

# Research Review Committee Annual Report 2021

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**northern health**  
*the northern way of caring*

# Table of Contents

Introduction and Background .....	3
2021 Membership .....	3
Research Reviewed.....	4
Principal Investigators.....	5
Category of Research.....	5
2021 - 2022 Key Actions and Progress.....	6
Conclusion.....	7
Table A: 2021 Research Projects, Ethics and Northern Health Approved to December 31, 2021 .....	8
Table B: 2021 Research Projects, Ethics Approved, requiring Northern Health Operational Approval, Privacy Impact Assessment or Information Sharing Agreement to December 31, 2021 .....	12



## Introduction and Background

***All research conducted within or for Northern Health (NH) must be reviewed and approved by the NH Research Review Committee (RRC).***

The RRC is mandated by NH policy to approve, reject, propose modifications to or terminate any proposed or ongoing research involving humans that is conducted: in NH facilities/programs; by NH staff or physicians; or with NH staff, physicians and/or patients. The RRC ensures that ethical principles and standards respecting the personal welfare and rights of research participants have been recognized and accommodated.

The Committee follows NH Research Policy and Principles, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) and the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS-2).

The RRC is accountable to the Governance and Management Relations Committee of the NH Board of Directors.

## 2021 Membership

Name	Title
Esther Alonso-Prieto	Chair, Ethics Lead, NH
Roseann Larstone	Regional Director, Indigenous Health, NH
Farzana Amin	Analyst, Clinical Outcomes, Research, Evaluation & Analytics, NH
Kerensa Medhurst	Research Facilitator, Physician Quality Improvement Special Services Committee, NH
Robert Pammett	Research and Development Pharmacist, Primary Care, NH
Sam Milligan	Carrier Sekani Family Services, NH
Ron Klausung	Privacy Officer, Research and Privacy Impact Assessments (PIA), NH
Rai (Theresa) Read	Elderly Services Nurse Consultant, NH
Chelsea Graham	Regional Dietetic Technician, NH
James Bruce	RN, MHSU Outreach, NH
Marcelo Bravo	Lead, Knowledge Translation, NH
Diane Suter	Community Member
Diana Tecson	Administrative Support, NH (non-voting)

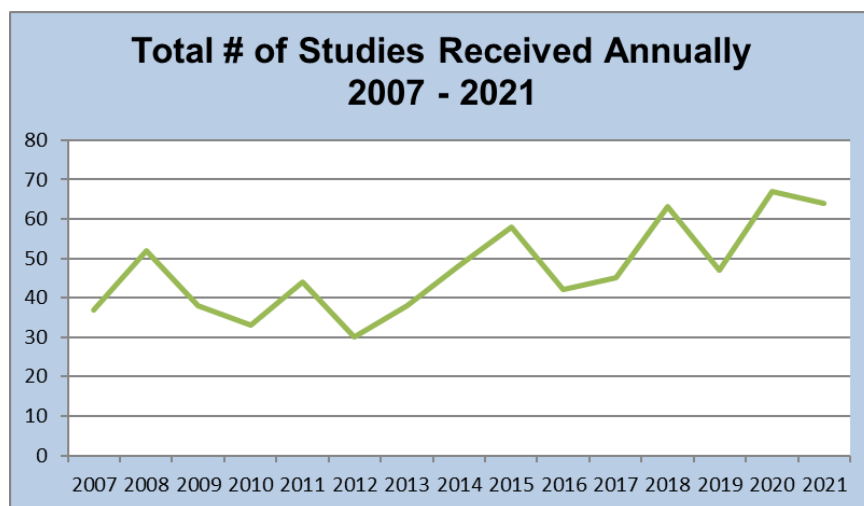
**Ad hoc member:** Traci de Pape, Regional Manager, Privacy Office is included in the review process when Section 35 of FIPPA applies to a research application or consulted on other relevant privacy concerns or legislation.

**Outgoing Members:** Northern Health would like to thank the following members for their contribution and service to the RRC:

- Linda Axen
- Jennifer Begg
- Julia Bickford
- Tamara Checkley
- Vash Ebbadi-Cook
- Damen DeLeenheer
- Tanis Hampe
- Vanessa Salmons
- Kirsten Thomson

## Research Reviewed

Sixty-Four (64) studies were received by the Research Review Committee in 2021. Three (3) were subsequently withdrawn by the researchers because the study was placed on hold, decided not to proceed at NH sites, or determined to be outside of NH RRC jurisdiction (e.g., research conducted in a private family practice office).



In 2021, 98% of the studies reviewed by NH were completed through the Research Ethics BC harmonized review process in collaboration with BC Universities and Health Authority partners.

Status of applications received in 2021 (as of February 28, 2021):

- 30 – Ethics approval granted, operational review, privacy impact assessment, or information sharing agreement still required
- 22 – Have received final NH Institutional authorization
  - 9 – Provisos pending (e.g., initial review complete, clarifications/revisions required by researcher before Research Ethics Board/Committee approval)
  - 3 – Withdrawn/on hold/determined to be outside NH jurisdiction

### Northern Health Participation in partnerships

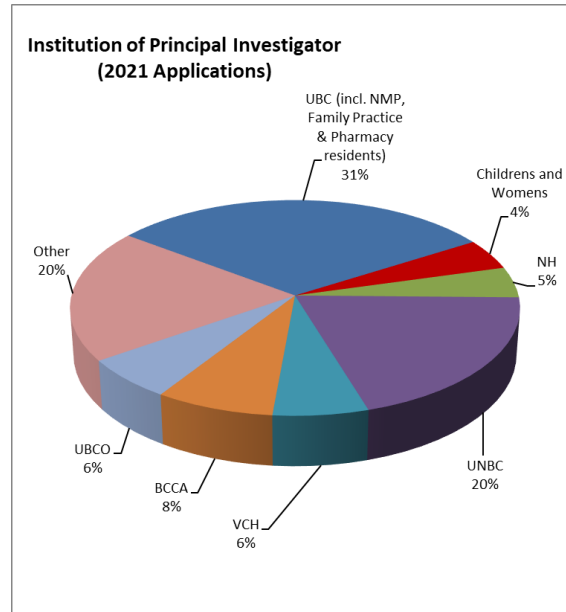
2015:	24 (41% of total studies)
2016:	35 (83%)
2017:	38 (84%)
2018:	52 (95%)
2019:	41 (87%)
2020:	64 (96%)
2021:	63 (98%)

[Table A](#) contains a list of the 2021 research applications that have received final institutional approval.

[Table B](#) contains a list of the 2021 research applications that have received ethics approval by the RRC but additional approvals (e.g., Information sharing agreements, privacy impact assessments, operational approval) is required.

# Principal Investigators

As in previous years, the majority of applications to the NH RRC were received from University of British Columbia (UBC) (31%) and University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) (20%) Principal Investigators (PI). Research conducted by Northern Medical Program faculty and students or UBC clinical residency programs based in the north are included with the UBC total.

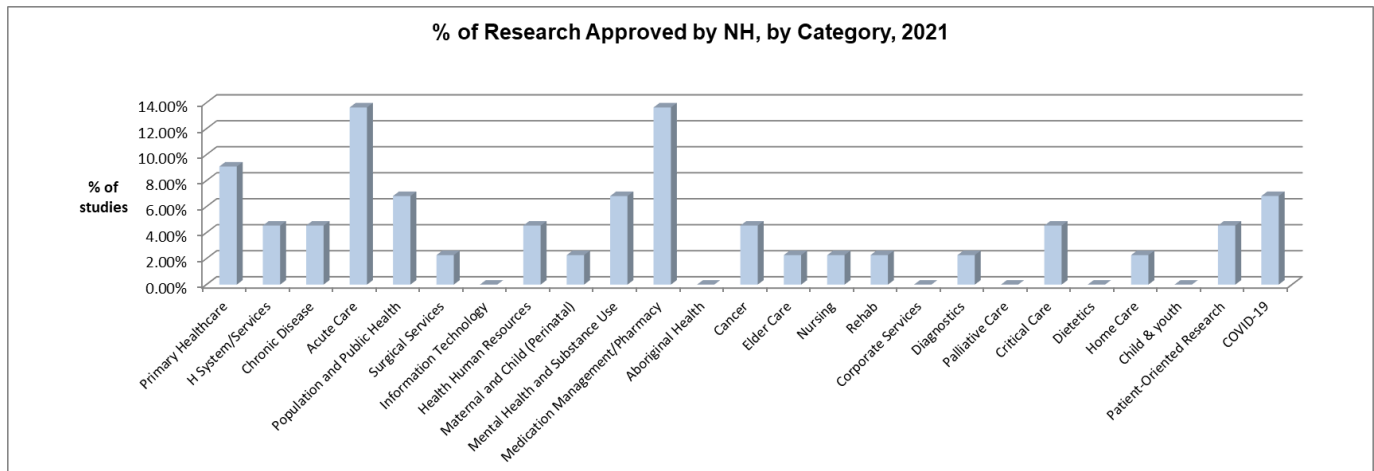


Thirty (20%) of 2021 applications involved a **UNBC PI or Co-Investigator** (compared with 30% in 2020, 19% in 2019, 47% in 2018, 23% in 2017, 33% in 2016 and 26% in 2015).

# Category of Research

## Northern Health categories

Researchers are invited to select up to three categories to describe the focus of their study. The percentage of studies that were classified into each category in 2021 are shown in the graph below. A new category was added in 2020, COVID-19, to reflect the shifting research priorities.

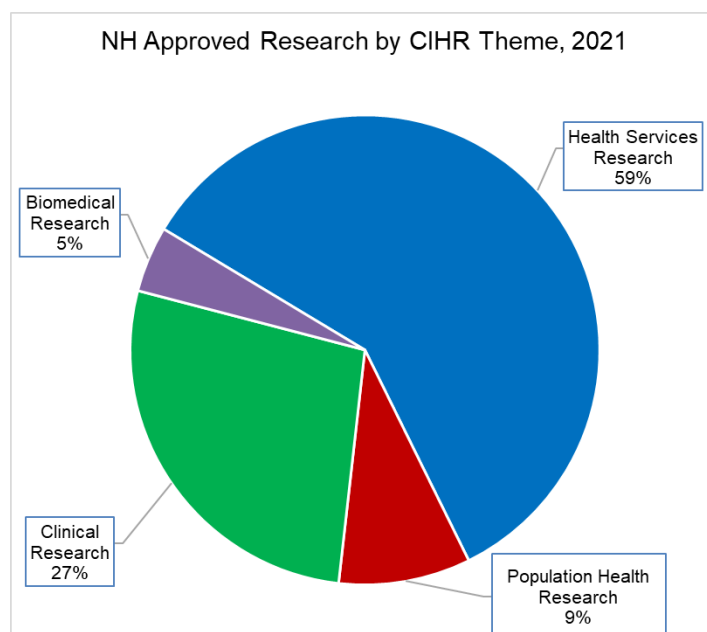


### COVID Related Studies

To support expedited reviews of COVID related studies, Research Ethics BC facilitated developing and implementing rapid turn-around for COVID studies. In 2021, NH received 3 COVID related studies. These are inclusive of both COVID focused research and research amended to include COVID related lines of inquiry.

### Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) categories

The CIHR categorizes research into four 'themes'. Definitions of the four themes of health research can be found in [Table A](#).



## **2021 - 2022 Key Actions and Progress**

Initiatives launched in the area of Research Ethics:

1. Strengthening the administrative infrastructure that supports the research review and approval process.
2. Revisiting the Research Review Committee structure, composition and governance.

### Key outcomes:

Since December 2021, efforts have been undertaken to strengthen the administrative infrastructure required to review and approve research studies.

First, the Research Engagement Team (RET) was created. The RET is composed of experienced research administrators dedicated to helping investigators navigate the review-and-approval stage. The involvement of the RET significantly increases the efficiency of the process, which in turn shortens the time it takes for investigators to receive the final institutional authorization letter for the conduct of research studies.

Second, the gap between ethics and privacy reviews and data access has been mitigated. A privacy expert participates now in the early stages of the ethics review process to address



## Table A: 2021 Research Projects, Ethics and Northern Health Approved to December 31, 2021

Including Canadian Institute for Health Research Themes (<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/48801.html>)

### Theme 1: Biomedical Research (B)

Biomedical research is research with the goal of understanding normal and abnormal human functioning, at the molecular, cellular, organ system and whole body levels, including development of tools and techniques to be applied for this purpose; developing new therapies or devices that improve health or the quality of life of individuals, up to the point where they are tested on human subjects. Biomedical research may also include studies on human subjects that do not have a diagnostic or therapeutic orientation.

### Theme 2: Clinical Research (C)

Clinical research is research with the goal of improving the diagnosis, and treatment (including rehabilitation and palliation), of disease and injury; improving the health and quality of life of individuals as they pass through normal life stages. Clinical research usually encompasses research on, or for the treatment of, patients.

### Theme 3: Health Services Research (H)

Health services research includes research with the goal of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of health professionals and the health care system, through changes to practice and policy. Health services research is a multidisciplinary field of scientific investigation that studies how social factors, financing systems, organizational structures and processes, health technologies, and personal behaviors affect access to health care, the quality and cost of health care, and, ultimately, Canadians' health and well-being.

### Theme 4: Social, Cultural, Environmental, and Population Health Research (P)

Population and public health research comprises research with the goal of improving the health of the Canadian population, or of defined sub-populations, through a better understanding of the ways in which social, cultural, environmental, occupational and economic factors determine health status.

Title of Research	Principal Investigator	PI Institution	Northern Health Operational Approval	CIHR Theme
<b>Received and Approved by Research Review Committee</b>				
Pharmacy Residence Research Project: Primary care pharmacists' perceived confidence and efficacy in managing patients with suicidal ideation – An assessment of a pilot educational module.	Shelby McGraw	UBC	Robert Pammett, Pharmacist, Primary Care	H



Dial-Mag Canada: Outcomes of a higher vs. lower hemodialysate magnesium concentration: A pragmatic cluster-randomized clinical trial in hemodialysis centres	Claire Harris	VCH	Mandy Levesque, Manager, Regional Renal Services	C
Retrospective Chart Review to Assess UHNBC's Management of Acetaminophen Overdoses	Aleisha Enemark	UBC	Susan Miller, Assistant Chief Pharmacist	C
Aging in place in rural and remote regions (APR3): A multi-case study of health care repositioning in BC's Interior	Wendy Hulko	TRU	Aaron Bond, Executive Lead, Elder Program	H
Short PeRIod IncideNce sTudy of Severe Acute Respiratory Infection	Srinivas Murthy	Children's & Woman's	Deanna Hembroff, Regional Manager, Infection Control	C
DETERMINE-A retrospective study of archival NSCLC biopsy samples to investigate the value of the DetermalO® gene expression assay in identifying immune checkpoint inhibitor responses	David Saltman	BCCA	Sherri Tillotson, Director, Regional Tertiary Services and UHNBC Clinical Supports	B
Adherence to Melanoma Excisional Guidelines in the Northern Health Authority: a 10 year Retrospective Chart Review	Christopher Sladden	UBC	Dr. Kamran Azar, Pathologist	C
Contributing to Perinatal Health: A Case Study of Nursing in the Fort St. John Prenatal Clinic and Birthing Centre	Martha Macleod	UNBC	Patricia MacEwan, H.S.A.	H
Determining the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccination in the chronic kidney disease population	Adeera Levin	Providence	Sherri Tillotson, Director, Regional Tertiary Services and UHNBC Clinical Supports	H
Enhancing rural community resiliency to climate change and ecosystem disruption: Building on the lessons learned from the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic to strengthen rural community health and health services	Stefan Grzybowski	UBC	Esther Alonso-Prieto, Lead, Clinical and Research Ethics	H

Impact of increasing realistic extraneous stimuli on the cognitive load experienced by medical students and their performance participating in group based virtual simulation	Melissa Dymond	UBC	UBC, Faculty of Medicine, Learner Access Advisory Council	H
A Descriptive Study of Patients Receiving Injectable Opioid Agonist Therapy in a Rural and Remote Health Jurisdiction in British Columbia	Robert Pammett	NH	Dana Cole, Regional Director, Pharmacy Services	C
An Opportunity for Improving Patient Care: An Examination of Rehabilitation Patient Experiences When Their Discharge Date Changed	Michelle E. Pidgeon	SFU	Sherri Tillotson, Director, Regional Tertiary Services and UHNBC Clinical Supports	H
PPsychological Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic and Experience: Healthcare Worker Survey	Theone SE Paterson	UVIC	Penny Anguish, COO	P
			Ciro Panessa, COO	
			Angela DeSmit, COO	
Building Dialogues for Clinical Research Collaboration and Leadership in Northern British Columbia	Davina Banner-Lukaris	UNBC	Esther Alonso-Prieto, Lead, Clinical and Research Ethics	H
MRSA Nares Screening: Finding the Utility in Predicting Culture-Proven MRSA Infections and Guiding Vancomycin Therapy at the University Hospital of Northern British Columbia (MRSA-FUL)	Alicia Rahier	NH	Kristi Hovland, Regional Manager, Coding and Analytics	C
Hospital Pharmacists and Optimizing Discharge Procedures in Canadian Inpatient Settings	Karen Dahri	VCH	Dana Cole, Regional Director, Pharmacy Services	H
Primary care clinical practice guidelines for a rural setting: a qualitative analysis	Eric Butler	UBC	Jason Jaswal, Regional Director, Medical Affairs	H
Partnering for Change II: Transforming Primary Health Care in Northern BC	Martha Macleod	UNBC	Kelly Gunn, VP Primary & Community Care, Chief Nursing Executive	H
Characterizing the Perceived Need for Advanced Clinical Pharmacy Training in BC	Gregory Michael Legal	Providence	Dana Cole, Regional Director, Pharmacy Services	H
Barriers for inclusion of clinicians with	Tal Jarus	UBC	Penny Anguish, COO	P

disabilities in health care professions in BC - the employers' perspective			Ciro Panessa, COO	
			Angela DeSmit, COO	
Characteristics, Enablers, and Barriers of Clinical Pharmacy Service Delivery at Small Hospitals in British Columbia	Sean Gorman	IH	Dana Cole, Regional Director, Pharmacy Services	H

## Table B: 2021 Research Projects, Ethics Approved, requiring Northern Health Operational Approval, Privacy Impact Assessment or Information Sharing Agreement to December 31, 2021

More studies ended 2021 without securing operational approval than in previous years. Due to COVID-19, many studies were required to change methods to comply with COVID policies, while others have been unable to move forward due to excessive operational impacts on resource stretched areas. Researchers who did not engage with leadership early on in their research have experienced more challenges gaining approval.

Title of Research	Principal Investigator	PI Institution
IN-PoCUS Profiling and Prognosticating COVID-19 patients Using Big Data: A Pan-Pop-BC Data Artificial Intelligence Study	Teresa Tsang	UBC
Indigenous experiences of solid organ transplant in British Columbia	Eric Yoshida	VCH
Core Services for Sustainable Rural Hospitals in British Columbia	Jude Kornelsen	UBC
Stroke Telerehabilitation in Rural and Small Communities British Columbia: Exploring the Perceptions of Stroke Survivors, Caregivers, Clinicians, and Health Administrators	Brodie Sakakibara	UBCO
Feasibility and Acceptability of the Self-Management for Amputee Rehabilitation using Technology (SMART) program: A pilot study	William Miller	UBC
CANVAS Surveillance of Adverse Events Following Immunization among Individuals Immunized with the COVID-19 Vaccine	Julie Bettinger	BCCW
Intelligent Network for Point-of-Care Ultrasound Data Collection	Teresa Tsang	UBC
Vaccine Intentions Among Healthcare Workers in the Northern Health Region	Gina Ogilvie	Children's & Women's
Day-to-day living during COVID-19 – a community participation study exploring the pandemic's impact on the early years, ages 0-8 yrs, across Northern communities	Caroline Sanders	UNBC

RSON team quality survey	Jude Kornelsen	UBC
Gathering narratives on emergency medical transport in British Columbia from physicians, decision-makers and patients in rural, remote and Indigenous communities	Nelly Oelke	UBCO
Person-Centred Care in Residential Care Social Work: Possibilities in the current medical model in BC	Wendy Hulko	TRU
International medical graduates' experiences of psychological safety: Insights from a family medicine residency program	Laura E. Nimmon	UBC
Assessing the Health and Human Resource Impact of COVID-19 in the LTC Setting in Northern BC.	Shannon Freeman	UNBC
Health information goals and use of community and home-based programs by older adult during COVID-19	Trina Fyfe	UNBC
Rural Point-of-Care Ultrasound Survey	Tracy Morton	UBC
Optimizing Discharge Procedures in Canadian Inpatient Settings	Karen Dahri	VCH
Race, ethnicity, and language data collection in Canadian hospitals: a national survey of emergency departments	Niresha Velmurugia	UAB
A Prospective Cohort Study Effectiveness of COVID Vaccination in Patients with Hematological Malignancy on Treatment or within 1 year Post Autologous or Allogeneic Stem Cell Transplant	Heather J. Sutherland	BCCA
Development of a COVID-19 risk assessment decision support tool to identify level of COVID-19 risk among homecare clients in BC.	Shannon Freeman	UNBC
FLICS BC - Developing a Consensus Driven Format for Level of Intervention and Code Status for British Columbia	Julia Z. Ridley	BCCA
Emergency Department Clinical Pharmacy Services in Canadian Hospitals: 2021 National Survey Study	Richard Wanbon	IH
Lifestyle factors and biomarkers of prognosis in colorectal tumours: a pilot study	Parveen Bhatti	BCCA

Long COVID among long-term care residents in BC: a retrospective comparative cohort study	Clayton Hamilton	FH
Penicillin Allergy Delisting through Direct Oral Challenge in a Rural Community Setting	Stephen Bruce Beerman	UBC
Care following non-fatal opioid overdose at the University Hospital of Northern British Columbia Emergency Department: A retrospective chart review	Erin Wilson	UNBC
The impacts of team culture on primary care teams	Nelly Oelke	UBCO
SABR-COMET-3	Rob Olson	BCCA
Self-management for amputee rehabilitation using technology (SMART) program: a peer supported mHealth approach for rehabilitation after lower limb amputation	William Miller	UBC
Incidence of Small Bowel Neuroendocrine Tumours in Northern British Columbia	Erin L. Martin	NH