



# The Vision Health Research Network Annual Research Day

The Vision Health Research Network (VHRN) was established in 1995 to increase research capacity, productivity, and visibility of vision science carried out in Quebec, Canada. The VHRN is funded by the *Fonds de la recherche du Québec en santé* (FRQS), a Quebec government agency, and the *Foundation Antoine-Turmel*, a private charity organization. In the past decades, the VHRN has fostered productive collaborations and helped improve access to specialized infrastructure and tissue banks, thereby enhancing competitiveness of Quebec vision research on the international stage. The VHRN also supports vision research directly by providing seed funding for national and international collaborative projects. The VHRN is also dedicated to support the training of the next generation of vision researchers by funding scholarships and awards for the best trainees, which not only help them carry out their projects but also make them more competitive to apply for funding at national and international granting agencies. The VHRN strongly believe that these research building initiatives will help us achieve our ultimate goal, which is to improve care and develop treatments for patients living with various vision impairments.

The VHRN brings together more than 120 principal investigators (clinicians and basic scientists) and 200 trainees at different levels (graduate students, residents, postdoctoral fellows), working in various areas of vision health research that make up the research axes of the Network: Cornea and Anterior Segment, Retina and Posterior Segment, Brain and Perception, Visual Impairment and Rehabilitation. The scientific discoveries of our members continue to enrich the understanding of physiological and pathological visual functions, and contribute to the development of advanced therapeutic strategies, including early diagnosis of eye and brain diseases, visual training, behavioral rehabilitation and ophthalmic implants. On March 18<sup>th</sup> 2019, members of the VHRN met in Quebec City (Quebec, Canada) to share their latest research findings on our Annual Research Day, where more than 100 presentations were delivered. For the occasion, we hosted a distinguished guest speaker, Dr. Shigeru Kinoshita, Professor at the Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine, Japan, presented his most recent work on “Advanced Therapies for Corneal Endothelial Dysfunction”. The 2019 VHRN Annual Research Day also featured our first science outreach contest “A wink on my research”, where trainees had to explain their research for a lay audience in 3 minutes. Finally, we also held a session titled “*Information and Research Strategies for Residents*”, which was specifically designed to stimulate residents in ophthalmology to get engaged in research.

In this special issue of the *Annals of Eye Science*, the official journal of Zhongshan Ophthalmic Center, Sun Yat-sen University, I am happy to share with you 47 abstracts from the Annual Research day. As you will see by reading the different abstract, the VHRN is a dynamic and diverse research community. I hope this will stimulate you to consider collaborating with our members or to pursue your training in one of our member’s laboratory and join us in future meetings!

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