



# CANADIAN FOUNDATION FOR DIETETIC RESEARCH

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CHARITABLE REGISTRATION NO. 89270 2150 RR0001

## *Announcing ... 2010 CFDR Research Grants*

The CFDR Board of Directors announced on May 27 that funding has been approved for six research grants in the 2010 annual grants program.

“These research projects cover a vast array of food and nutrition topics and will add new knowledge to support dietetic practice,” says Mary Sue Waisman PDt, MSc, FDC, President of CFDR. “Funding research of this type helps us to realize our vision of ‘Enhancing the health of Canadians by contributing new knowledge about food and nutrition’. We are especially pleased to note that three of the projects are funded under our New Researcher program for dietitians who have been in practice for no more than five years and who have not previously led a research project. This program demonstrates our commitment to encouraging dietitians to make research part of their practice.”

The six new projects will answer important research questions:

**Can food-related policies and land use planning practices be aligned in order to advance the nutritional health of the population?** This is a question being examined by **Jessica Wegener, PhD (Cand), MSc, RD** and her research team at the University of Waterloo. Land use planning documents can set the framework to support local food systems and facilitate access to healthy food. The Region of Waterloo’s planning documents include a progressive commitment to support its regional food system. This project takes a multi-sectoral look at the region’s food-related policies and planning actions aimed at facilitating access to locally grown and other healthy foods. The research aims to shed light on the promising role of land use planning policies and practices in facilitating healthy food access. *(This grant is awarded under CFDR’s New Researcher Category)*

**How can workers in long term care homes be supported to provide person-centered mealtime care for long term care residents with dementia?** Poor food intake is a common problem in long term care, especially among residents with dementia. Dietary strategies need to be augmented by person-centered mealtime care practices to improve residents’ mealtime experiences and foster good eating. Increased staff education and training and adequate staffing levels are necessary to improve the quality of mealtime care in long term care homes. **Holly Reimer, MSc, RD** and her research team at the University of Guelph will examine the current state of person-centered care and identify practical steps to improve it in three long term care homes. Findings of the study will be used to develop training resources for staff and to provide information to policy makers to improve implementation of person-centered mealtime care practices. *(This grant is awarded under CFDR’s New Researcher Category)*.

**What are the changes in nutritional, inflammatory and fatty acid status in gastrointestinal cancer patients receiving chemotherapy?** Patients with gastrointestinal cancer often experience weight loss, reduced functional status, poor quality of life and shorter survival time. Standard nutrition interventions are not effective possibly due to the influence of inflammation and depleted fatty acids. Increased knowledge and understanding of the changes in nutritional, inflammatory and fatty acid status while GI cancer patients are undergoing chemotherapy are necessary in order to understand the needs of cancer patients. This research, led by **Denise**

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**Gabrielson, RD** at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto, will provide a basis for further studies for the development of more effective nutritional strategies to improve quality of life of those with gastrointestinal cancer. (*This grant is awarded under CFDR's New Researcher Category*).

### **What are the effects on the thoughts and behaviours about food and eating among restrained women?**

Energy-restricted diets often require dieting rules which force the individual to eat according to cognitive norms, increasing their vulnerability to external food cues. Allowing the recognition of hunger and satiety cues by conscious food tasting could be helpful in facilitating an internalized regulation of food intake. **Véronique Provencher, RD, PhD**, Université Laval, Quebec will look at whether conscious food tasting can influence attitudes and behaviours associated with food and eating, reliance on hunger and satiety signals and the development of taste and olfactory memory in restrained women. The study will provide a better understanding of the effects of conscious food tasting and eating attitudes and behaviours.

**Can a web based tool improve learning in dietetic education?** The Scenario Based Learning Interactive Program is a web based tool that facilitates independent learning and skill development through the completion of clinical case studies using virtual patients. A case study has been developed and researcher **Mary Keith, PhD, RD**, and her team at St. Michael's Hospital are now ready to test whether using this scenario enhances learning. The team will test its hypothesis that dietetic practicum students who use the tool in addition to standardized renal education will score higher on tests compared to those without access to the tool.

### **Can a preterm growth chart developed and validated at Canadian sites be generalized to other countries?**

Growth charts are useful tools for the assessment of growth patterns of preterm infants. A new preterm growth chart, developed in Canada in 2003, is currently being studied to determine its validity in two Canadian cities. A research team, led by **Tanis Fenton, PhD, RD**, Alberta Health Services, Foothills Medical Centre, Alberta, have been working on a study to validate the chart in Calgary and Regina. With this new study, including the University of California San Diego Medical Centre will increase the population base and improve the chart's generalizability beyond Canada's borders.

The Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research was created in 1991 by Dietitians of Canada to support applied nutrition and dietetic research. Thanks to the generous support of corporate donors and individual members of Dietitians of Canada, CFDR has awarded research grants annually since 1993. To date, CFDR has funded more than 100 research teams across the country, awarding more than \$1,200,000 in grants. The CFDR research program supports the Foundation's mission: *Enhancing the health of Canadians by contributing new knowledge about food and nutrition.*

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