



COVID-19 IMMUNITY
TASK FORCE

Spotlight on CITF-FUNDED RESEARCH

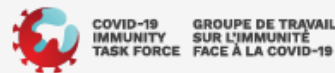


CITF Events



Seminar Series | Research Results & Implications

Protecting Canada's long-term care residents from COVID-19: The evidence behind the policies



COVID-19
IMMUNITY
TASK FORCE

GROUPE DE TRAVAIL
SUR L'IMMUNITÉ
FACE À LA COVID-19



Thank you for a very successful second seminar with CanCOVID!

On October 28th, more than 150 people attended the second of our monthly CITF/CanCOVID seminar series. Seven CITF-funded research teams offered interim results from their findings of SARS-CoV-2 infection among residents and staff in long-term care homes, as well as older adults living in the community. Thank you to all who were present and **a big thank you** to all

our presenters: Dawn Bowdish, PhD, McMaster University; Allison McGeer, MD, University of Toronto; Daniel El Koadi, PhD, Bruyère Research Institute; Michelle Canac-Marquis, MPH, McGill University Health Centre; Bonita Lee, MD, University of Alberta; Mark Brockman, PhD, Simon Fraser University; Sharon Walmsley, MD, University of Toronto; Timothy Evans, MD, PhD, CITF Executive Director; and our moderator, Nathan Stall, MD, PhD(c), Sinai Health and Women's College Hospital.

[View presentation in PDF](#)

[View summary](#)



Seminar Series Research Results & Implications



Watch now if you missed our first CITF/CanCOVID seminar

Did you miss our first *CITF/CanCOVID Seminar Series*, “Risks and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Canada’s kids, their parents, and teachers: Latest research results and policy implications” or want to watch it again? It’s now available on our website.

[Watch here](#)



Plant-produced proteins for SARS-COV-2 could expand vaccine-delivery options

It is increasingly clear that vaccines are among the primary solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, cost-effective and large-scale production is key for ensuring vaccination all over the world, specifically in lower-middle income countries. In this pre-print, not yet peer-reviewed, study that was partly funded by the CITF and led by Dr. Marc-André Langlois at the University of Ottawa and his colleague, Dr. Allyson MacLean, researchers have generated SARS-CoV-2's receptor-binding domain (RBD) portions of the spike protein in plants which could aid in the development of vaccines. This plant-based RBD has proved to be effective at eliciting an immune response capable of producing antibodies that could neutralize COVID-19.

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Designing serological assays with high diagnostic potential

In a not-yet peer-reviewed preprint, CITF-funded investigator Dr. Andrei Drabovich and colleagues from the University of Alberta, designed and evaluated the performance of serological diagnostics, used to measure the presence of SARS-CoV-2 antibodies. The particular assays studied, known as immunoprecipitation - parallel reaction monitoring (IP-PRM) and immunoprecipitation - selected reaction monitoring (IP-SRM), use a combination of two common laboratory techniques - ELISA and mass spectrometry - and proved to be highly specific and sensitive in their detection of antigen-antibody combinations.

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A Canadian platform to study the antibody response to SARS-CoV-2 infection and vaccination

A group of Canadian researchers has developed a set of standardized, high-throughput serological assays to detect antibodies against SARS-CoV-2. Multiple studies estimating the seroprevalence of various populations in Canada – including over half of those funded by the CITF – use this platform, making it possible to harmonize and compare their results nationwide. In a preprint, not yet peer-reviewed, and partly funded by the CITF, the team led in part by Dr. Anne-Claude Gingras from Toronto’s Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute, Dr. Marc-André Langlois from the University of Ottawa, and Dr. Yves Durocher from the National Research Council of Canada, describe their multi-faceted detection of the antibody response to SARS-CoV-2 infection and vaccination.

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Explaining the limited utility of convalescent plasma from the first phase of the COVID-19 pandemic in treating those newly infected

The continued persistence of SARS-CoV-2 infections in predominantly unvaccinated individuals has meant a continued need for therapeutics to treat those hospitalized with COVID-19. Convalescent plasma containing SARS-CoV-2 neutralizing antibodies from recovered individuals is one therapy option but has been controversial. A new publication in *Transfusion* by CITF-funded researchers Drs. Steven Drews and Sheila O’Brien of Canadian Blood Services assesses why plasma collected from the first wave of COVID-19 in Canada may have a limited ability to neutralize SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern (VOCs).

[Read More](#)



CITF Announcement

New Blood Donation Organization Results Web Page

The CITF has launched a new web page, to be updated monthly, featuring the latest aggregated data gathered by Canadian Blood Services & Héma-Québec on SARS-CoV-2 seroprevalence in Canada. Graphs show results from each organization's serosurveys (those from Canadian Blood Services are monthly) nationally, provincially, by race and by material deprivation index, providing an overview of the state of immunity to COVID-19 in Canada as well as a breakdown of vaccine uptake in each province and across different subgroups.

[Discover the data](#)

Héma-Québec offers opportunity for plasma samples via its new plasma donor biobank

Given Héma-Québec's opportunity to collect repeat plasma samples, they have launched a biobank of samples from plasma donors. The samples collected allow researchers to gather information before and after vaccination, and in some cases before and after COVID-19 infection, allowing both their researchers and other researchers in Canada to study the immune response to COVID-19 vaccination or infection. They are inviting researchers to use their samples.

[Learn more](#)



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