



Impact Report

2025



A Reflection from Co-Founders

“Since its inception in 2019, PIRN has grown from a grassroots collaboration to a nationally recognized leader in pediatric inpatient research. What began as a collective conducting unfunded, retrospective studies has evolved into a robust network advancing funded prospective studies and now randomized controlled trials! Along the way, PIRN reached exciting milestones – including the creation of the Trainee Advisory Committee (TAC), first executive transition, and introduction of new leadership roles, to build an expanded team that has strengthened our collective capacity. PIRN’s reach extends across Canada, supported by strategic and meaningful partnerships with collaborators. PIRN aims to continue building on this momentum of expanding partnerships, enhancing data infrastructure, and driving evidence-informed changes in pediatric inpatient care.”



Dr. Peter Gill
Chair, PIRN



Dr. Sanjay Mahant
Past Chair, PIRN

Our Impact: At a Glance

Members

196

Sites

26

Studies

17

Funding

\$9.3M

Publications

44

Our 6th Annual Meeting



Our Annual Meeting is a key event for advancing pediatric hospital medicine research and collaboration across Canada. The 6th Annual Meeting, held in November 2024 at the Montreal Children’s Hospital, brought together 70 participants and featured expert talks on quality improvement, implementation science, and Indigenous child health. For the first time, it included oral and poster presentations from trainees, faculty, and patient partners. It is a valuable opportunity to strengthen partnerships and share ideas. We look forward to continuing this momentum at the 7th Annual Meeting on November 13–14, 2025, at BC Children’s Hospital.

The Canadian Paediatric Inpatient Research Network: Development and Early Successes to Advance the Field of Pediatric Hospital Medicine

This [paper](#) published in The Journal of Pediatrics outlines the creation and achievements of PIRN. It describes how PIRN was established to address gaps in pediatric hospital medicine (PHM) research by fostering national collaboration among clinicians, researchers, and institutions. The paper highlights early successes, including the launch of multicenter studies, the development of trainee engagement initiatives, and the creation of infrastructure to support high-quality, collaborative research. These efforts position PIRN as a key driver in advancing PHM and improving care for hospitalized children across Canada.

Grants

Congratulations to Dr. Peter Gill, Dr. Sanjay Mahant, Dr. Francine Buchanan, and their team who were awarded the Spring 2025 CIHR Project Grant and Operating Grant for the study "Dexamethasone vs. Placebo in Children and Youth Hospitalized for Orbital Cellulitis: a Pilot Randomized Clinical Trial". This multi-centre pilot trial aims to assess the feasibility of conducting a definitive RCT to determine whether IV dexamethasone is superior to placebo for children and youth hospitalized with orbital cellulitis. In addition to SickKids, Stollery Children's Hospital, led by Dr. Jessica Foulds will be the second participating PIRN site in the trial.

Congratulations to Dr. Patricia Li, Dr. Amy Shawanda, Dr. Francine Buchanan, and their team who were awarded the Spring 2025 CIHR Healthy Youth Grant for their study "Empowering Voices, Shaping Futures: Co-designing and co-implementing a toolkit with Indigenous and Marginalized Youth for culturally safe engagement in research". This study will address the barriers to Indigenous and Marginalized Youth (IMY) engagement in research and advance reconciliation by empowering Indigenous youth perspectives in research.

Key Collaboration & Partnerships



INSPIRE unites national pediatric inpatient research networks: PRIS (US), PIRN (Canada), GAPRUKI (UK/Ireland), and CIRCAN (Australia/New Zealand), to advance pediatric research globally. At PAS 2025, PIRN's Drs. Nama & Li co-lead a workshop for early-career investigators, fostering collaboration and global connection.



GEMINI is Canada's largest hospital data network, linking 30+ Ontario hospitals to standardize data from millions of admissions. Based at Unity Health Toronto, it drives research and innovation. PIRN is collaborating to develop **GEMINI-Paediatrics** to improve child health outcomes nationwide.



PIRN members co-lead key **POPCORN** teams; Inpatient Medicine (Dr. Gill), Health Equity & EDI+I (Dr. Li), Knowledge Mobilization (Dr. Drouin), Indirect Consequences (Dr. Carwana). POPCORN Inpatient Site Leads include: Dr. Gill (SickKids), Dr. Wahi (McMaster), Dr. Sakran (KHSC).



At the 2024 **CPS** Conference, PIRN's Drs. Drouin, Gill, Wahi, & Forbes, hosted workshops and Journal Club. Drs. Mahant & Nama led CPS CME webinars in 2024 on UTI and BRUE. Drs. Foulds and Wahi will present on pneumonia and high-flow in bronchiolitis during CPS Grant Rounds on November 18th, 2025.



ACT is a national initiative strengthening Canada's clinical trials ecosystem. PIRN joined ACT as a recognized network. This partnership enhances opportunities for multicentre collaboration, accelerates trial start-up, and ensures that children & youth are meaningfully represented in Canada's clinical trials landscape.

SNAP-PY is a global trial led by Dr. Pappenburg evaluating antibiotic treatments for *S. aureus* in children across 9 Canadian pediatric hospitals. PIRN supported the study during the pre-award phase, helping secure four years of CIHR funding and advancing this vital research. PIRN is committed to supporting and ensuring the success of this global trial!

PRESTO is a pilot trial led by Drs. Pernica and Selvakumar from McMaster Children's Hospital. The trial aims to advance care for children hospitalized with pneumonia by evaluating the MeMed BV Assay and short-course antibiotic therapy. The trial is supported by PIRN and will be led at two additional PIRN sites; SickKids (Drs. Gill & Mahant), LHSC (Drs. Taheri & Lu).

Patient Engagement & Partnership

PIRN takes pride in pausing to layer the valued patient and family voice into research. Working with patient partners with lived experience of pediatric admission brings an authentic layer to PIRN's research. Our recent successes include starting the PREFER Lived Experience Advisory Committee and patient partner presentations at the Annual Meeting. Patient Partners will support

larger PIRN initiatives such as POPCORN's launch of a new Advisory group of Parents and Patients with Lived Experience (APPLE) in January 2026. As the network grows, we look forward to enhancing the number of diverse patient partners and exploring the creation of a PIRN Patient Partner National Advisory Table.



Kim De Castris-Garcia
Parent Partner, PIRN

"I have had the honour of working with this team for nearly seven years, and what has struck me the most is that each and every member is dedicated to making difficult, stressful situations easier. They are determined to make every visit and stay more comfortable and less daunting by taking care of the whole child, physically and emotionally, with an aim to improving not only the child's experience, but that of their family, as well."

Mentorship

Mentorship is foundational within PIRN.

As a more formalized mentorship pairing is pursued for trainees through collaboration with our Trainee Advisory Committee (TAC), PIRN is looking to leverage existing mentorship programs and fill gaps unique to the inpatient pediatric research perspective. As PIRN interest and attendance grows, interest in project consultation, connecting or career coaching will be areas to further expand network mentorship. With exciting network growth, our vision is for connectivity theory, learning together from diverse backgrounds, distribution of knowledge and experience between centers and projects, as well as the use of technology to connect and resource-share, to remain integral.

Dr. David D'Arienzo
Early Career Research Lead,
PIRN



"Joining PIRN has been transformational for my career and an incredibly meaningful experience, especially at this early stage of my professional journey. It has opened doors to mentorship, collaboration, and research opportunities that have been essential in my professional development. Beyond research, the sense of community and encouragement have been invaluable, helping me grow not only as a researcher, but also as a colleague and collaborator."

Building Capacity: Trainee Advisory Committee (TAC)

The TAC engages pediatric trainees in national research and fosters collaboration across Canadian centres, providing a platform for residents, fellows, and graduate students to contribute meaningfully to pediatric inpatient research.

Projects & Publications



Lee, Jensen, Buuren, et al. **Research Training and Scholarly Activity during Pediatric Residency: A Cross-sectional Survey of Canadian Pediatric Residents.** May 4, 2024.

The TAC surveyed 230 pediatric residents (36% response rate) from all 17 Canadian general pediatrics programs between April-June 2023. Residents reported involvement in a range of scholarly activities: retrospective clinical studies (22%), qualitative research (15%), quality improvement (13%), & medical education research (12%). However, only 20% had presented at conferences & 12% had submitted manuscripts. The survey revealed a mismatch between residents' career interests and their projects, and identified key factors influencing engagement—protected time, mentorship, and research skills training. The authors recommend national standards, progress-tracking systems, and flexible protected research time to support resident scholarship.

Nurse, Kirolos, Kwan, et al. **Promoting scholarly productivity in pediatric post-graduate training: a scoping review.** *Academic Pediatrics.* In press.

The TAC conducted a scoping review of 23 studies evaluating interventions to increase scholarly activity among pediatric trainees. Interventions included specialized electives, short-term and longitudinal curricula, mentorship, mandates, and funding support. Of 16 studies with comparison groups, 81% showed improved outcomes such as increased presentations or publications, particularly with specialized electives and short-term curricula. These approaches may enhance scholarship with modest time investment, though more rigorous evaluation—especially for QI and medical education—is needed.

Educational Seminars

This collaborative seminar series, co-hosted by the PIRN and CPS Section of Hospital Pediatrics is designed to



support current and future pediatric hospitalists by exploring key themes in hospital medicine training, research, work-life balance, and career development. Check out our website [here](#) for details.

Mentorship & Research Interest Form



The TAC created a Mentorship/Research Interest Form for trainees! Whether you're a pediatric resident, subspecialty fellow, or graduate trainee (MSc/PhD), this form will help us match you with the right opportunities for mentorship, collaboration, and career guidance.



Dr. Nardin Kirolos
Pediatric Resident,
TAC Member

“My involvement in PIRN over the past 6 years was instrumental in my learning, career development, and professional networking. As a second-year medical student, I was involved in PIRN’s national periorbital and orbital cellulitis study. As a pediatric resident, I joined the TAC and will take on the role of TAC Resident Lead this coming year. Through PIRN, I’ve deepened my academic knowledge, contributing to a scoping review by the TAC and presenting at the national annual meeting, and have also built meaningful connections with colleagues across the country. I’ve received invaluable mentorship that continues to shape my evolving career as a pediatrician.”



Our Executive Committee



Chair
Dr. Peter Gill, MD,
DPhil, MSc, FRCPC



Vice Chair
Dr. Patricia Li, MD,
MSc, FRCPC



Vice Chair
Dr. Olivier Drouin, MD,
MSc, MPH, FRCPC



Past Chair
Dr. Sanjay Mahant,
MD, MSc, FRCPC



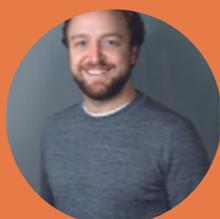
Education Lead
Dr. Karen Forbes, MD,
Med, FRCPC



Mentorship Lead
Dr. Jessica Foulds,
MD, MEHP, FRCPC



Research Lead
Dr. Gita Wahi, MD,
MSc, PhD, FRCPC



Research Lead
Dr. Matt Carwana,
MD, MPH, FRCPC



Research Lead
Dr. Elise Lu, MD,
PhD, FAAP



Research Lead
Dr. Nassr Nama, MD,
MSc, FRCPC, FAAP



Community Lead
Dr. Kim Zhou, MD,
FRCPC



Community Lead
Dr. Niraj Mistry, MD,
MSc, FRCPC



**Early Career
Research Lead**
Dr. Alastair Fung, MD,
MPH, PhD(c), FRCPC



**Early Career
Research Lead**
Dr. David D'Arienzo,
MD, PhD, FRCPC



**Early Career
Research Lead**
Dr. Shamini Selvakumar,
MD, MSc, FRCPC



TAC Fellow Lead
Dr. Zach
Dionisopoulos,
MD, PhD (c) FRCPC



Resident Lead
Dr. Katharine Jensen,
MD, MSc, FRCPC



**Patient & Family
Research Engagement**
Michelle Quinlan



Network Manager
Keenjal Mistry

Trainee Advisory Committee (TAC) 2024 - 2025



Fellow Lead

Dr. Zach Dionisopoulos,
PhD Student
University of Toronto



Resident Lead

Dr. Katharine Jensen, MD
Stollery Children's Hospital



Kimberly Nurse,
PhD Student
University of Toronto



Layla Dehbidi, MD
Pediatric Resident,
CHU Sainte-Justine



Dr. Nardin Kirolos, MD
Pediatric Resident
SickKids



Dr. Celia Kwan, MD
Pediatric Resident
McMaster Children's Hospital



Dr. Manisha Bharadia, MD
Pediatric Resident,
Stollery Children's Hospital



Dr. Jessica Cooper, MD
Pediatric Resident,
Alberta Children's Hospital



Dr. Elya Quesnel, MD
Pediatric Resident
CHU Sainte-Justine



Vivek Gill,
Medical Student,
University of British
Columbia



Contact Us!



contact.pirncanada@sickkids.ca



www.pirncanada.com/



@CanadaPirn



PIRNCANADA Paediatric Inpatient
Research Network

Become a Member!



Scan the QR code or click [here](#)