

## The OHTN Research Chair in Gay Men's Health

The Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN) is actively recruiting a highly skilled researcher and clinician to provide leadership in creating and improving clinical interventions to prevent and manage HIV for gay and other men who have sex with men in Ontario.

The newly created **The OHTN Research Chair in Gay Men's Health** will work collaboratively with existing OHTN Applied HIV Research Chairs (Trevor Hart and David Brennan), with OHTN Director of Prevention Research (Barry Adam) and with other key prevention and care research initiatives for men who have sex with men. To complement the work of our current Chairs, who are focused mainly on social / behavioural science and mental health, we envision this new Chair in gay men's health. The Chair will have a good understanding of health systems issues, particularly for those facing multiple challenges (due to syndemics), and will bring unique expertise to this research effort around clinical, biomedical research and health services interventions, including mental health interventions. This Chair will foster collaboration and provide research leadership that will have a measurable impact on HIV and sexual health programs, services and systems in the short to medium term.

### **The Need:**

In 2013, gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (MSM) accounted for 6 of every 10 new HIV diagnoses in Ontario (59%) – and 71% of all diagnoses in men (75% if we include MSM who also use injection drugs). Nearly two-thirds of individuals living with HIV in Ontario are men who have sex with men. Comprehensive, and interconnected systems of care are required to support HIV+ and HIV- gay, bisexual, and other MSM in maintaining their health and reducing HIV transmission. Clinical programs must also consider co-morbidities such as anal cancer, smoking, and STIs which uniquely affect gay and bisexual men, as well as syndemic factors such as experience of child abuse, homophobia, physical/sexual abuse, or intimate partner violence, which increase vulnerability and may negatively affect their engagement with care.

***Ontario has innovative researchers working to address the needs of gay and bisexual men at-risk of and living with HIV. To enhance capacity and take Ontario research to the next level, we need a dynamic individual who can draw on these strengths and kick-start new program and implementation science research agenda.***

**Expectations for this new Chair are high and different.** The OHTN Chair 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 and social systems can do better. We expect the successful candidate to build relationships and work with people living with and at-risk of HIV, frontline service providers, and health services/systems policy makers as well as other researchers, to undertake highly relevant pragmatic program science 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 Chair will create a program of research that aims to design comprehensive and accessible health services and clinically-based interventions that address the complex intersecting clinical, psychosocial and structural factors that influence HIV prevention and care outcomes among gay and other men who have sex with men. This program will consider structural barriers that men may face accessing culturally competent services in centres across Ontario.

To advance clinical programs in Ontario, the Chair will embark on a program of research that involve the following elements:

- Investigate the social, structural and individual-level challenges that impede health engagement, access to information, and HIV risk reduction among gay, bisexual, and other MSM,
- Collaborate with health system partners to develop, scale up and evaluate integrated multi-level intervention strategies to improve the care continuum for gay, bisexual, and MSM, both HIV-positive and HIV-negative,
- Develop, implement and evaluate clinical care models to more effectively deliver biomedical HIV prevention strategies, such as PrEP and PEP, to gay, bisexual, and other MSM at risk of HIV,
- Develop, implement and evaluate strategies to improve access to mental health services for gay, bisexual, and other MSM across the province,
- Develop, implement and evaluate clinical care models to effectively address and treat comorbid conditions affecting gay, bisexual, and other MSM who are living with HIV, including anal cancer, smoking, cardiovascular disease, STIs and depression,
- Develop, implement and evaluate self-management strategies to empower gay, bisexual, and other MSM (HIV positive and negative) to maintain their health and reduce health risks,
- Champion program science in Ontario and work to attract and mentor academic and community-based researchers,
- Collaborate with other Chairs in Program Science for key populations most at risk to HIV,
- Contribute advice toward policy development on Ontario's response to HIV.

### **The successful candidate for the OHTN Chair will:**

- Be a clinician with an established interest in identifying interventions and improving care for gay, bisexual, and MSM living with and affected by HIV,
- Have clinical expertise in HIV treatment, biomedical prevention and HIV co-morbidities,
- Have a documented history of working in a collaborative, culturally respectful way with community-based organizations,
- Have an established, proven, consistent and excellent academic track record with an extensive research publication and funding record,
- Be a recognized scholar and mentor on HIV prevention initiatives and comorbid conditions,
- Have an established track record of developing and evaluating health systems and services as they relate directly to gay, bisexual, and other MSM through collaboration with other academics, service providers, and community leaders,
- Have an academic appointment at the level of Associate Professor or higher in a university Faculty/Department/Division suited to the specific qualifications of the Chair.

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 gay men living with HIV as well as representation from the Gay Men's Sexual Health Alliance, the Ontario AIDS Network and representatives from programs across Ontario that serve gay, bisexual and other MSM. 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 who currently work with gay men. 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](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/](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 representatives of frontline service agencies and community members from the gay and bisexual community, health care providers and decision-makers in government, as well as researchers in the health of gay, bisexual and MSM.

***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.