

Research Seminar Series

Dalla Lana School of Public Health

Thursday September 16, 2010, 12:00pm

The Ontario Health Study:

Creating platforms for revolutionary science and transformational biology

Professor Lyle John Palmer, PhD, FRSS, FAIM

Executive Scientific Director, Ontario Health Study
Principal Investigator (Ontario), The Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project
Senior Principal Investigator and Program Director, The Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, Toronto
Professor of Biostatistics and Epidemiology, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto
Senior Investigator, Samuel Lunenfeld Research Institute, Mount Sinai Hospital
Senior Scientist, Cancer Care Ontario

Seminar Description:

The discovery and characterization of the etiological factors underlying health and disease in the community and the translation of such knowledge to clinical and public health applications will ultimately depend upon the availability of large-scale population-based, longitudinal data and linkage to statutory health data. This will allow all those with and without disease, their risk and protective factors, including both genetic and environmental contributions, to be studied in an unbiased way throughout the whole life span. Such linkages and resources already exist in Ontario. We are in the process of developing a world class cohort resource that will build on the unique Ontario population health data collected and managed over the last 4 decades.

The Ontario Health Study (OHS) is the biggest community-based health study ever attempted in Canada. The OHS is a long-term study that will help us understand the causes, prevention and treatment of chronic diseases such as cancer, heart disease, asthma, and diabetes. The Ontario Health Study is a longitudinal cohort study seeking to collect health data from all consenting members of the adult population of Ontario (~9.5 million people). The Study began with an initial phase in which more than 8,000 adults living in three communities in Ontario took part.



Guest Speaker Biography:

Prof. Palmer has recently relocated to Toronto to take up the role of Executive Director of the Ontario Health Study (www.ontariohealthstudy.ca/), the largest cohort study ever attempted in Canada. He is also the Director of the Genetic Epidemiology Program at the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research. Together with many partner organizations across Ontario, Prof. Palmer is leading a large-scale expansion of the provincial capacity in the area of genetic epidemiology. Before moving to Canada in July 2010, Prof. Palmer was the Foundation Chair in Genetic Epidemiology and founding Director of the Centre for Genetic Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of Western Australia, where he was also a Professor in the Schools of Medicine & Pharmacology and Population Health. Until 2003, he was an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and the Director of Statistical Genomics at the Channing Laboratory, Boston. His background includes training in clinical epidemiology, human genetics and biostatistics. Prof. Palmer has been recognized for his leadership role in biomedical research by numerous awards, including Fulbright and Churchill Fellowships. Over the last 5 years, he has chaired and/or given invited symposia at over 30 international scientific meetings, has delivered over 100 invited lectures, has produced over 130 publications, and has co-edited a commercially successful encyclopedia of genetic epidemiology that has become a standard reference work. He is in high demand internationally as a speaker and teacher.

Health Sciences Building

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