



BEATRICE HUNTER  
Cancer Research Institute

Evolving Cancer Research in Atlantic Canada

## BHCRI Strategic Framework 2011-14

Confirmed by the BHCRI Board 4 June 2012

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**Notes:** The BHCRI was created in April of 2009 in order to increase the scope and impact of cancer research throughout Atlantic Canada, and to expand the opportunities for training in cancer research for the next generation of researchers and clinicians. Initially overseen by the Dalhousie Cancer Research Program (DCRP) Management Committee, its framework and governance processes were developed with input from the community under the guidance of a Development Board, between August 2009 and August 2011. This document arises from a comprehensive process of community consultation including 6 separate meetings at different sites across the Atlantic Region and a final inclusive full-day Strategic Planning Workshop held in Halifax on 28 January 2011. Minor revisions for clarification were added by the Board on at its meeting on 7 November 2011 and reviewed on 23 January 2012 to form this document.

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## **Mission**

To advance cancer research and its impact throughout Atlantic Canada.

## **Vision Elements**

- a) Positively impacting clinical care and public policy
- b) Enhanced researcher competitiveness for funding opportunities
- c) Collaborative – maximizing outcomes through sharing of expertise, knowledge and facilities (within and beyond the cancer research community)
- d) Established pipeline of accomplished researchers
- e) Strong support for cancer research – from industry, government, research funding agencies and the public
- f) Active engagement of the public in moving toward our goals

## **Strategic Directions**

1. Systematic development of accomplished researchers – from undergraduate student to senior scientist
  - a. We will support undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral researchers through training awards, effective mentoring, multidisciplinary instruction and by providing advice and opportunities that will aid career progression.

- b. We will support researchers according to their needs depending on their career stage and research environment; through the provision of seed and bridge funding, and funds to facilitate new and multidisciplinary collaborations.
2. Strengthening a collaborative community of researchers doing work related to cancer
    - a. We will promote interaction and collaboration within our community through our annual regional conference, interdisciplinary seminars with effective access from across the Atlantic region, strong communication and information exchange through our website and our committees and task groups.
    - b. We support all forms of cancer research, including but not restricted to: Research in fundamental mechanisms and discovery of new pathways and therapeutics, clinical research (including clinical trials) and translational medicine, population studies and epidemiological research, prevention research, research involving patient experience and support after treatment, and research into health services and outcomes.
    - c. We equally value research in all these areas and will review and support those areas based upon criteria appropriate to the discipline and research location. We support both institutional and individual equity as principles that guide our decisions.

### 3. Informing clinical care and public policy

- a. We believe that clinical care and public policy on cancer-related matters should be based upon sound research that relates to patient treatment and supportive care, health outcomes and objective health economic research; and will support and promote excellent research in those areas.
- b. We recognize the unique demographic profile and healthcare needs of each of our constituent provinces, and will support research to enhance the prospects of cancer patients and people at risk of cancer, across the entire Atlantic region and beyond.
- c. We encourage the engagement of researchers with decision makers in cancer clinical care, and the involvement in clinical research of medical residents who are the future generation of leaders in cancer clinical care. We believe in the value of a strong linkage of clinical research with other research areas.

### 4. Positioning the Institute for optimal effect.

- a. Raising profile and gaining support from key stakeholders: We will work to provide the greatest impact for the profile of our members through our communications, website, annual report and public events. We will engage all of our partners through a positive dialogue that will respect their jurisdictions and priorities and provide the greatest impact for their research investment. We will inform the lay public of our successes, and seek their input in planning for the future.

- b. Harmonizing role and relationship with centres throughout region:  
Our value and impact as an institute depends on the balanced contributions and gains of many institutions and groups within the Atlantic Provinces. We commit to working to maintain an equitable relationship amongst our members and partners, such that the collective advantage is fairly shared by all.
  - c. Strengthening partnerships with other agencies: We recognize that the participation of many strong players in the region presents us with a strong collective profile that can be used for the advantage of our members, both as institutions and individual researchers. We will take this opportunity to seek partnerships, both financial and strategic, throughout North America and globally, that will benefit cancer research and society within this region.
5. Developing shared/common infrastructure to support priorities of the community.
- a. We will act as a network to facilitate linkages and practices between the many different facilities, resources and expertise available in our region. This will both empower researchers to reach new goals, and promote the development of new collaborations based upon regional strengths.
  - b. We will listen to the needs of our members and will seek to facilitate group initiatives through which our combined resources give us greater chances of success or enable us to secure ambitious resource platforms for our region.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Our Strengths and Potential**

- We are a community of manageable size and collaborative spirit, having the capacity to respond quickly to opportunities and needs.
- Each province and institution has its particular strengths, which can be joined together to form a network with national and international impact.
- We have many local centres of excellence and collaboration, whose value and impact will be enhanced by the leverage provided by a regional network.
- Our strengths are growing and renewable, based upon a strong and well-recognized foundation of research training programs.

### **Our Opportunities for Growth**

- An increased patient base for research around patient care, and clinical trials
- Greater capacity for leveraging research support through a cohesive approach
- Increased connectivity in the research community through engagement in the BHCRI
- Enhanced effectiveness through common standards, mechanisms and processes

- Facilitation of researcher retention through enhancing the research environment
- Increased success in granting competitions through mentoring and advice
- Greater recognition through a cohesive network of strong individuals and institutions
- Greater engagement of the policymakers
- Building synergistically on what currently exists

### **Our Institutional Players and Partners**

- Universities, research institutes and other centres of research in Atlantic Canada
- National, international, regional and local funding agencies
- Governmental and nongovernmental groups that share our goals in cancer research
- Members of the business community who share our vision and goals
- Clinical care centres and cancer care agencies
- Other educational facilities