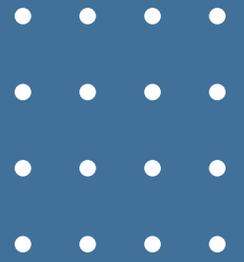


2021/2022

# ANNUAL REPORT



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Transplant Research Foundation of BC



# Vision & Mission



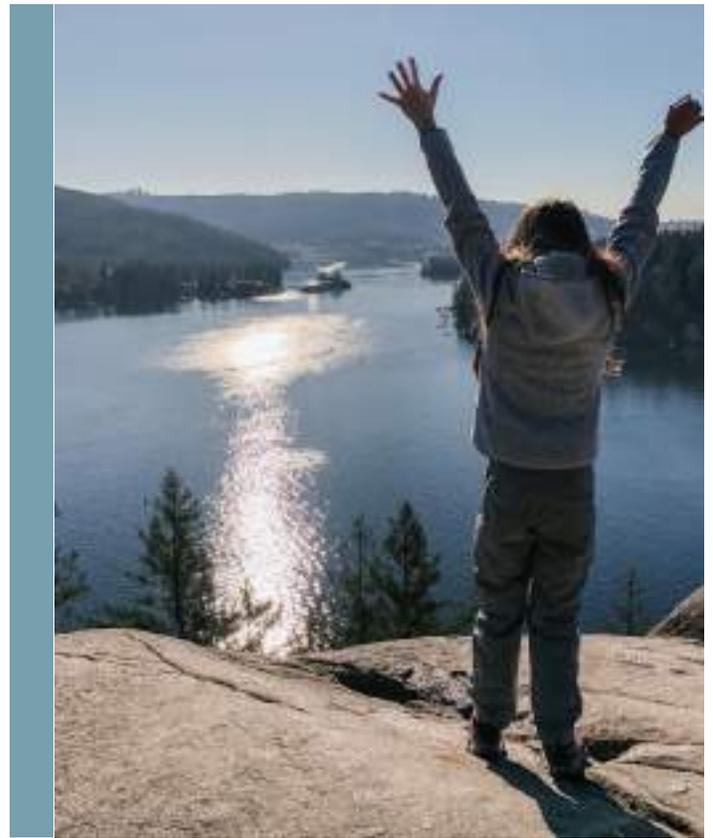
## Vision

Leading edge research, new treatments and novel technologies that will ultimately eliminate the waiting list and make transplant a cure.

## Mission

To support innovative, patient-centered organ donation and transplant research that will provide solutions to benefit those whose lives are threatened by organ failure.

.....  
TRANSPLANT  
RESEARCH  
FOUNDATION  
of British Columbia  
.....



## Table of Contents

02	Mission and Vision	08	Venture Grant
03	Table of Contents	09	Connecting with our Community
04	Co-Chair's Message	10	Addison Fund
05	TRF Team	11	Donations at Work
06	Why Research Matters	12	Financials
07	Research Challenge	13	Contact Us

# Co-Chair's Report

It is rather appropriate that I am writing this message while sitting on an airplane, our family's first flight in three years. Bolstered by COVID-19 vaccines and so much more knowledge about how this virus works, especially for people such as my eldest daughter Addison, a heart transplant recipient, life is returning to a "new normal."

This has only been made possible by research. We have all witnessed the life-changing impact of new knowledge and discoveries in real-time as we live through this pandemic. It has taught us how partnerships and collaboration can foster brilliance, when supported by those who believe in the goal of improving and transforming health and well-being.

This is what we do at the Transplant Research Foundation of BC. We want to make a difference in the lives of transplant recipients, donors and their families. You have helped us by funding innovative new research projects that are patient-focused. I am pleased to share more in this report about the research you have supported.

I am so grateful for your generosity, and for the brilliant scientists in our transplant research community who keep working hard to answer important questions. When COVID-19 vaccines were approved and available for children five to 11 years old, I made sure Addison and her younger sister were among the first in line. Finally, a tool to protect those who are most at risk. A tool to help us get to this "new normal" we are at today.

Thank you researchers. And thank you generous donors. We wouldn't be where we are today without you. I look forward to working together on even more important discoveries ahead.



**Elaine Yong**

TRFBC Co-Chair

# TRF Team

## Meet our newest member - Reema Garcha



Reema is a highly respected financial services business leader with over twenty years of experience. She is a self-directed strategic thinker who is known for her thoughtful leadership and is committed to integrity and continuous learning.

In 2018, Reema donated a kidney to her sister Binn and is an active ambassador for organ donation awareness and transplant research.

For Reema, research represents the future and all that is possible. She believes research is vital to reach beyond our current state, ultimately improving the organ donation and transplant journey for patients and donors.

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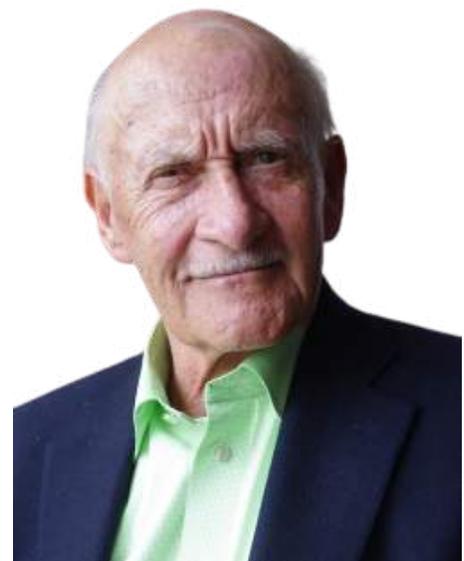
## Remembering our friend - John Weins

John joined the TRF Board of Directors in 2008 as a result of his own experiences with transplant. In 1999 John underwent a kidney and heart transplant, receiving a second kidney transplant from his daughter over a decade later.

Ever grateful for the ‘miracles’ of science that kept him alive and able to enjoy life, John and his wife Verna were generous supporters of transplant-related research and patient services.

A pillar of the community, John made the most of his second chance at life, devoting his time to various charities and supporting many worthwhile causes. His and Verna's greatest joys were their children and grandchildren with whom they shared much time and many adventures.

John passed away last year at the age of 81. We are grateful for his long years of service to TRF and we miss him.



# Why research matters

**“ While I am incredibly grateful to my donor, I hope that one day, transplant will be a cure, not just a treatment.**

*- Heart transplant recipient*



**5700**

## Recipients Thriving

Over 5700 British Columbians are receiving post-transplant follow-up care.

**529**

## Lives Saved

In 2021, 529 transplants were performed in British Columbia.

**650**

## Desperately Waiting

Currently more than 650 people are desperately waiting for a life-saving transplant in BC.

**200**

## Lives Lost

Since 2017, over 200 people have died waiting for an organ that never came.

**3**

## Records Broken

66 lung, 97 liver and 265 kidney transplants were performed in 2021 - all surpassing previous records!

# Research - Research Challenge Highlights

Since 2016, the Transplant Research Foundation of BC has partnered with Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute (VCHRI) and Providence Health Care (PHC) to support the Research Challenge grant programs. These practice-based research programs are driven by allied health care staff and point-of-care professionals who are addressing patient care initiatives and important clinical questions. Through this partnership TRFBC funds transplant-related research. For the 2021-22 season we were proud to fund three \$5,000 grants, featured below.



**Kimberly Noble**

**Frequency of swallowing and voice dysfunction following double lung transplant.**

Voice and swallowing changes in lung transplant patients are common challenges following transplantation and carry the risk of poor health outcomes and impact quality of life. This project will explore the frequency of these changes and develop best practice recommendations to support patient care.



**Nergina Kubiliene**

**Psychosocial factors associated with resilience after lung transplantation: an interpretive descriptive study.**

Learning how resiliency is subjectively experienced by lung transplant patients is key to supporting them in their transplant journey. This project will explore this aim and identify factors that contribute to recipient's successful adjustment after transplant.



**Christina Schellenberg**

**Evaluation of the Live Donation Patient and Family Group**

This project seeks to empower individuals by implementing a support group for patients exploring living donation.

*"Our hope is that our group is addressing the barriers that patients and their donor champions have in getting a live donor transplant."*

# Research - Venture Grant Highlights

2021/22 marks a new chapter for our Venture Grant Program. After more than a decade since the program's inception, TRF embarked on a new partnership with the Canadian Donation and Transplantation Research Program (CDTRP). As part of this new union, our existing Venture Grant Program joined the CDTRP's Research Innovation Grant competition. This enables us to further our commitment to BC-based scientists conducting solid organ donation and transplant research in our province. Through this new partnership, we have funded two innovative studies that seek to improve key areas of health for kidney transplant patients, with potential to benefit other organ groups.

## **Caigan Du, Scientist, Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute Evaluation of propyl gallate for limitation of cold ischemic injury in organ preservation**



When an organ is removed from a donor for transplant the cells of the donor organ start dying. Preservation solutions are used to try and minimize damage. There are several preservation solutions available, but many organs still don't function at full capacity following transplant. To address this, Dr. Du is exploring a new organ preservation solution that will improve the function of transplanted kidneys.

## **David Harriman, Transplant Urologist and Surgeon, Vancouver Coastal Health Urine microbiome profiling in kidney transplant recipients in health and disease**



Specific bacterial communities which may influence the immune system have been found to reside in the urinary tract, the so-called urinary microbiome. The urinary microbiome has not been extensively investigated in kidney transplant patients. Dr. Harriman seeks to understand the role urinary bacteria play in renal transplant patients and their associated influence on the transplanted kidney and the immune system.

# Connecting with our Community

## Our Research Champions



### Running for Research

Just months following her liver transplant, Dakota Meredith began brainstorming ways she could give back to the transplant community. The perfect opportunity presented itself when her coworker at Blakeburn Elementary School in Port Coquitlam suggested they turn their school run into a fundraiser to support transplant research and honor the life of her donor. After extensive planning and pivoting to ensure safety during the pandemic, Dakota and fifteen of her colleagues held their 10km run, raising \$3,300 for the Transplant Research Foundation of BC.

### Loyal Supporter Remembered

***“My lung transplant enabled me to return to work for fourteen years before retiring. I was able to watch my three children grow up and be part of my granddaughter Teija's life.”***



This past fall we lost a loyal support of research and dear friend of our organization, Michel Grandbois. Michel received a lung transplant in 1997 and he recognized that many of the treatments that enabled him to thrive post-transplant were only made possible through medical advances driven by research.

Because of the generosity of Michel and his family over the years, researchers in British Columbia have been able to pursue new and innovative ideas to improve the lives of transplant recipients. We are so grateful, and we are privileged to honour Michel's commitment to furthering our knowledge of organ transplantation and donation.

# The Addison Fund for Pediatric Transplant Research

The Addison Fund for Pediatric Transplant Research was created with the goal of funding pediatric specific research that addresses the needs of children undergoing transplants and supporting young recipients as they navigate life as a recipient.



*Right now, we have no idea if Addison’s three doses of COVID-19 vaccine are providing any protection at all. The answers Dr. Mitchell and her team find through the extended study will provide crucial information that transplant kids and their families really need to know to help keep our kids safe.*

*- Elaine Yong, TRF Co-chair and mom of Addison*

In 2022, the Addison Fund committed over \$53,000 to fund an extension to a national study, "A Prospective study Evaluating COVID-19 Vaccine immunogenicity in Organ Transplant Recipients (the PREVenT-COVID study) – pediatric arm". These funds support desperately needed information on young recipients’ immune responses to the COVID-19 vaccine. The three main goals of this research are summarized below.



Determine persistence of immune responses to authorized COVID-19 vaccines.



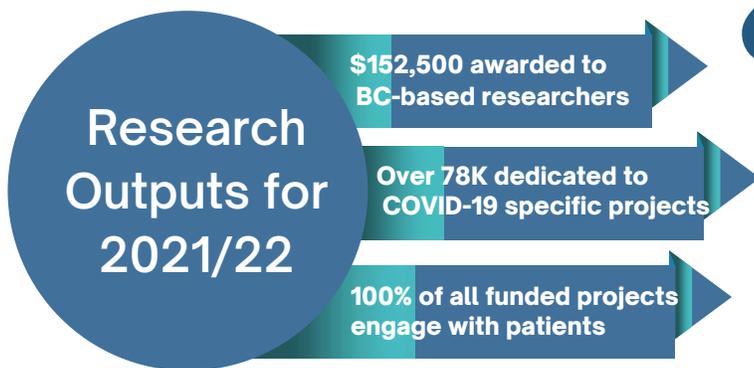
Assess the safety of COVID-19 vaccines and document recipient safety concerns.



Determine the incidences of COVID-19 infection following vaccination.

# Your Donations at Work

The TRFBC is committed to funding research that will improve the lives of organ recipients and those living with end-stage organ disease, ensuring that the priorities of patients, caregivers and donors remain central to this process. In recent years, there has been a growing awareness and appreciation for the role of mental health in transplantation and donation, driven by the voices of patients and their caregivers.



***Kids receiving a transplant, they really have survived a lot in their young lives, and many of them have accumulated repeated traumatic exposures related to their previous medical experiences.***  
- Tom Blydt-Hansen

Neil Erickson was a young man who believed in the power of research. Following his liver transplant, his family gave generously to support the work of BC investigators who are advancing knowledge about the mental health impacts of transplant in children and young adults. Neil and his family partnered with TRFBC to fund the pilot study led by Dr. Tom Blydt-Hansen, "Quality of life and mental health needs of children after solid organ transplantation in BC". Neil's commitment to research continues after his untimely death with a significant memorial donation to TRFBC. This will ensure the work that mattered to him will thrive, helping to improve the quality of life for other young people living with end stage organ disease and transplantation.



When Dr. Tom Blydt-Hansen began looking at the traumatic effects of transplant on children and their families, he was surprised to learn how prevalent the incidents of post-trauma stress were in this population. The support of Neil Erickson and his family enabled Dr. Blydt-Hansen and his team to get their pilot study off the ground. Their findings led to novel insights into the relationships between transplant and depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress symptoms. These important discoveries formed the basis of his current research, which was published in the February 2022 edition of *Pediatric Transplantation*.

# Financials

Combined Statement of Operations and Fund Balances.

For the year ended March 31, 2022, with comparative information for 2021 and 2020

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>\$391,975</b>	<b>\$230,296</b>	<b>\$150,769</b>
Philanthropy	\$334,100	\$191,469	\$121,233
Game Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
Investment Income	\$ 57,875	\$ 38,826	\$ 29,536
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$18,282</b>	<b>\$12,647</b>	<b>\$17,816</b>
Foundation Operations	\$17,981	\$8,548	\$ 7,596
Fundraising	\$ 300	\$4,100	\$10,220
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses before disbursements and grants</b>	<b>\$373,693</b>	<b>\$217,648</b>	<b>\$132,953</b>
Community outreach and engagement program delivery	\$31,120	\$ 33,095	\$ 34,523
Research grants	<u>\$82,500</u>	<u>\$112,500</u>	<u>\$102,500</u>
	\$113,620	\$145,595	\$137,023
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses, distribution and grants</b>	<b>\$260,073</b>	<b>\$72,053</b>	<b>(\$4,070)</b>
Fund balances, beginning of year	\$ 996,971	\$866,928	\$888,188
Change in fair value of investment	\$ 108,033	\$ 57,990	\$ (17,190)
Fund balances, end of year	\$1,265,077	\$996,971	\$866,928



TRANSPLANT  
RESEARCH  
FOUNDATION  
of British Columbia

## Contact Us

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