

## Partnership accelerates research trainees to reach potential for clinical trials in BC

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From left to right: Alison Orth, director, Clinical Trials BC; Karina Thiessen, 2023 CANTRAIN doctoral award; Marlana Ornowska, 2023 CANTRAIN doctoral award; Dr. Stirling Bryan, chief scientific officer, Health Research BC.

The first cohort of clinical trials training awardees has been announced for masters, doctoral and postdoctoral students in British Columbia national educational initiative aimed at developing clinical trial talent and building capacity for clinical trials in the province.

Michael Smith Health Research BC is enabling 21 awardees to participate in the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) national clinical trials training program through the Canadian Consortium of Clinical Trial Training (CANTRAIN) and other platforms. Along with these national partners, this support will enable the next-generation scientists to develop competencies in designing, leading, working and participating in clinical trial research.

The awardees are from institutions across the province, including Curtis Leclerc, a MD/PhD student in the UBC Northern Medical Program based at the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George. "I feel very fortunate to receive this award and the opportunity to develop a strong foundation of knowledge and skills needed to implement clinical trials," says Curtis. "I hope to apply what I learn during the training program to compare types of radiotherapy as a treatment for cancer. My long-term goal is to deliver medicine and research for northern communities, and I believe this award will enable me to accomplish that."

Clinical trials allow researchers to assess the safety and effectiveness of new drugs, treatments and therapies, and there is a critical need across the country for training and mentoring of clinical research professionals. Launched earlier in the year, the clinical trials training program aims to increase clinical trials training, expertise, and capacity in Canada as part of a long-term strategy developed by CIHR. Through Clinical Trials BC, Health Research BC is an instrumental part of developing the national training platform, content and evaluation.

"Our organization aims to strengthen efforts to build a robust clinical trial ecosystem to maximize the health, educational and economic benefits of clinical trials for British Columbians," says Dr. Bev Holmes, President & CEO, Michael Smith Health Research BC. "We are pleased to partner with CANTRAIN, CAN-TAP-TALENT, CBITN and StrokeCog on these trainee awards, which accelerate skills training of the next generation of a clinical trial workforce, attract brilliant minds to our province, and build research talent for BC's future. Congratulations to these individuals who are committed to learning and better care for British Columbians."

"In order to proactively and efficiently lead impactful clinical trials, we need highly qualified personnel who are thoroughly trained to improve the design and execution of these trials," says Dr. Jean Bourbeau, National Leader, CANTRAIN. "Our goal with CANTRAIN is to harmonize and enhance training, mentoring and networking across the continuum of people engaged in the conduct and successful outcomes of clinical trials. We will promote adherence to regulatory and ethical high standards via continuous improvement in accessible and innovative training and an accredited platform."

Join us in congratulating this year's award recipients.

[See the full list here](#) 