



DEPARTMENT AWARDS OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS

The Department of Medicine’s Annual Awards Banquet was held on Tuesday, May 5. The event celebrated faculty and residents and recognized the achievements and accomplishments within the department.

Awards were presented to winners in several categories, with awards in the areas of clinical, teaching research and administrative, to both residents and faculty. Among these awards were dedicated research awards, presented to winners of the resident and faculty Research Days respectively. Special guests included Dr. Janet Tootoosis, USask Vice-Dean of Indigenous Health, Megan Truscott, USask Director of Research of the Office of the Vice-Dean Research and Clinical Trial Support Unit, Jennifer Molloy, Chief Executive Officer of the Royal University Hospital Foundation, and Cheryl Kloppenburg, the Kloppenburg Award donor.

CONTENTS

Achievements	1	Awards	5-7
Message, Updates	2	Publications	7
Getting to Know	3	News, Funding	8
Success, Connecting	4	Events, Reminders, Contact	9



Visit our department website for the latest news and information.

Message from the Provincial Head



Happy (slightly snowy) spring! As we close out this academic year, I would like to thank all members of the department, from faculty to residents to staff, for their ongoing contributions to advance our academic, research, and clinical goals.

Congratulations to our PGY3 Core Internal Medicine residents and fellows in our subspecialty programs as they prepare to embark on the next chapter of their training and careers. We look forward to watching your continued growth and the wonderful things you will accomplish moving ahead.

Recently, our department gathered in Saskatoon for our Annual Awards Banquet. We celebrated the

many accomplishments of our faculty and residents together. Congratulations again to all the award winners and thank you to everyone who helped make the evening a success.

We are looking forward to welcoming a new group of residents in July. We have a few welcoming events planned in both Saskatoon and Regina; please look out for more details that will be announced in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,
Dr. Haissam Haddad, O.C.,
S.O.M., MD, FRCPC, FRCP Edin,
CCPE

Professor and Head
Department of Medicine
University of Saskatchewan
Louis Horlick Chair in Medicine
Provincial Head, Medicine

Research Update



I hope that everyone had a great spring as we move into summer to close the academic year.

Our last term started with a work in progress meeting where we heard from Dr. George Katselis and Dr. Cari McIlduff (Community Health and Epidemiology) on working with Indigenous communities. We were also able to hear from Dr. Sharyle Fowler and her team including Dr. Juan-Nicolas Pena-Sanchez and Colten Brass about “Working with Indigenous Community Members in Saskatchewan: Our journey to advocate and work collaboratively for better health care and wellness among Indigenous persons living with inflammatory bowel disease” as part of research rounds.

In May, we held our annual Department of Medicine Faculty Research Day. The event was well attended with excellent presentations and

discussion. We would like to thank all of the presenters and attendees. At this event, Dr. Haddad was the keynote speaker and reflected on his journey into research as a clinician and his move to Saskatchewan. We also heard about the research being conducted by 10 researchers in the department, representing eight divisions. Based on these presentations, Drs. Kerri Schellenberg (First), Ben Leis (Second), and Christina (Tia) Shaw (Third) received research presentation awards at the Department of Medicine Annual Banquet. Congratulations and thanks to all of the presenters!

Over the past few months, we were very excited to hear about several DOM researchers receiving CIHR funding in lead roles. This includes Dr. Julian Tam (Function of pulmonary ionocytes and club cells in human airway and their contribution to cystic fibrosis lung disease), Drs. Sharyle Fowler and Mina Niazi (Innovating gastroenterology and hepatology care with First Nations and Métis community members in Saskatchewan through patient navigation), and Dr. Angelica Lang along with Drs. Katselis, Kirychuk, and Koehncke (Safety and Health in Agricultural and Rural Populations (SHARP): Partnering for Success).

Faculty Updates

Dr. Moyosore Abimboye and **Dr. Sanchit Bhasin** are now Regina co-area leads.

Thank you to **Dr. Bonnie Richardson** for previously serving in this role.

Welcome to the new faculty recruits to our department:

- **Dr. Kathryn Whittemore**, GIM, Regina
- **Dr. Chance McDougall**, Rheumatology, Regina
- **Dr. Preston Njaa**, GIM, Saskatoon
- **Dr. Anmol Gupta**, GIM, Regina
- **Dr. Cathrine Gouden**, GIM, Prince Albert

Staff Updates

Welcome to the new staff in our department:

- **Olivia Torpey**, Department and Program Administrator
- **Rhonda Haase**, Regina Core IM Program Administrator
- **Heather McKenzie**, Regina Core IM Program Administrator

Please remember that there are several research grant deadlines approaching in the next few months. You may want to keep an eye on the announcement emails coming your way and start looking ahead to these to plan future projects.

If you are looking for specific research opportunities or would like to speak with someone about moving into research or advancing your research program, please contact Dr. Ozlem Sari (ozlem.sari@usask.ca), the DOM Research Facilitator. Also, if you have some suggestions for improving research support, please contact Dr. Sari. Finally, please remember that the DOM offers biostatistical support with our biostatistician, Minyoung Kim.

Best of luck in all your research activities!

Dr. Josh Lawson
Director of Research,
Department of Medicine



Getting to Know...

Meet some of our wonderful researchers, faculty, and administrators



Researcher profile: Dr. Jeffrey Marciniuk

A Q-and-A with Dr. Jeffrey Marciniuk, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine in the Division of Respiriology and Sleep Medicine.

Could you provide a short description of your background?

I graduated from the University of Saskatchewan (USask) Medical School in 2016 and completed Internal Medicine and Respiriology subspecialty training in 2023. I then undertook a one-year fellowship in Airways Disease and Pulmonary Rehabilitation at McGill University under the supervision of Dr. Jean Bourbeau. In my free time I enjoy skiing in the winter and camping and fishing in the summer (all of which I do with my adorable husky, Scout).

What is your area of research?

Clinical physiology and airways disease with a focus on Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and Pulmonary Rehabilitation. I recently completed a project reviewing the role of overnight bi-level ventilation in COPD and am currently working on a project evaluating sub-lingual fentanyl for the acute relief of breathlessness in COPD. I've also been recently awarded funding from the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation to evaluate the impact of a post-acute exacerbation of COPD hospital discharge airways clinic.

Could you tell us about the "big moments of research" for you?

I am currently wrapping up a project on sub-lingual fentanyl on breathlessness in COPD that I have been designing and working on for over four years, dating back to my fellowship at McGill. It has been extremely rewarding to begin to see the results and implications of these results for something I have spent such a long time working on. Presenting the results recently at the Canadian Respiratory Conference was also an excellent full circle moment as many of my peers and colleagues across Canada gave excellent feedback and advice on future directions.

Do you have any advice/messages for early-career researchers?

Identify mentors and utilize their expertise. Don't be afraid to ask for advice and recommendations. Find topics and areas that you find interesting and consider research questions that expand upon those interests. It is important to find and work with others that are successful in research. But the first and most important thing is to get started in research.

What are your future aspirations for research?

To continue to maintain and build on the current research being done at the USask Department of Medicine in the fields of airways disease and pulmonary rehabilitation. Additionally, to foster relationships with other researchers in Canada and internationally to develop and participate in multi-site clinical research studies.



Administrator profile: Jeane Magsakay

Jeane Magsakay is one of the Saskatoon Core Internal Medicine Program Administrators for the Department of Medicine.

Hi, I'm Jeane Magsakay. I joined the department in November 2025 and I'm one of three program administrators helping manage the day-to-day admin chaos in Saskatoon. I handle assessments, records, and whatever else lands on my desk. I take academic half day attendance, organize lunch orders, process resident reimbursements (and yes, chase people down for missing detailed receipts), and help pull off big academic events like Research Days, Objective Structured Clinical Exams, and AMBOSS exams. I also regularly bug residents to send me their elective supervisor's name and email.

I'm originally from the Philippines and my background is in Health Information Management. I'm a Certified Health Information Management (CHIM) professional, and before joining the department, I worked with the Saskatchewan Health Authority reviewing clinical documentation, both paper and electronic. I also worked on classifying diseases and interventions to make sure everything is standardized for clinical, financial, and legal use. In a nutshell, CHIM professionals care for patients by taking care of their data, and we're responsible for the quality, integrity, security, and protection of health information.

Outside of work, I love camping and spending as much time outdoors as I can during the summer. In the winter, I try to pick up a new hobby, and I recently learned basic crochet. I'm still at the stage where everything turns into a "creative" shape, but I'm calling it progress.

Celebrating our Success

Recognizing the awards and achievements made by our department

Dr. Eric Noyes has been awarded a one-year Innovation grant for \$50,000 co-funded by SHRF and Parkinson Canada for his project: 'Sebum and Cerumen Analysis for the Identification of Biomarkers in Parkinson's Disease and Related Disorders.'

Dr. Eric Noyes also received one of two New Investigator Awards for \$135,000 from Parkinson Canada for his project: 'Early surveillance of brain connectivity changes in Parkinson's disease during the conversion of minor hallucinations to psychosis and dementia.'

Dr. Bashir Daud Shah received one of five Clinical Movement Disorders Fellowships for \$75,000 from Parkinson Canada for his clinical fellowship training for 2026-27.

Dr. Eric Noyes and Dr. Alex Rajput are co-investigators (PI – Dr. Chris Phenix, Dept of Chemistry) for a two-year Impact Grant for \$150,000 co-funded by SHRF and Brain Canada for the project: 'Validating GBA activity-based profiling assays in human samples.'

Congratulations to all of our amazing faculty and staff!

We're so lucky to have you!

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

Connecting Colleagues



St. Paul's Hospital Medicine doctors faced off against Surgeons in a hockey game at Merlis Belsher Arena. Thank you to St. Paul's Hospital & Foundation and Emmanuel Health for helping sponsor this fun event.



The department's administrative staff celebrated Administration Appreciation Day on April 22, 2026, by visiting Twig and Bloom to make flower arrangements.



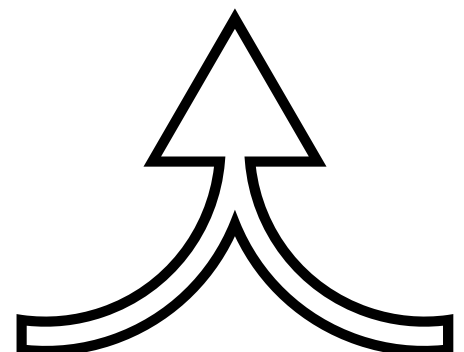
The Department also held its annual awards banquet on May 5, 2026. Thank you to all who attended, congratulations to all the award winners, and a special thanks to Kathy Lanceleve for organizing this wonderful event.



The Core IM program held their Resident Research Days on April 21 and 28, 2026. Thank you to all staff and faculty who helped to run this wonderful showcase.



The Department held its annual Faculty Research Day on May 1, 2026. The event had a great turnout and saw many amazing presentations, as well as a keynote speech from the Provincial Department Head, Dr. Haissam Haddad. Thank you to everyone who contributed to make this day a success.



Annual Banquet (cont'd from P1)

Photos by Dave Stobbe

Provincial Head Awards

The Provincial Head Awards were presented by Dr. Haissam Haddad (Provincial Department Head and Professor of Cardiology, Department of Medicine) to recognize the outstanding contributions of department members.

- Administrator of the Year: **Dr. Shelley Kirychuk** (Director CCRAH, Division Head Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Associate Professor)



- Clinician of the Year: **Dr. Anil Bedi** (Assistant Professor, Division Head, Gastroenterology and Hepatology)



- Researcher of the Year: **Dr. Kerri Schellenberg** (Associate Professor Neurology)



- Teacher of the Year: **Dr. Gary Hunter** (Associate Professor, Division Head, Neurology)



Faculty Awards

The faculty awards were voted on by Core Internal Medicine (IM) residents to recognize teaching excellence within the department. Awards were presented by **Dr. Haissam Haddad** (Provincial Department Head and Professor of Cardiology, Department of Medicine).

- Teacher of the Year, Saskatoon: **Dr. Linden Kolbenson** (Assistant Professor GIM)



- Teacher of the Year, Regina: **Dr. Krystyna Wang** (GIM) (No Photo)
 - *Awarded for excellence in informal and formal teaching.*
- Bedside Teacher of the Year, Saskatoon: **Dr. Ben Leis** (GIM, Cardiology)



- Bedside Teacher of the Year, Regina: **Dr. Moyosore Abimboye** (GIM)
 - *Awarded for outstanding bedside teaching.*
- Distinguished Lecturer Award: **Dr. Nabeel Samad** (GIM)
 - *Awarded for outstanding contribution to Grand Rounds, Academic Half Day or Subspecialty Rounds.*



Faculty Research Day Awards

The Department of Medicine's Faculty Research Day was held on May 2. Awards were presented at the Annual Banquet by Dr. Josh Lawson, the Director of Research for the Department of Medicine.

- First place presentation: **Dr. Kerri Schellenberg** (Neurology)



- Second place presentation: **Dr. Ben Leis** (GIM and Cardiology)



Annual Banquet (cont'd)

Faculty Research Day Awards (Cont'd)

- Third place presentation: Third: **Dr. Tia Shaw** (Geriatrics)



Resident Awards

The following awards were voted on by faculty – and residents where noted – and awarded to residents in the Core IM program. The awards were presented by **Dr. Jon Dean** (Assistant Professor GIM, Core IM Program Director).

- David Cotton Award: **Dr. Addison Bertrand**
 - Awarded to the junior resident who best displays the qualities of professionalism, accountability, commitment to excellence, duty, integrity and respect for patients and colleagues.



- Ian Holmes Award: **Dr. Kwame Asiamah**
 - Presented to the senior resident who best displays the qualities of professionalism, accountability, commitment to excellence, duty, integrity and respect for patients and colleagues.



- T. W. Wilson Spirit Award, Saskatoon: **Dr. Aidan Kwok**



- T. W. Wilson Spirit Award, Regina: **Drs. Muzzafar Haque (right) and John Hick (left)**
 - Awarded by the internal medicine residents to the resident(s) whose outstanding contribution to the program helped to build a rewarding and positive environment, motivating and inspiring his or her colleagues.



- The Alex Trebek Award, Saskatoon: **Dr. Talha Salman**



- The Alex Trebek Award, Regina: **Dr. Muzzafar Haque** (No photo)
 - Awarded to the senior resident(s) who best demonstrates excellence in bedside teaching, informal teaching, morning report teaching or any other teaching activities.

- Special thanks to: **Christina Sparrow**



Resident Research Awards

These resident research awards were based on the results of resident research days conducted in fall 2025 and spring 2026. These awards were presented by **Dr. Jon Dean** (Assistant Professor GIM, Core IM Program Director).

- PGY2 Fall Research Days First Prize: **Dr. Shivani Bhat**



- PGY2 Fall Research Days Second Prize: **Dr. Arshdeep Marwaha**



- PGY2 Fall Research Days Third Prize: **Dr. Nick Robichaud**

Annual Banquet (cont'd)

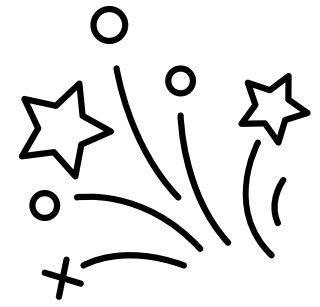
Resident Research Day Awards (Cont'd)

- PGY1 Case Presentations First Prize: **Dr. Julia Cahill**



- PGY1 Case Presentations Second Prize: **Dr. Claire DuVal**
- PGY1 Case Presentations Third Prize: **Dr. Maricris Beautista**

- The Kloppenburg Resident Research Prize in Medicine: **Dr. Arshdeep Marwaha**
 - Awarded to the PGY3 resident who has displayed consistent excellence in resident research throughout three core years of internal medicine training. Presented by Dr. Jon Dean and Cheryl Kloppenburg.



Congratulations to all of our amazing faculty and residents!

We're so lucky to have you!

Publications of Note

Circulating Markers of Biological Aging Associated with Obstructive Sleep Apnea or Insomnia in Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

Chang THC, Hicks JB, Izadi Z, **Marwaha A**, Allen AH, Hajipour M, Conklin AI, Ayas NT.

Summary: This systematic review and meta-analysis evaluates how sleep disorders are associated with biological aging. Given that quality sleep is essential, this piece reviews how sleep disorders such as Obstructive Sleep Apnea or insomnia may accelerate biologic aging through the analyzed biomarkers and lead to more adverse health effects.

Link:
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41655394/>

BEAT-BK: An Adaptive, Randomized Controlled Trial to Treat Polyomavirus Infections (BKPyV) in Kidney and Kidney-pancreas Transplantation Recipients (BEAT-BK) Study Protocol

Gately R, Dymock M, Sabanayagam D, Campbell SB, Craig JC, Dharnidharka V, Francis A, Gleadle JM, Hajek M, Hamilton S, Howell M, Isbel N, Jaure A, Johnson DW, Kanellis J, Keung K, Kim S, Kok J, Kuypers DR, Larkins N, Lim WH, **Mainra R**, Marsh JA, Mihala G, Nankivell BJ, Ng S, Pilmore H, Scholes-Roberton N, Snelling T, Teixeira-Pinto A, Valks A, Yong K, Hawley C, Wong G.

Summary: This trial compares immunosuppression reduction with or without intravenous immunoglobulin in kidney and pancreas-kidney transplant recipients with BK polyomavirus, a common infection in kidney transplant recipients that reactivates during immunosuppression. The results of this trial provide evidence on how to best balance immunosuppression and infection risk in posttransplant care.

Link:
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41799026/>

End-of-Life Communication in the Context of MAID: A Qualitative Study on the Perspectives and Preferences of Individuals Living with MS

Brown J, Ashraf MN, Thorpe L, Herter L, Knox KB, **Levin MC, Poliakov I.**

Summary: This qualitative study analyzes interviews with individuals living with multiple sclerosis (MS) and healthcare professionals regarding end-of-life care options, particularly with regard to medical assistance in dying (MAID). Findings highlight the need for trust, good and balanced communication, and importance of addressing misinformation and disinformation to allow for informed and person-centred decision making.

Link:
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/41965586/>

Find the latest research publications from our department on [our website](#) or by using the QR Code:



Your Support is Advancing Life-Saving Heart Care at RUH



Dr. Jason Orvold, Cardiologist and Division Head of Cardiology, in the new EP Lab.

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our community – including the Department of Medicine’s Academic Members – Saskatchewan patients are now benefiting from newly renovated, state-of-the-art interventional cardiology suites at Royal University Hospital (RUH), made possible through a \$5.5 million donor-funded investment by the RUH Foundation.

The upgraded Walter and Margaret McNabb Interventional Cardiology Suite replaces aging infrastructure with advanced technology that supports critical cardiac catheterization and electrophysiology procedures. This important modernization improves efficiency, reduces delays, and enhances safety for both patients and care teams delivering time-sensitive interventions.

Completed at the end of 2025, the suites are fully operational and will support more than 4,000 procedures per year, serving patients referred from across Saskatchewan for advanced heart care.

This milestone reflects the powerful impact of donor partnership in bringing leading-edge innovation and improved outcomes to the people who rely on RUH.

Learn more at ruhf.org.

Department of Medicine in the News

Article: New technology reduces wait times for RUN cardiac patients. 650 CKOM. (Dr. Jason Orvold, Dr. Chris Pekrul, Cardiology).

<https://www.ckom.com/2026/01/30/new-technology-reduces-wait-times-for-ruh-cardiac-patients/>



Article: ICU bereavement project born from loss, compassion in Saskatoon hospitals. Discover Humboldt. (Dr. Sabira Valiani, GIM and Critical Care).

<https://discoverhumboldt.com/articles/part-i---icu-bereavement-project-born-from-loss-compassion-in-saskatoon-hospitals->



Article: Technology, community mapping expand reach of ICU bereavement support. Discover Humboldt. (Dr. Sabira Valiani, GIM and Critical Care).

<https://discoverhumboldt.com/articles/part-ii---technology-community-mapping-expand-reach-of-icu-bereavement-support->



Current Research Funding Opportunities

SHRF 2025-26 Mobilize Grant in Reconciliation and Indigenous health

Area of Focus: Reconciliation and Indigenous health

To support knowledge mobilization activities in relevant and practical settings and mediums, with the aim of improving the applicability and impact of health research in Saskatchewan. Proposed activities must address any of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action.

Deadline: Continuous intake

[Opportunities](#) | [Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation](#) | [Canada](#)



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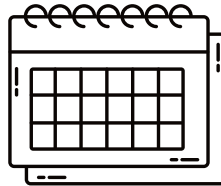
Dr. Jeffrey Marciniuk, Assistant Professor Respiriology and Sleep Medicine - Department of Medicine

Jeanne Magsakay, Saskatoon Core IM Program Administrator - Department of Medicine

We acknowledge that we live and work on includes the Treaties 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 Territories and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

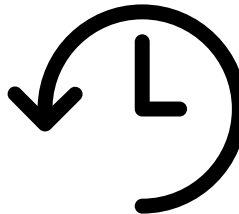
Events

Grand Rounds will resume on September 10, 2025.



Reminders

- All department faculty must provide a profile photo for our website. Please send a photo or send a photography request to DoM.Communications@usask.ca. Need to update your profile? Contact us too!
- Share your successes! If you have a 'win' to share, contact our communications specialist!



We want your feedback! What do you think of Internal Insights?

Internal Insights is YOUR newsletter. Get to know each other by sharing information about your special projects, upcoming events, as well as personal and professional success stories. Email DoM.Communications@usask.ca with your events, activities, photos, and anything else that you think would be interesting to your colleagues in the department.



Questions? Comments? Accessibility concerns? Send an email to the Department of Medicine Communications team at DoM.Communications@usask.ca.

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To see past newsletters please visit our Department of Medicine website:



<https://medicine.usask.ca/department/clinical/medicine-pages/internal-insights-newsletter.php>



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MS CLINICAL RESEARCH
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