

Did you know that since 2015 POAO has been actively supporting a Research Fund Program?

POAO generously supports this project: **Integrating Brain Injury, Mental Health, and Addictions. This project is funded by Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, 2017/18, Health System Research Fund Program-Award.** This important opportunity was first recognized during the planning of workshops during the 2015 POAO Symposium (London). The workshop was highlighted by the researchers as a venue to present the vital need for such a research funded program to deal with Brain Injury in the offender population (institution and community).

What first started as written letters of support for this research grant to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, has now led to POAO having official status in the fully approved and funded research program! Our partnership with this research as Program Advisory Committee members brings our profession into the forefront across Ministries and highlights our role as essential links to seeing research into practice, both in supervision and in advocating and working for better outcomes for all in our communities. Our Association's ability to reach members from across the province, support connections to stakeholders, provide surveys/focus groups/workshops as well as offer the use of our website and other publication opportunities, can assist in the dissemination of research findings and promote key discoveries into our work and clinical practice. Increasing knowledge transfer and raise awareness related to brain diseases and disorders is a key reason POAO is remaining involved in this important project.

There are many on the research team and our main contacts to date have been Dr. Angela Colantonio, Principal Investigator of the University of Toronto and Catherine Wiseman-Hakes, Co-Investigator University of Toronto, and Vincy Chan, Co-Investigator Toronto Rehabilitation Institute – UHN. Dr. Colantonio's researched statistics into the number of women with acquired brain injuries given domestic violence victimization were referenced by a keynote speaker at the HSJCC (Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee) conference in 2017.

Given POAO's commitment to the research component of our strategic plan your involvement is most welcomed. Any member who is interested in being on our team on this Program Advisory Committee can call your policy board member. For now, this would be myself. You would not be expected to attend meetings, but your consultation will be essential. Other board members have stepped in for now. Our President is actively involved in attending meetings as well, both in person and in teleconference. The membership director has provided consultation on products developed by the research team, given her experience in this field. From time to time a request for your input on a topic related to this program may be sent to all members and we appreciate your participation and support.

More information on how to support your Association's involvement in this project will be forwarded soon. In addition, details on this project will be highlighted on our website. As always, feel free to contact your POAO Branch Chair or Policy Director directly should you have any questions or concerns.

Karen Tinning

Youth Policy Director/ POAO Board Member, 2018