCaffrey** (Research), **Sarkis Meterissian** (Clinical Service and Innovation), **Zeev Rosberger** (Teaching and Mentorship) and **Stephanie Larocque** (Academic, Clinical or Research Support). **Abraham Fuks**, former Dean of Medicine, was the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award.

We continued our popular "Focus on Faculty" profile series, which I began in June 2015. The following faculty members were profiled: Basic Cancer Research (**Simone Chevalier**, **Vincent Giguère**, **Abraham Fuks**); Hematologic Oncology (**Sarit Assouline**); Head and Neck Oncology (**Nader Sadeghi**); Medical Physics (**Ives Levesque**); Psychosocial Oncology (**Sylvie Lambert**); Radiation Oncology (**Tamim Niazi**, **Valerie Panet-Raymond**, **George Shenouda**, **Sonia Skamene**); Surgical Oncology (**Armen Aprikian**).

The Chair's Office of the Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology continues to coordinate the Rossy Cancer Network's Cancer Care Quality and Innovation (CQI) Research Fund and Education Fund (Skills Enhancement Grant and Kuok Fellowship) competitions. In the spring of 2022 four Research Fund Grants were awarded in response to the November 2021 Call for Applications. In November 2022 a new Call for Applications was announced. The Skills Enhancement Fund was restructured to encourage applications from a broad range of healthcare professionals. Further details about the Research Fund and Skills Enhancement Fund are in this report.

There were several Chair's Office changes in 2022. **Magali Lecavalier** replaced **Joanne Alfieri** as Director of the Radiation Oncology Residency Training Program, **Jamil Asselah** replaced **Thierry Alcindor** as Co-Director of the Visiting Speakers Program in Oncology, **Shideh Ahmadzadeh** replaced **Maria Fossetti** as coordinator of the Radiation Oncology Residency Training Program and **Tony Narine** was hired to coordinate the MORE sessions and assist with other Department tasks.

AEC-7, which provides services to the Department of Oncology, also underwent some staffing changes. **Subhobrata Das** replaced **Carolynna Olha** as Academic Affairs Administrator, **Allita Rodrigues** replaced

Min Yu as Senior Accounts Administrator and **Talina Van Essen** (Financial Administrator) was replaced by **Sally Crawford/Jenny Lee**.

On the subsequent pages we report just a small fraction of the many accomplishments of our large Department which has over 200 faculty members

Eduardo Franco, O.C., MPH, DrPH, PhD (Hon), FRSC, FCAHS
James McGill Professor
Minda de Gunzburg Chair in Oncology
Chair, Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology

Summary of Department Activities

1. COVID-19 and Cancer Program (Director: Wilson Miller)

- Rossy Cancer Network funding to assess impact of COVID-19 pandemic on cancer care pathways & outcomes in Québec using administrative data. Linkage with RCN registries allows combining cancer grade/stage information with medical claims & mortality data.
- RCN funding has enabled us to earn nearly \$1M in 3 new grants from CIHR.
- 5 completed projects, 3 ongoing.

2. Global Oncology Program (Director: Argerie Tsimicalis)

- May 18, 2022, was the Celebratory Launch of the Global Oncology Program as part of the McGill Bicentennial Global Health Week.
- On December 1st and 2nd McGill hosted the 2022 Global Oncology Workshop (Pan-Canadian). **Tarek Hijal, Zeev Rosberger** and **Argerie Tsimicalis** were co-Chairs. The Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology was a sponsor.
- **Fabio Cury** is taking the lead on drafting an MOU with Albert Einstein/Santa Catarina Hospitals in Sao Paulo, Brazil.
- A Barretos Cancer Hospital delegation visit took place on November 3, 4, 2022. Plans are underway to collaborate with them and an MOU will be drafted.

3. Rossy Cancer Network (RCN)

- 2021 CQI Research Fund Grants Awarded (awarded in 2022): **Fabio Cury, John Kildea, Annett Körner, Antonio Vigano**
- Launch of updated Skills Enhancement Fund grants – Applications are ongoing. Several received from nurses who are taking courses provided by the de Souza Institute.
- 2022 CQI Research Fund – Call for Applications: Deadline January 2023
- RCN Retreat (November 25, 2022)

4. Research and Publications

Cancer-related research, teaching and clinical care are conducted throughout McGill and its affiliated hospitals, namely at the Goodman Cancer Research Institute, the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) including the Cedars Cancer Centre and the MUHC Research Institute, the Jewish General Hospital (JGH) including the Segal Cancer Centre (Lady Davis Institute), St. Mary's Hospital Center (SMHC) and at the Department's headquarters located at 5100 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West, Suite 720. Cancer-related research activities at McGill include:

- Basic research focusing on understanding at the molecular, cellular, and tissue levels the development and growth of tumours and their resistance to therapy;
- Translational research for the development and testing of novel therapeutics; biomarkers, and molecular signatures as targets for cancer detection or treatment;
- Phase I, II and III clinical research studies testing the efficacy of new cancer treatment therapies;
- Radiation physics studies to improve the delivery of radiotherapy;
- Genetic studies of inherited susceptibility to cancer;
- Epidemiological studies of the etiology, prevention, screening, and prognosis for several cancers;
- Psychosocial research aimed at improving the emotional well-being and quality of life of cancer patients and their families, and managing pain and other symptoms of the disease;

- Health systems research aimed at improving the quality of cancer care and clinical outcomes.

Publications (full list: <https://www.mcgill.ca/oncology/about-department/annual-reports>)

5. Teaching and Learning

- **Inaugural Celebration of Research and Training in Oncology (CORTO) June 21, 2022**
 - ❖ Over 100 attendees for afternoon Keynote Address and trainee presentations
 - ❖ Over 70 attendees for dinner
 - ❖ Keynote Address: Dr. Christopher Booth (medical oncologist and health services researcher at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario)
 - ❖ Trainee Presentations: 10 oral, 48 poster
 - ❖ 9 Residents/Fellows, 21 PhD students, 19 MSc students, 6 Postdoctoral Fellows and 3 Graduate Diploma in Oncology students
 - ❖ Basic Science – Cancer Biology, Clinical Research – Medical Oncology, Clinical Research – Radiation Oncology, Clinical Research – Surgical Oncology, Epidemiology and Public Health, Medical Education, Medical Physics, Patient Education, Psychosocial Oncology, and Translational Oncology Research
 - ❖ Best Oral Presentation: Marina Fukano (PhD student)
 - ❖ Best Poster Presentations: Ian Gerard (Radiation Oncology Resident); François Panet and Matthew Young (Medical Oncology Residents); Seta Derderian (PhD student)
 - ❖ Graduation Ceremony: 6 Residents, 5 Fellows, 12 graduate students in Medical Physics, 4 Graduate Diploma in Oncology Students
- **Graduate Diploma in Oncology**
 - ❖ 2021-2022 (second cohort): 8 students (7 new and 1 part-time from 2020-2021 cohort). Of the 7 new students, 5 were full-time and 2 were part-time). By July 2022 there were 5 graduating students (4 new full-time and the part-time student from 2020-2021).
 - ❖ Launch of ONCO 611 – Proteomics for Precision Medicine and ONCO 645 – Seminars in Global Oncology in January 2022.
 - ❖ 2022-2023 (third cohort): 9 students (5 new full-time, 1 new part-time, 3 returning part-time).
 - ❖ Partnership with Department of Surgery: Two pathways to use Graduate Diploma in Oncology as a springboard to obtain MSc Non-thesis in Experimental Surgery
 - Option 1: Stackable Master’s: Graduate Diploma in Oncology and Graduate Certificate in Surgical Innovation
 - Option 2: MSc non-thesis in Experimental Surgery – Oncology Concentration which includes the 30 credits of coursework for the Graduate Diploma in Oncology
 - One student from 2020-2021 cohort is doing the Stackable Master’s
- Work underway to create Interdisciplinary Program in Cancer Sciences. Planning committee chaired by Aimee Ryan, Associate Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. The Department Chair’s Office (**Gayle Shinder, Luke McCaffrey**) is playing a key role in the planning process.
- **Undergraduate Medical Education (UGME)**
 - ❖ Participated for the first time in the McGill Program for International Medical Students, a virtual program for international medical students. Led a half-day session on oncology

Annual Report 2022 – Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology

with lectures and a workshop. The workshop leaders were from radiation oncology and medical oncology. Feedback was positive from the learners.

- ❖ Continued involvement in the TCP medical students' curriculum with lectures and attendance in tumor boards incorporated into the second-year curriculum to initiate students to oncology.
- ❖ A record number of medical students chose to pursue electives in oncology this past year especially in radiation oncology. The feedback from these students has been very positive.
- **Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME)**
 - ❖ MORE sessions were successful over the year, with good feedback from the trainees.
 - ❖ Radiation Oncology
 - Royal College Accreditation for 2 years (Action plan outcomes report in 2 years).
 - The two PGY5s of last year successfully passed their Royal College exam and graduated in June 2022.
 - All of the residents (PGY2-5) had presentations at both the Canadian Association of Radiation Oncology (CARO) and American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO) annual meetings in the fall of 2022.
 - Two awards were won by our residents at the CARO meeting.
 - The program resumed social activities in person to enhance the interaction between the trainees and faculty. Numerous events were held since the spring of 2022, including a welcome barbecue in the summer and 4 dinners.
 - After 2 years of having in-training exams done virtually, in-person exams were resumed in December 2022, allowing for a more thorough assessment of the various skills residents are expected to develop throughout their training.
 - ❖ Medical Oncology
 - Royal College Accreditation for 8 years.
 - Successful 2nd Annual Medical Oncology Career Day.
 - All four residents graduated and passed their Royal College exam.
 - Two residents won prize for best poster (joint project) at CORTO.
 - ❖ Surgical Oncology
 - Creation of the Peter Abraham Cedars Surgical Oncology Fellowship Fund.
 - Completed first workshop for Competency by Design in General Surgical Oncology (Dec 2022) with the creation of new entrustable professional activities and stages of training which is a new framework for the way we teach, coach and observe our trainees in their learning environment. To be implemented July 2025.
 - Hosted a successful 32nd Annual EJ Tabah Visiting Professor in Surgical Oncology (April 2022) featuring Chandrajit Raut - Professor of Surgery at Harvard Medical School and Chief of the Division of Surgical Oncology at Brigham and Women's Hospital. The residents and fellows were active participants.
- **Medical Physics Unit (MPU)**
 - ❖ The Medical Physics Unit had 24 PhD students, 13 MSc students, 1 graduate diploma student, and 12 medical physics residents in its CAMPEP-accredited education programs during 2022.
 - ❖ More than half of these students had external awards from NSERC, FRQS, FRQNT and the MSSS.
 - ❖ **Ives Levesque** renewed his NSERC Discovery Grant until 2027. **Shirin Enger** obtained a

Medteq+ grant, and **John Kildea** an RCN grant.

- ❖ Shirin Enger's lab once again organized the highly successful eight weeks long McMedHacks workshop on medical image analysis and deep learning, with more than 1000 attendees from 61 countries.
- ❖ The Opal Health Informatics Group hosted the first two Laurie J. Hendren summer-student scholars, funded by the Cedars Cancer Foundation.
- ❖ MPU students and investigators contributed 11 peer-reviewed publications in prestigious journals and made 64 conference presentations at international, national and provincial conferences. MPU faculty spoke as invited speakers at 7 international and national events.
- ❖ MPU students in the Enger and Kildea labs were successful in 3 young investigator competitions at international and national conferences.

• **Visiting Speakers Program in Oncology (2 in-person events in the fall)**

- ❖ Cora Sternberg (USA): Urothelial carcinoma (Virtual)
- ❖ Steven Treon (USA): Waldenstrom macroglobulinemia (Virtual)
- ❖ Elizabeth Smyth (UK): Esophageal cancer (Virtual)
- ❖ Hans Hammers (USA): Renal Cell Carcinoma (Virtual)
- ❖ Yelena Y. Janjigian (USA): Upper GI cancers (Virtual)
- ❖ Jason Luke (USA): Melanoma (In Person)
- ❖ Jennifer R. Brown (USA): Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia (Virtual)
- ❖ Xavier Leleu (France): Multiple Myeloma (Virtual)
- ❖ Matthew Galsky (USA): Muscle-invasive Urothelial Carcinoma (Virtual)
- ❖ Véronique Diéras (France): Breast cancer (In person)
- ❖ Fabrice Barlesi (France): Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (Virtual)
- ❖ Claudine Isaacs (USA): Breast cancer (Virtual)

6. Milestones

New Appointments

- **Christina Tsien** – Professor (Radiation Oncology)
- **Kim Ma** – Assistant Professor (Medical Oncology)
- **Nicholas Meti** – Assistant Professor (Medical Oncology)
- **Shereen Ghali** – Faculty Lecturer (Hematologic Oncology)
- **Sinziana Dumitra** – Associate Member (Surgical Oncology)
- **Véronique Fortier** – Associate Member (Medical Physics)
- **Justin Sanders** – Associate Member (Palliative Care)
- **Sabrina Wurzba** – Associate Member (Head and Neck Cancer)
- **Antonia Arnaert** – Associate Member (Psychosocial Oncology)
- **Ackeeem Joseph** – Affiliate Member – Change to Faculty Lecturer (Medical Physics)
- **Marie-Ève Letellier** – Affiliate Member (Lymphedema, Palliative Care)
- **Megan Doherty** – Adjunct Professor (Pediatric Palliative Care)
- **David Donath** – Adjunct Professor (Radiation Oncology)
- **Arezu Jahani-Asl** – Adjunct Professor (Basic Cancer Research)
- **Monica Serban** – Adjunct Professor (Medical Physics)
- **Jan Seuntjens** – Adjunct Professor (Medical Physics)
- **Marc Morcos** – Adjunct Professor (Medical Physics)

Other Appointments

- **Nicole Beauchemin** – Professor Emeritus (Basic Cancer Research)
- **Zeev Rosberger** – Changed primary appointment to Oncology

Departures

- **Thierry Alcindor** (left McGill to join Harvard)

Promotions and Tenure

- **Sonia del Rincon** - promoted to Associate Professor

Years of Service Milestones

15 Years: Erin Strumpf

20 Years: Nada Jabado

25 Years: Marie Duclos

30 Years: Michel Tremblay

35 Years: Pierre Laneuville, Alain Nepveu, Luis Souhami

40 Years: Pnina Brodt, Shafaat Rabbani

7. Honours, Awards and Prizes

- **Laurent Azoulay:** William Dawson Scholar
- **Julia Burnier:**
 - McGill Bravo Honoree, Research and Innovation
 - MUHC Foundation Research Competition, 1st prize
- **Fabio Cury:** 2022 Brazilian Society of Radiation Oncology's *Marie Curie Medal of Honor*
- **William Foulkes:** *Dr. Chew Wei Memorial Prize in Cancer Research* from the University of British Columbia
- **Eduardo Franco:**
 - Elected President (2022-24), Canadian Society for Epidemiology and Biostatistics
 - Selected as Incoming Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*
- **Carolyn Freeman:**
 - Inducted as Member of the Order of Canada
 - Cedars Visiting Professorship created in her name
- **Lucy Gilbert:**
 - Elected to serve on the McGill Board of Governors
 - *Robert Kinch Chair in Women's Health* in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
- **Phil Gold:** McGill University Medal for Exceptional Academic Achievement
- **Celia Greenwood:**
 - Elected to serve on the McGill Board of Governors
 - Leadership award, International Genetic Epidemiology Society 2022
- **Melissa Henry:** *Noemi Fisman Award for Lifetime Clinical Excellence* from the International Psycho-Oncology Society
- **Bernard Lapointe:** Inducted as Officer of the Order of Canada
- **Tamim Niazi:** His study *Conventional vs Hypofractionated radiotherapy for high-risk prostate cancer: 7-year outcomes of the randomized, non-inferiority, phase 3 PCS5 trial*, was selected for press release at the 2022 ASTRO Annual Meeting

Annual Report 2022 – Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology

- **Morag Park:**
 - Woman of Distinction 2022 from the Women's Y Foundation
 - One of two McGill researchers who have been awarded funding through the TRANSCAN international grant competition
- **Stéphane Richard:** Distinguished James McGill Professor
- **Michel Tremblay:** Honorary Doctorate from Université de Bordeaux in France
- **Argerie Tsimicalis:** *Carrie M. Derick Award for Graduate Supervision and Teaching* from McGill University
- **Michael Witcher:** CFI's John R. Evans Leaders Fund grant
- **Stephanie Wong:** *Emerging Scientist Award* from the Quebec Breast Cancer Foundation

McGill Bicentennial - Unsung Heroes of McGill: Robin Cohen, Gayle Shinder

FRQS Salary Awards

- **Chercheurs-boursiers de mérite:** Sarit Assouline, Laurent Azoulay
- **Chercheurs-boursiers:** Julia Burnier, Marc Fabian
- **Chercheurs-boursiers cliniciens:** Sinziana Dumitra, Melissa Henry, Annie Leung