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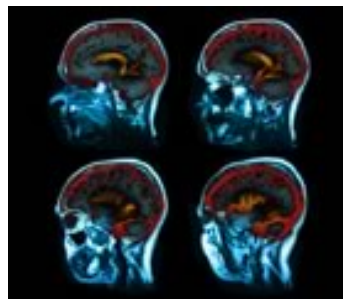
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CAMH Science: Centred on Discovery

Science Synopsis from the
Research Program
Volume One, Issue Three



From the Desk of Shitij Kapur, Chief of Research

We broke ground at our Queen Street site on October 5th, and took an important first step towards replacing an institution with a mixed-use urban village. This redeveloped location will integrate client care, research, education, policy and health promotion into the fabric of a revitalized community.

I am pleased to report that CAMH's Board of Trustees and Executive Leadership Team both approved an accelerated Master Plan to deliver the redevelopment faster, and to reduce the inevitable disruptions that a long-term construction project will cause. This new plan, which we are now discussing with the Province, will allow us to complete 90% of the entire site redevelopment by 2015.

This represents a major step forward for Research. In the original plan Research was in "Phase Four" and would have moved only after all the other programs. The new Master Plan

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brings forward in time the build for Research and provides direction for a building called the "Centre for Discovery & Knowledge Exchange". This building will integrate Research staff with the Policy, Education and Health Promotion (PEHP) program.

I am excited by this renewed vision of integration, which will create more opportunities for collaboration amongst researchers and between Research and PEHP. This setting will greatly increase our opportunities to work together to generate timely and relevant research. We will also be in a better position to translate these discoveries into improved clinical care, prevention and intervention initiatives, and public policy.

As noted under the newsletter's "Redevelopment Update" this revised plan includes changes to our Clinical Research Program. Staff in this area will be integrated into the clinical programs, allowing for closer interaction with clients, and providing a more comfortable environment for individuals participating in research studies.

These are exciting times in CAMH's history, and we will be sharing with you each new development and important milestone as we Transform Lives.

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Fall 2006 News and Events

Research Trainee Event a Success

CAMH is home to more than 100 post-doctoral fellows and graduate research students. These research trainees have interests that encompass science from the neuron to the neighbourhood. To help foster a sense of community amongst these diverse trainees, research staff and students joined together on November 22nd for an afternoon of munching and mingling at the CAMH Research Trainee Welcome Event. [more](#)

Research in the Media

CAMH's Research Program has been very active in the media. Since September, we've sent out eight press releases announcing exciting updates about pioneering discoveries and innovative projects. The news items ranged in topics from a \$1.7 million research project that will do an in-depth study of involvement in Big Brothers Big Sisters match relationships on the health of Canadian children, to a new depression model that offers a thorough explanation of how the "chemical imbalance" occurs in major depression.

Releasing this information kept our scientists busy with television,

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radio, and newspaper interviews. CBC, CP24, CTV.ca, and the Toronto Star were just a few of the media outlets that spoke with our scientist and shared our stories. Also, one of our press releases was among the ten most downloaded releases in the month of September on Canada Newswire, with a total of 357 downloads on the day it was released.

As Research at CAMH achieves new levels of excellence, we will have even more opportunities to expand the reach and impact of our scientific discoveries. By speaking with the media, we have an opportunity to educate people about the important work of our scientists, and show how our work is impacting client care today and in the future.

Visit the links below to view CAMH Research press releases:

[Suicide Prevention Day: New Study Links Suicide Mortality Rates to Alcohol-related Factors](#)

[Proof Positive: New Study Shows that Political Ideology Impacts Public Health](#)

[Alcoholics Anonymous membership may decrease alcohol-related homicides](#)

[1.7 Million Research Project with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada](#)

[Light Therapy Holds Promise for Treating Symptoms of Adult ADHD](#)

[New Depression Model Advances Disease Frontiers](#)

[Mental Disorders and Substance Abuse Costs Ontario \\$34 Billion](#)

[CAMH Signs Exclusive Technology
License Agreement with
Epigenomics AG](#)

**Research Office Services
Brochure**

Click [here](#) to view a copy of our
newest publication. (PDF only)

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Profile: Welcome Tony George, MD, FRCR(c)



Goal

- Make CAMH the epicentre of addictions and concurrent disorders education and research in Canada

Strategy

- Increase collaboration with other areas of research focus
- Translate basic knowledge into developing specialized treatment programs for clients
- Capitalize on CAMH's knowledge translation skills

Tactic

- Hire Tony George, M.D., FRCPC, Professor and Endowed Chair in Addiction Psychiatry, University of Toronto, and CAMH's new Head of Addictions Research and Concurrent Disorders Services

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Joining CAMH in September from Yale University, Dr. Tony George has ambitious plans to reinvigorate research and education initiatives for our Addictions and Concurrent Disorders programs.

His vision is rooted in knowledge generation and translation. "I'm interested in testing new treatments through efficacy studies, but at the same time we need to understand if these treatments work in the real world in order for them to be truly effective," said Dr. George. Understanding how to do treatment work in a community setting, and translating research findings into tools for clinicians will be key success factors for Addictions Research and Concurrent Disorders Services under his leadership.

Collaboration is another important component of his vision. For Dr. George, building bridges with other programs, and therefore working together to understand and treat complex disorders, is vital.

Dr. George describes his general research interests using the theme of addictions across the life span – from children and youth, to adults, and geriatric clients. His work examines targeted interventions at all stages of life, and he's also interested in understanding what concurrent addictions across the lifespan can tell us about the underpinnings of mental illness.

"We're still trying to figure out which comes first, a psychiatric disorder or an addiction," said Dr. George. By working with other scientists with different expertise, and studying these problems at all stages of life, "we have an incredible opportunity to share common interests and values, and more fully understand all the elements that influence mental

illness and addiction.”

Working a researcher, clinician and administrator, Tony George has big plans for taking our work to the next level of excellence. Making CAMH the epicentre of addictions and concurrent disorders research, education and clinical care in Canada, is an ambitious goal. But for Dr. George, “if CAMH isn’t considered one of the top research and education centers in the world within ten years, then I haven’t done my job.”

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Redevelopment Update: Clinical Research and the New CAMH

October 5th marked the beginning of the first phase of the multi-year, multi-phased redevelopment of our Queen Street site. Work began on three Alternate Milieu buildings, and a related administrative and ambulatory patient care building. These four new buildings are scheduled to house both the Addictions and Mood and Anxiety Programs by December 2007. And we are now discussing an accelerated Fine Tuned Master Plan with the Province, which will allow us to complete 90% of the entire site redevelopment by 2015.

This accelerated plan brings exciting changes for Clinical Research staff. Rather than working in one centralized building as originally planned– the "Centre for Discovery & Knowledge Exchange" – staff in this area will now be integrated into the buildings containing clinical programs. This means that some Addictions, and Mood and Anxiety Clinical Research staff are scheduled to be at Queen Street by the end of 2007.

Clinical Research staff are currently integrated into our clinical programs. Continuing this integrated approach to research and care creates a more welcoming and comfortable



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environment for both clients and individuals participating in research studies. Clinical Research staff will also continue to have closer interaction with clients, all of which will improve client care and extend the reach and impact of CAMH Research.

replacing an institution with
an urban village

This element of Integration is an important component of the new CAMH. It is not only the Clinical Research program that will experience this kind of environment. Our entire new site will bring together client care, research, health promotion, prevention, policy and education into a revitalized community.

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Are Single Mothers at Higher Risk for Psychiatric Disorders?

Approximately 20% of Canadian families are single headed by single parents, and women head 80% of these families. Although the increased risk for psychiatric disorder among single mothers is well established, several gaps remain in our understanding of the relationship between family structure and psychiatric outcomes.

If we are to understand the relationship between family structure and maternal mental health, it is necessary to examine whether rates of mental illness differ between divorced or separated and never-married single mothers. A recent study, under the direction of Dr. John Cairney, examined the differences between single and married mothers in the prevalence of psychiatric and substance use disorders over a 12-month period.

The data indicated that it was previously married mothers who had higher rates of mental illness, compared with married mothers. Previously married mothers also had higher rates of depressive disorders and alcohol abuse, compared to married and never-married mothers.

Dr. Cairney and his team also discovered that single mothers

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who were never married and married mothers have similar prevalence rates of psychiatric and substance use disorders. These rates are generally lower than prevalences among women who experience a disruption in their marriage. This pattern of results suggests a vulnerability to psychiatric and substance use disorders that is specific to divorced or separated women with children, not married and never-married mothers.

This data is important for clinicians to consider. Dr. Cairney and his team suggest that clinicians look the impact of marital history on the relationship between family structure and psychiatric outcomes, and carefully screen for psychiatric and substance use disorders in mothers who've experienced marital disruption.

Visit <http://www.cpa-apc.org:8080/Publications/Archives/CJP/2006/september/cjp-sept-06-cairney-BC.pdf> for a full PDF copy of this study.

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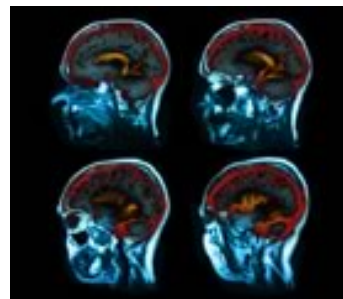
CAMH Signs License Agreement with Leading Epigenetic Company

CAMH recently signed a license agreement with *Epigenomics AG*, a German-based biotechnology company that is a world leader in the field epigenetic research. This agreement was for a large-scale epigenomic profiling system, developed by CAMH scientists under the direction of Dr. Arturas Petronis. The epigenetic profiling system uses microarrays - small pieces of glass containing microscopic elements that enable scientists to investigate the epigenetic status of thousands of different genes.

At CAMH this technology is now being used in the research of epigenetic defects in psychiatric patients. A number of innovative ideas developed in this novel system were submitted to the international patent office for protection of intellectual property.

This license agreement is an example of a business transaction that will maximize the reach and impact of research, as this platform technology will be used as a diagnostic tool in regards to multiple complex diseases and can help to develop new therapeutic approaches.

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Visit [CAMH Signs Exclusive Technology License Agreement with Epigenomics AG](#) for more details on this announcement.

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Identifying a Potential Target for Treating Impaired Cognition in Schizophrenia

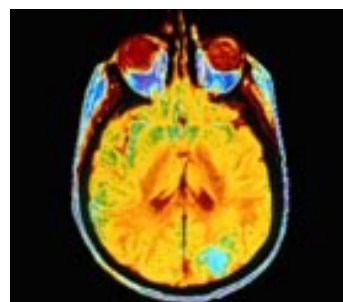
Dr. Paul Fletcher and colleagues examined the effects of repeated treatment with a stimulant, amphetamine, on rats' performance in a test that measures sustained visual attention. Scientists studied this behaviour because it is known to require the prefrontal cortex, the front portion of the front part of the brain.

Dr. Fletcher and this team first trained rats to respond to a brief light stimulus. Once rats learned to respond to the light, they were treated with amphetamine. Dr. Fletcher and his colleagues noted that amphetamine-treated rats less accurately responded to the light and experienced errors of omission.

These results indicate that exposure to amphetamine brings on a long-lasting deficit in visual attention. However, both the reduced accuracy, and increased omissions, seen in amphetamine-treated rats, were reversed by injecting the rats with a D1 receptor agonist.

These results add to a growing list of deficits suggesting that an amphetamine- sensitized state may resemble the cognitive deficits experienced by individuals with schizophrenia. The reversal of

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these deficits by a D1 receptor agonist provides further evidence that prefrontal D1 dopamine receptors are involved in cognition, and may be a potential target for treatment of impaired cognition in schizophrenia.

Visit <http://www.nature.com/npp/journal/vaop/ncurrent/abs/1301221a.html> to view the article abstract.

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Demonstrating a Link between Child Pornography and Pedophilia

Justice statistics suggest that there is an increase in the child pornography investigations. Given this, clinicians may be asked more often to assess child pornography offenders. A particularly useful question during assessment is whether a child pornography offender is a pedophile. CAMH's Drs. Michael Seto, James Cantor and Ray Blanchard published a study in the Journal of Abnormal Psychology, entitled Child Pornography Offenses Are a Valid Diagnostic Indicator of Pedophilia, which investigated whether child pornography offenses are a valid diagnostic indicator of pedophilia.

Using a sample of 685 male patients referred to CAMH between 1995 and 2004, the study showed that 61% of child pornography offenders, 35% of offenders with child victims, 13% of offenders with adult victims, and 22% of general sexology patients met diagnostic criteria for pedophilia by showing greater sexual arousal to stimuli depicting children than to stimuli depicting adults in the laboratory. In other words, child pornography offenders were almost twice as likely of being identified as a pedophile, compared to the participants identified as offenders against children (sexual offenses against children 14 or young)

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The results indicate that child pornography offending is a valid diagnostic indicator of pedophilia. This group was significantly more likely to show a pedophilic pattern of sexual arousal during testing compared to the other study groups. The results suggest that child pornography offending might be a stronger indicator of pedophilia than is sexually offending against a child. In fact, child pornography offenders - regardless of whether they had a history of sexual offenses against children - were more likely than child offenders to show a pattern of sexual arousal consistent with the pattern of identified pedophiles.

Currently, clinicians rely on three potential sources of information when considering a diagnosis of pedophilia: self-report, a history of sexual behaviour involving children, and psychological assessment. While useful, these methods do have limitations. These results from Dr. Seto and colleagues may be a particularly helpful diagnostic tool in circumstances in which a person denies a sexual interest in prepubescent children, or has no documented history of sexual behaviour involving children.

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