

The OHTN Research Chair in HIV Clinical Care and Aging

The Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN) is actively recruiting a highly skilled researcher and clinician to provide leadership in improving clinical care for Ontario's aging population of people living with HIV.

The Need

Nearly 50% of Ontarians living with HIV are now over age 50. In recent years, a group of serious non-AIDS events (SNAEs) have become the main causes of morbidity and mortality for this population. These comorbidities, including cardiovascular, neurocognitive and renal health concerns, seem to be associated with immune activation and inflammation due to HIV infection. The appearance of one or more of these comorbidities is sometimes referred to as immunoaging because the outcomes may indicate early signs of aging. Developing clinical care practices which respond to these health care concerns is critical to achieve Goal 4 of Ontario's HIV/AIDS Strategy, improvement of the health, longevity and quality of life for people living with HIV.

Research on HIV care for an aging population was identified as one of seven major priorities in a formal consultation process hosted by OHTN and Ontario AIDS Network in the fall of 2014. An interest in better understanding the links between inflammation and aging was specifically identified. As well, a recent consultation about the HIV research priorities of at-risk women highlighted the necessity of considering biological sex, when developing care protocols for men and women aging with HIV.

Expectations for this new Chair are high and different. The OHTN Research Chair in HIV Clinical Care and Aging is not a traditional investigator-driven academic award, where researchers can solely follow their own curiosity. We are looking for someone driven by both curiosity and the conviction that our health systems can do better for people living with HIV. We expect the successful candidate to build relationships and work with people living with HIV, with other clinicians and health service providers, and with health services/systems policy makers as well as other researchers, to undertake a pragmatic program of research that will lead to positive change. This role is part of a new emphasis in Ontario's HIV/AIDS strategy on improving health systems through evidence-based program development and continuous quality improvement.

The Chair's Role

The proposed Chair will lead an innovative and productive impact-focused research program to address the **emerging clinical care challenges of treating an aging population** of people living with HIV. This work must specifically address the co-morbidities associated with HIV infection and the role that immune activation and inflammation appear to play in these disorders. It is our expectation that this clinical leader **will design studies of interventions that have potential to prevent or slow immunoaging** and that they will provide leadership and mentorship to others in Ontario to undertake these studies.

To advance clinical care in Ontario, the Chair's program of research may include study of the following:

- The effective management of co-morbidities associated with immune activation and aging, and of appropriate diagnostic and treatment interventions,
- The identification and study of inflammatory biomarker(s) that may be used to predict HIV progression and the risk of co-morbidities, assess clinical well-being and rapidly screen new treatments and interventions,
- The impact of biological sex on immune markers and immune activation, as well as the role of hormonal changes on HIV progression and comorbidity risk,
- The implementation of clinical trials of treatment regimens to manage HIV and reduce the concomitant effects of immune activation and inflammation considering the impact of biological sex.

The successful candidate for the OHTN Chair will:

- Be a clinical leader in HIV management and care and in the design and execution of clinical trials,
- Have an established interest in the phenomena of immune activation and inflammation, and on one or more associated co-morbidities,
- Have a personal vision for a program of research that aims to reduce the impact of immunoaging and comorbidities on the health of people living with HIV,
- Be an internationally recognized scholar on HIV treatment and care with an extensive research publication and funding record (including previous external salary/Chair awards).
- Have a documented history of working in a collaborative, culturally respectful way with community-based organizations, clinical colleagues and policy makers to improve clinical care standards,
- Be classified as a Senior Scientist and fulfill the criteria for independent scholarly research at this level. A candidate working at this level would usually have received honours, awards and appointments consistent with leadership in their field,
- Be eligible to work and reside in Ontario.

The Chair will be appointed for an initial 5-year term, and be eligible for additional 5-year terms, based on a successful review by the OHTN and other relevant local stakeholders, as well as a national/international review panel. The appointed candidate will receive an annual salary award to protect research time for the activities outlined above. The Chair is expected to seek additional peer-reviewed funding through CIHR, NIH and other peer-reviewed funding opportunities as a nominated principal applicant for specific research activities relevant to this program of research from national and international funding bodies.

The successful candidate will be required to create a Community Research Advisory Committee to inform the development of research initiatives and future priorities. This advisory committee will include the meaningful participation of people living with HIV. The Chair will work with OHTN staff, as part of Ontario's Strategy on HIV/AIDS, to develop a collaborative network of



established researchers and service providers working to improve clinical care for Ontario's aging HIV population. The Chair will be a resource for scientific information and data for policy makers and media.

Apply Online by September 25, 2015 at 5pm.

****IMPORTANT****

1. OHTN Applied HIV Research Chair Resubmission and Renewal award applications must be accessed for the first time at https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_920?SA=SNA&FID=35090
2. Once created, applications must be re-accessed using https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_920/ and entering a user-unique ID and password
3. The application does not need to be completed in order, or all at once. Incomplete applications may be saved (click 'Save & Finish Later') and returned to at a later date
4. Print a copy of the application for your records (if desired) *prior* to electronic submission

Highly ranked candidates will be contacted and asked to make a more detailed submission as part of the review and interview process. Individuals not currently residing in Ontario are welcome to apply.

Each candidate will be asked to present their vision of the Chair in a community public forum to include people living with HIV, representatives of health care providers and government decision-makers, frontline service agencies supporting diverse communities and clinical HIV researchers.

The Ontario HIV Treatment Network is committed to employment equity and encourages applications from persons living with HIV/AIDS, and persons with culturally diverse backgrounds.

Please direct your questions to [Lydia Makoroka](#) at 416 642 6486 ext. 2244

About the OHTN

The OHTN is a collaborative network of people living with HIV, community-based agencies, health care providers, government policy makers, educators and researchers that supports and conducts high quality research to help end the HIV epidemic, and shares the best available evidence with all those who can put that knowledge into action.