



UNIVERSITY OF  
**TORONTO**

Centre for the Study of Pain

# UTCSP

## Interim Report

November, 2023

# UTCSP OPERATIONS

01

## **UTCSP STAFF UPDATE: New Education Coordinator**

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Shelley O'Brien has joined our team as Education Coordinator in a permanent capacity. Dr. O'Brien brings a wealth of diverse knowledge as an educator and social scientist, having recently completed her PhD in Environmental Studies at York University.

# Capacity Building & Promoting Growth

# 02

## UTCSP 2023 PAIN SCIENTIST TRAINEE AWARDS

The UTCSP Pain Scientist Scholarship is a yearly merit-based award, and is given to applicants that exhibit high academic achievement, originality, excellent research ability or potential, excellent oral and written communication skills, and leadership abilities. The objective of this scholarship is to strengthen pain research and talent development through the provision of financial support for research training.

This year's winners were:

Suha Sagheer (Cioffi Lab)

Crystal Mui (Loren Lab)

Harashdeep Deol (Loren Lab)

Timur Latypov (Hodaie Lab)

Veena Sanmuganathan (Davis Lab)

Seyed Asaad Karimi (Loren Lab)



# Capacity Building & Promoting Growth

# 02

## UTCSP 2023 SEED GRANTS

This initiative offers a one-year funding opportunity of up to \$30,000. Eligible applicants must be UTCSP members and possess a faculty appointment at the University of Toronto, with the capacity to hold research funds at the University.

Grant priority areas include:

- Initiatives addressing the opioid crisis.
- Interdisciplinary and cross-faculty collaborative research focused on pain management.
- Pain education research.

Applications are currently under review and we anticipate sharing results before the new year.

## Seed Grant

Up to \$30,000

Deadline Oct 13, 2023



# EDUCATION

# 03

## TRANSLATIONAL SEMINAR SERIES EVENTS

The pain trainees and pain professionals who make up the UTCSP Knowledge Translation Subcommittee have organized a series of pain-related talks called the Translational Seminar Series. The most recent event, held on August 31st, featured esteemed speaker Dr. Catherine Bushnell, and was titled "Beyond Opioids: engaging endogenous pain modulation in the brain." The seminar was a hybrid event, with **200** attendees tuning in via Zoom. The Collaborative Program in Neuroscience, The Canadian Pain Society and the International Association for the Study of Pain partnered with the UTCSP to host the event at Hart House.

## UTCSP TRAINEE WELCOME EVENT

On the evening of September 18th, the UTCSP hosted a gathering of UTCSP trainees, faculty, supervisors, and researchers from the pain community. The event, held at Hart House, was marked by a series of presentations, orientations to UofT and UTCSP, awards announcements, and networking opportunities.

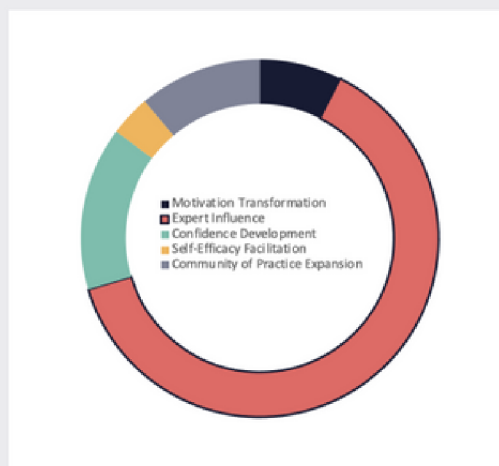
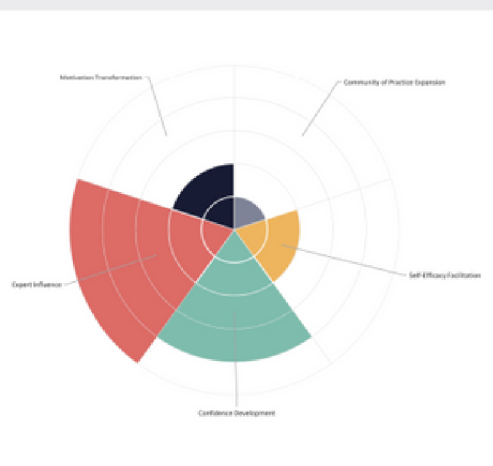


# EDUCATION

# 03

## UTCSP's PARTNERSHIP ON THE CPD ECOSYSTEM PROJECT

UTCSP partnered with the CPD Ecosystem project, an initiative that sought to gather information about Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs in Canada. The project focused on demographics, recruitment methods, objectives, curriculum, and development of CPD programs. The findings revealed that many CPD programs operate in disconnected silos, which leads to challenges in achieving sustainable behavior change. The project aims to address this gap by fostering a collaborative approach that will collectively improve health professional practices and increase program impact.



# Pain CPD Ecosystem Report

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

# 04

## EXCITING WEBSITE LAUNCH, PAIN WEEK BRAND REFRESH, COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

We are thrilled to announce the launch of our new website. Our team worked closely with Universe, a web design and branding company headed by Elaine Stam, to create a website that is tailored to our needs and vision. The new site is designed to serve as our primary tool of Knowledge Mobilization and Translation for our researchers, educators, and trainees, and for our entire UTCSP membership at large. It offers broad functionality for updating and pivoting as we continue to grow.

As part of our effort to engage our community further, we have also given the Interfaculty Pain Curriculum a branding refresh, working with Trisha Brimmer Graphic Design. The new design flows seamlessly across social media and communications platforms and includes strategic and modern touches that activate member engagement and unify our vision.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

# 04

## **EXCITING WEBSITE LAUNCH, PAIN WEEK BRAND REFRESH, COMMUNICATION CHANNELS (cont.)**

In addition to our new website, we continue to engage our UTCSP community through our monthly eNews and Twitter account. Our newsletter has over 400 members who receive our monthly eNews, as well as periodic eNews Bulletins highlighting special events and opportunities. Our Twitter following has grown to over 1200 followers in the local, national, and international pain community, with recurring hashtags such as #prioritizepain. We've also been collaborating with our home faculty, the Faculty of Dentistry, and their communications manager to refine our communications strategy. We are excited to have landed a place in their monthly newsletter's newly added "pain corner," which is distributed to over 3000 subscribers.





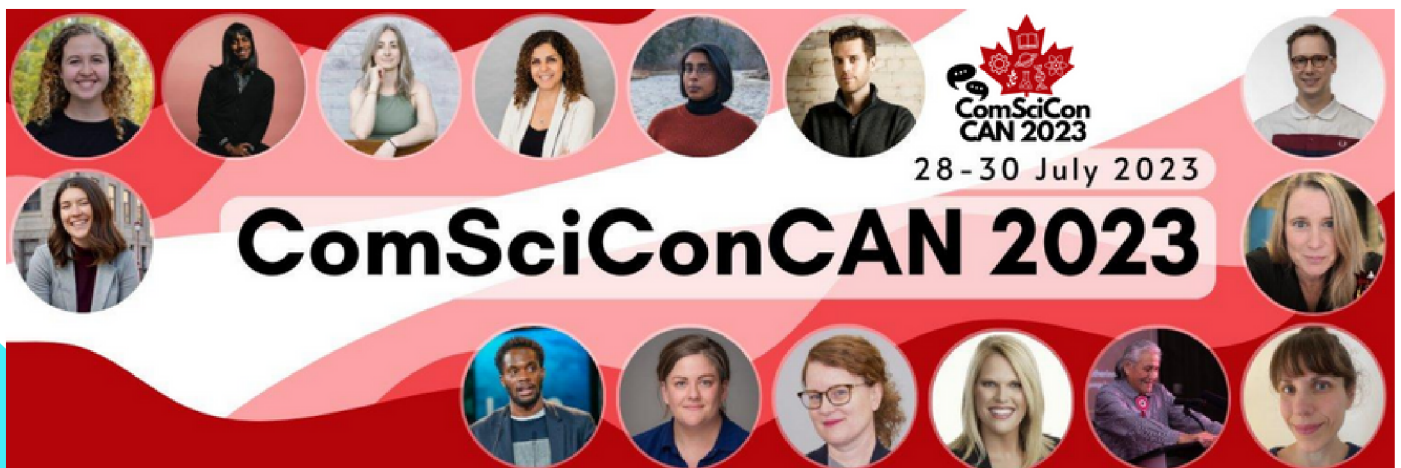
# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

# 04

## PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMSCICONCAN CONFERENCE

The UTCSP was a co-sponsor for the fifth annual ComSciConCAN conference, which was held from July 28-30, 2023 at McMaster University. The conference brought together 36 attendees from 21 Canadian institutions, who represented various STEAM disciplines. The event also featured 16 experts across diverse fields. UTCSP's support this year was directed towards expert honorariums, attendee expenses such as travel and accommodations, catering, and expenses related to the event space.

The conference was structured around interactive workshops, panel discussions, and networking sessions. Attendees had the opportunity to refine their communication skills, gather feedback on their science communication pursuits, explore diverse career paths, and develop a rich network of passionate science communicators.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

# 04

## NATIONAL PAIN AWARENESS WEEK

From November 5-12, National Pain Awareness Week will take place this year, with the aim of shedding light on the 8 million people in Canada who suffer from chronic pain. This event serves as an opportunity to raise awareness about chronic pain, its effects, and how implementing an Action Plan for Pain in Canada can improve access to timely and evidence-based care and support for those who live with it.

The UTCSP is launching a social media campaign to showcase how our work is aligned with the action plan.



**University of Toronto Centre for the Study of Pain**  
Showcasing leaders in pain research, education & practice

01	02	03
<b>Research</b> Foster research and scholarship	<b>Education</b> Develop, implement, and support coordinated educational programs	<b>KT</b> Link research & education in pain to effect the dissemination and application of new knowledge in pain



**8 million**  
people in  
Canada live  
with pain

UNIVERSITY OF  
TORONTO  
Centre for the Study of Pain

#NPAW2023 #PrioritizePain

# #prioritizepain

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

# 04

## NATIONAL PAIN AWARENESS WEEK, PAIN TALKS

We are thrilled to announce that our UTCSP Trainee and Pain Scientist Award winner, Suha Sagheer, has been selected to speak and compete at Pain Talks this year. The 8th edition of PAINtalks took place on November 2, 2023, at 6:30 pm (EDT) in Zoo de Granby, Quebec.

PAINtalks is an evening of popular conferences on the theme of pain. It is bilingual, free and open to all, and inspired by the “TED” presentation formula. Speakers are invited to submit their candidacy to present at the evening in order to communicate their research.

The team behind PAINtalks brings together students in the field of radiation sciences and biomedical imaging, experimental surgery, rehabilitation sciences, virtual rehabilitation, health sciences and psychology. More than 800 people signed up for the PAINtalks 2022 from all over Quebec, other Canadian provinces, and other countries around the world.



20 h 35



**SUHA SAGHEER**

Explorer un nouveau circuit cérébral  
dans la douleur orofaciale

*Exploring a novel brain circuit in  
orofacial pain*

# COMING SOON

# 05

## **PAIN CASE LIBRARY**

The UTCSP, with the expertise of clinicians in many bio-psycho-social disciplines, is collating a pain case library. Creating a resource library of common chronic pain cases will allow us have this repository for future Continuing Professional Development offerings, they can also be adapted for pre-licensure curriculum. The UTCSP aims to have an interprofessional approach to ensure that the complexity of real-world patients, and the advantages of diverse, interprofessional expertise are incorporated in the design of the case. Ideally each case would be created by a team of (~3) expert perspectives covering the medical, psychological, and physical perspectives.

**The seven cases we are developing are:**

**Back Dominant Low Back Pain**  
**Chronic Pelvic Pain in Female Patients**  
**Myofascial Pain**  
**Suboxones For Chronic Pain**  
**Pain and Addiction**  
**MSK in Pediatric Patients**  
**CRPS in Pediatric Patients**

**These cases will be completed in January 2024.**

# COMING SOON

# 05

## **TC3 UTCSP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARD**

TC3 and UTCSP have partnered to offer the UTCSP TC3 Professional Development & Training award. This is a competitive award to offer professional development opportunities for trainees engaged in research on cannabis and/or cannabinoids, the endocannabinoid system, and/or pain and/or its related comorbidities. Professional development & training opportunities may include, but are not limited, to:

- conference attendance
- external professional development courses or training,
- travel allowances to support collaboration/training at institutions outside of Toronto
- other professional development activities as appropriate.

Funds are provided to contribute to the costs of event registration, travel, accommodation, and meals in accordance with the University of Toronto regulations.



# COMING SOON

# 05

## **Fundamentals of Somatosensory and Pain Neuroscience**

Coming soon, the UTCSP supports this comprehensive course on the Fundamentals of Somatosensory and Pain Neuroscience. This course will begin with a review of the basic neuroanatomy and physiology of nociceptive and pain modulatory pathways. Additionally, students will gain in-depth knowledge of cellular, molecular, and systems-level understanding of the somatosensory, decision-making, and descending modulatory pathways involved in the experience of pain. Students who have elementary neuroscience backgrounds will progress to reading neuroscience literature independently.

UTCSP pain scientist Massieh Moayedi leads this course, with each module being led by a content expert.

