

Peer Support Networks for People with Chronic Pain

Chronic non-cancer pain significantly affects the quality of life for many adults, creating complex management challenges. Nearly 8 million people in Canada experience chronic pain, and many of them face significant barriers to receiving the care they need.¹ A promising intervention for chronic pain is peer support, in which patients and families can share their lived experiences, connect with others, and exchange knowledge about pain management. Thus, this project aims to explore the dynamics of peer support for these individuals and its implications for both patients and healthcare providers.

A scoping review will be conducted to investigate clinicians' perspectives on peer support, assess how its availability influences care delivery, examine how peer support programs enhance overall care frameworks, and evaluate the impact on the well-being of peer support facilitators. Concurrently, a systematic review will analyze existing literature on the effectiveness of peer support interventions for community-dwelling adults coping with chronic non-cancer pain. Together, these approaches will provide comprehensive insights into peer support's role in improving care outcomes and patient experiences.

The dissemination plan includes two evening Café Scientifiques that took place in Halifax and Ottawa and a full-day education event planned in St. John's. These events gather together individuals living with pain, clinical experts, and pain-focused organizations. The agenda in St. John's will feature discussions on pain management, peer support, research findings, and available resources, along with a workshop empowering individuals with lived experience to provide peer support. This initiative aims to enhance knowledge translation, fostering collaboration among individuals living with pain, clinical experts, and relevant organizations.

Virginia McIntyre

President, People in Pain Network
Patient and Public Partner, SPOR Evidence Alliance

In 2009, Virginia developed persistent pain after a shoulder surgery. She works extensively as a lived experience partner on research projects, pain initiatives, and is a proud member on several committees which include; Pain Canada National Advisory Committee, Canadian Pain Society (CPS) Communication committee, Atlantic Mentorship Network Advisory Committee and Chair of the CPS People with Lived Experience (PWLE) Committee. Virginia is a public presenter, and a guest speaker for local universities, focusing on pain related topics with a committed diligence to increase awareness on chronic pain.



Jennifer Donnan, PhD

**Associate Professor, School of Pharmacy,
Memorial University**

Dr. Jennifer Donnan is an Associate Professor with Memorial University School of Pharmacy. A pharmacist by training, her research focuses on pharmacy practice, cannabis policy and substance use prevention and harm reduction among youth. Jennifer has co-developed the Drug Education Centered on Youth Decision Empowerment (DECYDE) strategy. This comprehensive strategy includes educator training, lesson plans and activities for use in the classroom, and is expanding to include meaningful peer support for caregivers. Jennifer is also passionate about training the next generation of pharmacists to provide true patient centered care that challenges stigma, is culturally sensitive and trauma informed.



¹Health Canada. (2021). [An Action Plan for Pain in Canada](#).