



# ACHORD

Alliance for Canadian Health  
Outcomes Research in Diabetes

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## 2008 CDA Young Scientist Award Dr. Jeffrey Johnson



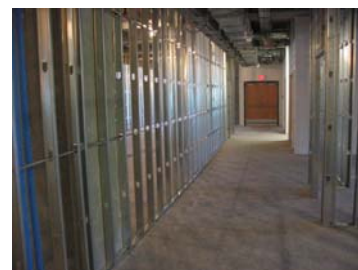
The National Research Council of the Canadian Diabetes Association (CDA) is pleased to announce Dr. Jeffrey A. Johnson as the 2008 recipient of the CDA, Great-West Life, London Life, and Canada Life Young Scientist Award. The CDA established the Young Scientist Award in 1987 for the purpose of encouraging, by appropriate recognition, outstanding research conducted in Canada by young scientists (not past their forty-fifth birthday) in the field of diabetes. This award continues today with the support of Great-West Life, London Life, and Canada Life. Dr. Johnson was presented with this award on

October 17 at the Annual Meeting of the CDA/CSEM in Montreal. Dr. Johnson presented a lecture entitled "Health outcomes research: aiming to improve the quality and efficiency of diabetes care." As part of that talk, Dr. Johnson thanked his colleagues in the ACHORD Group for their productive collaborations, and especially the staff and trainees who he has had the pleasure of working with over the years. Dr. Johnson's presentation also recognized the CDA, AHFMR, CIHR and the Canada Research Chair programs for their financial support of the ACHORD research program.

## Under Construction: ACHORD Research Laboratory

As many of you know, ACHORD is currently temporarily located in the University Terrace on the University of Alberta campus. We are very happy to tell you that construction of our new office space in the Alberta Diabetes Institute began September 2. This space is scheduled to be completed by January 2009. The space is currently in the steel stud erection phase with the wall framing being installed; mechanical and electrical ductwork and conduit rough-ins are beginning as well.

We are quite excited about moving to our new space in the New Year as this will be our final move, allowing us to unpack all of the boxes! The new space will house ACHORD investigators, staff and trainees, as well the new home of the Alberta Diabetes Surveillance System (ADSS) and the Alberta Caring for Diabetes (ABCD) Project. We have some photos of what our space looks like now; not very appealing at the moment but we are pleased to see that progress is underway!



## Report from the Chair

Fall is upon us and time for another ACHORD update!

I am pleased to introduce new staff and students to our group. We are very pleased to welcome to Sandra Rees, who is our ABCD Project Manager. Sandra is a pharmacist who came to us from CADTH. Halim Elamy, who has a computer engineering background, has been working with us on the ADSS data and began a PhD. Saskia Vanderloo, who hails from Ontario, started a MSc in Epidemiology. Both Halim and Saskia are students under my supervision. JM Gamble, who defended his MSc in July, is now enrolled in a PhD under Dean Eurich's supervision. In Calgary another former ACHORD Trainee, Doreen Rabi, is now also a supervisor with Sonia Butalia beginning her MSc under Doreen's supervision. We are very happy to have all of these people in our group, welcome to you all! Robin Lau defended his MSc in August is currently in India for a 6 month internship with the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute. All the best to you Robin!



Jeffrey A. Johnson

The ACHORD Team has continued to work hard with abstracts of our work being presented at many different meetings and conferences throughout the fall. Stephanie Vermeulen and I attended EASD in Rome in September; Larry Svenson was also there and presented a poster on diabetes trends in Inuit population in Alberta. Most of the ACHORD team will attend the CDA Annual Conference in Montreal in mid-October, there are many abstracts from our group being presented at this conference. I am very happy to share the news that I have been selected as the recipient of the 2008 CDA Great-West Life, London Life, and Canada Life Young Scientist Award to be presented the CDA Conference this year.

We are also ramping up for a number of 2009 activities, including our annual Banff retreat in March, and the 2009 version of the Alberta Diabetes Atlas. I hope everyone has a great Fall season, and look forward to updating you on these things in the New Year!

## Meet the Staff: Sandra Rees, BScPharm

Sandra graduated from the University of Alberta in 1993 with a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy. In addition to working in a hospital and community pharmacy, Sandra was involved in research at the Faculty of Pharmacy at the University of Alberta before joining the Alberta Drug Utilization Program (ADUP) in 1999. Sandra spent 5 years with ADUP as the Trial Prescription Program Manager and one of the program's Academic Detailers – providing physicians with evidence based information during one to one visits in their clinic offices with the goal of optimizing patient care.



Sandra Rees

In 2005, Sandra joined the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) as the Alberta Liaison Officer with the goal of increasing awareness of CADTH's programs and

services and facilitating the use of evidence based information in decisions about health technologies. After 2 years in this role, Sandra moved to the Canadian Medication Prescribing and Utilization Service (COMPUS), a division of CADTH, as Manager of Implementation Support. In her role as manager, she supported the national implementation and evaluation of COMPUS' optimal practice intervention program.

In her spare time, Sandra enjoys training for triathlons and looks forward to her next race - the Great White North ½ ironman in July 2009. She also enjoys quiet evenings at home with her two shih tzu dogs. Sandra is excited to be working with the ACHORD group as the Manager of the Alberta's Caring for Diabetes Project.

## ACHORD Seen and Heard

### Recent Publications

Koshman SL, Charrois TL, Simpson SH, McAlister FA, Tsuyuki RT. Pharmacist Care of Patients with Heart Failure: A systematic review of randomized trials. *Arch Intern Med* 2008 Apr 14;168(7):687-94.

Canadian Diabetes Association Clinical Practice Guidelines Expert Committee. Canadian Diabetes Association 2009 Clinical Practice Guidelines for the prevention and management of diabetes in Canada. *Can J Diabetes* 2008;32(Suppl 1):S1-S201.

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## Meet the Student: A. Halim Elamy, MSc, BSc, BEng

Halim's accreditations include a Masters degree with distinction in Software Engineering (specializing in intelligent multi-agent systems) from the University of Calgary in 2005, as well as a BSc in computer science and statistics (double major) and a certificate in remote sensing and geographic information systems, both from the University of Winnipeg in 2004. Furthermore, in 1984 Halim was awarded a BSc (Honors) in aeronautical engineering. For several years, Halim has pursued different areas of information technology and knowledge abstraction by working for several world class corporations, including the Innovative Magnetic Resonance Imaging Systems Inc. (IMRIS), Lucent, Bell Labs, and Digital Equipment Corporation. Halim's publication record includes

many IEEE peer-reviewed articles and a book chapter in Springer's Lecture Notes in Artificial Intelligence (LNAI) series. Halim has received several national and provincial awards from different organizations in recognition of his outstanding research and academic achievements, including from the National Science Resources Center (NSERC) and the Informatics Circle of Research Excellence (iCORE).

Halim is starting his PhD under the supervision of Dr. Jeffrey Johnson. Halim is planning to devise an innovative technique that adapts knowledge from medicine, epidemiology and intelligent computation to support the early detection of diabetic retinopathy.



Halim Elamy

## Meet the Student: Saskia Vanderloo, BSc

Saskia was born and raised in Ottawa, Ontario and completed her undergraduate education at the University of Guelph. Originally attracted by the school's veterinary program, Saskia developed an interest in Molecular Biology and Genetics and graduated with a BSc in Biological Sciences in 2007.

After graduation, Saskia decided to take time to travel abroad. During this period, she was able to reflect on her educational and professional objectives. Upon her return to Canada, Saskia was immediately attracted by graduate work in Public Health as a way to employ preventive measures and treatments in efficient and effective ways to address the health of the popula-

tion. She also looks forward to working with researchers from a variety of backgrounds and is delighted to be joining the ACHORD team. Saskia hopes to continue to challenge herself and gain expertise in a rapidly growing field. She hopes that she may use this research experience to participate in, and support, health policy development.

In her spare time, Saskia enjoys playing field hockey, sailing and participating on recreational sports teams. Although this is Saskia's first experience living out of her home province, she already considers Edmonton home. She is beginning a Master's in Epidemiology under the supervision of Dr. Jeffrey Johnson.



Saskia Vanderloo

## ACHORD Seen and Heard (cont)

### Recent Publications (cont)

Jones C, Simpson SH, Mitchell D, Haggarty S, Campbell N, Then K, Lewanczuk RZ, Sebaldt RJ, Farrell B, Dolovitch L, Kaczorowski J, Chambers LW. Enhancing hypertension awareness and management in the elderly: lessons learned from the Airdrie Community Hypertension Awareness and Management Program (A-CHAMP). *Can J Cardiol* 2008 July;24(7):561-7.

Clement (nee Shrive) FM, Ghali WA, Donaldson C, Manns N, B. J. The impact of using different costing methods on the results of an economic evaluation of cardiac care: micro-costing vs gross-costing approaches. *Health Econ* 2008 Jul 10 [Epub ahead of print].

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## ACHORD Seen and Heard (cont from Page 3)

### ACHORD Chair

#### Dr. Jeffrey Johnson

University of Alberta  
Department of Public Health Sciences

### Staff & Research Trainees

Ms. Samantha Bowker  
Ms. Lauren Brown  
Mr. Halim Elamy  
Dr. Dean Eurich  
Mr. JM Gamble  
Mr. Greg Hugel  
Ms. Sherry Lydynuik  
Ms. Sandra Rees  
Ms. Saskia Vanderloo  
Ms. Stephanie Vermeulen



#### Address:

ACHORD  
Department of Public Health Sciences  
University of Alberta  
1-40 University Terrace  
Edmonton, AB T6G 1K4

#### Phone

(780) 492-7317

#### Fax

(780) 492-7455

#### Website

<http://www.achord.ca>

#### Recent Publications (cont)

Schmaltz HN, Southern DA, Maxwell CJ, Knudtson ML, Ghali WA; for the AP-PROACH Investigators. Patient Sex does not Modify Ejection Fraction as a Predictor of Death in Heart Failure: Insights from the AP-PROACH Cohort. *J Gen Intern Med* 2008 Oct 2 [Epub ahead of print].

Action to Control Cardiovascular Risk in Diabetes Study Group, Gerstein HC, Miller ME, Byington RP, Goff DC Jr, Bigger JT, Buse JB, Cushman WC, Genuth S, Ismail-Beigi F, Grimm RH Jr, Probstfield JL, Simons-Morton DG, Friedewald WT. Effects of intensive glucose monitoring in type 2 diabetes. *N Engl J Med* 2008 Jun 12;358(24):2545-59.

#### Recent Presentations

Svenson LW, Campbell RL, Johnson JA. Incidence and Prevalence Among Inuit in Alberta, Canada 1995 to 2006. 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD), Rome, Italy, September 6-11, 2008. *Diabetologia* 2008;51 (Suppl 1)S179.

Lau R, Ohinmaa A, Johnson JA. Projecting the Future Burden of Diabetes in Alberta. Can Diabetes Assoc Annual Meeting October 15-18, 2008, Montreal, Quebec.

Johnson JA, Carstensen B, Vermeulen SU, Ottosen P, Hugel G. Comprehensive Population-Based Diabetes Surveillance: A Comparison of Alberta, Canada and Denmark, Netherlands. Can Diabetes Assoc Annual Meeting October 15-18, 2008, Montreal, Quebec.

Johnson JA, Vermeulen SU, Hugel G, Svenson L. Urban and Rural Differences in Prevalence and Incidence of Diabetes in Alberta. Can Diabetes Assoc Annual Meeting

October 15-18, 2008, Montreal, Quebec.

Johnson JA, Vermeulen SU, Couch RM, Marks SD, Pacaud D, Hugel G. Increasing Incidence and Prevalence of Diabetes between 1995 and 2006 in Young Children and Adolescents in Alberta, Canada. Can Diabetes Assoc Annual Meeting October 15-18, 2008, Montreal, Quebec.

Johnson JA, Vermeulen SU, Hugel G, Toth E, Hemmelgarn B, Ralph-Campbell K, King M. Increasing Incidence and Prevalence of Diabetes Among Aboriginal Men in Rural and Urban Alberta, 1995 to 2006. Can Diabetes Assoc Annual Meeting October 15-18, 2008, Montreal, Quebec.

Vermeulen SU, Forsyth J, Hugel G, Johnson JA. Active Dissemination of the Alberta Diabetes Surveillance System: Local Information for Local Planning. Can Diabetes Assoc Annual Meeting October 15-18, 2008, Montreal, Quebec.

Hugel G, Vermeulen SU, Johnson JA, Tennant MTS, Rudnisky CJ. Introduction of Teleophthalmology in a Northern Alberta Community and its Effect on Retinal Laser Photocoagulation Procedures in People with Diabetes. Can Diabetes Assoc Annual Meeting October 15-18, 2008, Montreal, Quebec.

Bowker S, Yasui Y, Veugelers P, Johnson JA. Increased Risk of Cancer Mortality Associated with Time-Varying Exposure to Exogenous Insulin Therapy in Type 2 Diabetes. Can Diabetes Assoc Annual Meeting October 15-18, 2008, Montreal, Quebec.

Gamble JM, Eurich DT, Simpson SH, Johnson JA. Insulin Exposure and All-cause Mortality. Can Diabetes Assoc Annual Meeting October 15-18, 2008, Montreal, Quebec.

### Why this Newsletter?

The purpose of the ACHORD Newsletter is to keep you updated on the activities of the ACHORD group and to provide reviews of recent, relevant diabetes literature. The newsletter is published three times a year.

If you have any questions about the newsletter, please call Jeffrey Johnson or any of the ACHORD staff at the University of Alberta at (780) 492-7317.

### ACHORD Events

6th Annual ACHORD Retreat

March 5 & 6, 2009

The Banff Centre

Banff, Alberta, Canada