



Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute

Welcomes First Scientific and Executive Recruits

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Thunder Bay –Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute’s Board of Directors and partners introduced the institute’s first three scientists and first Chief Research Officer in a press conference today.

The three scientists will work under Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute’s flagship program, the Molecular Medicine Research Centre (MMRC). The MMRC will focus on developing new molecular imaging technology and advanced diagnostics for the treatment and diagnosis of cancer.

The event was attended by several distinguished guests including Ontario’s Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long Term Care, George Smitherman; Minister of Northern Development and Mines, Michael Gravelle; and Bill Mauro, MPP Thunder Bay-Atikokan.

“Research and Innovation is the future of cancer care in Thunder Bay and in Ontario,” said Minister Smitherman. “The research that will be done in Thunder Bay will help develop new technologies so we can detect cancer earlier and treat it less invasively. It will attract new physicians and scientists to the region with its leading-edge collaborative work environment.”

“I am delighted that this continues to be a very good news story for Northern Ontario,” said Minister Gravelle. “World-class scientists attract other world-class scientists, all of whom attract research and development dollars to our region and help stimulate our economy in the North.”

The MMRC is a unique, cross-Ontario collaboration involving Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, Lakehead University, Philips Healthcare and Cancer Care Ontario.

“Cancer Care Ontario is extremely proud to be a supporting partner of the MMRC,” said Dr. Michael Sherar, VP Regional Programs, Cancer Care Ontario. “One of the key priorities in the recently released Ontario Cancer Plan involves ensuring that research is rapidly applied to improve cancer prevention and clinical practice. The translational research that will be done in Thunder Bay will see scientists and clinicians working closely together to find cancer early and apply the best possible treatment.”

The new recruits include Dr. Alla Reznik, who is investigating the development of a new generation of Positron Emission Tomography (PET) imagers to detect cancer earlier. Joining her are Dr. Laura Curiel and Dr. Samuel Pichardo, who specialize in the development of High-Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU) technology that destroys cancers with heat, allowing for less invasive treatments. All three have been working with Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and will continue collaborating closely with their colleagues in Toronto.

“The recruitment efforts of Mr. Michael Power, Acting CEO, Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute, and Dr. John Rowlands, Founding Scientific Director, MMRC, have been tremendously successful. These are world-class scientists, and we are fortunate to have them among the first members of our team,” said Mr. Keith Jobbitt, Chair of the Board, Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute.

The board also welcomed two new members: Mr. Ron Saddington, President and CEO, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre and Dr. Michael Julius, Vice President Research, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre.

Dr. Mark Poznansky announced as first Chief Research Officer

In addition to the three scientists, Dr. Mark Poznansky, former President and Scientific Director of Robarts Research Institute, was announced as Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute’s Chief Research Officer.

“What is growing here under the Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute will have significant impact on the future of healthcare. This is evident in the caliber of the molecular imaging experts who have been recruited for the MMRC program. The research institute is off to an impressive start, and I’m pleased to be involved in its development,” Dr. Poznansky said. “With the pursuit of scientific excellence, we are committed to the notion of job and wealth creation for the people of Thunder Bay.”

“Dr. Poznansky brings a wealth of experience in growing a world-class research institute through his work with Robarts. He will be a tremendous asset to our team,” said Mr. Michael Power, Acting CEO, Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute.