



Canadian Foundation  
for Dietetic Research

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021



# CFDR CELEBRATES 30TH ANNIVERSARY



## Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research

Supporting Canadians' Health through  
Applied Dietetic and Nutrition Research



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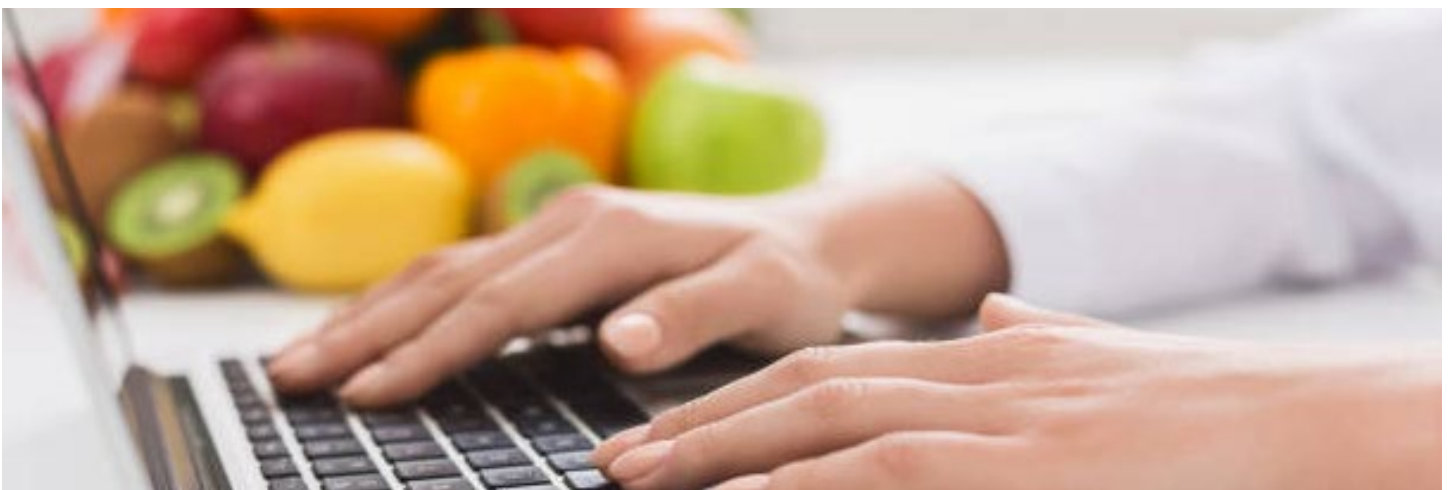
# 30th Anniversary

In this past year CFDR was able to demonstrate an incredible sense of resilience and ability to adapt to the many challenges facing its mission to fund and disseminate practical science-based dietetic research during the COVID-19 pandemic. Though the full extent of the economic and social impacts on the dietetic profession are yet to be seen, advocates have recognized the need for economic, technical, and human resource support for CFDR to sustain itself and continue providing crucial research and support to community wellbeing.

During this pandemic CFDR celebrated its 30th anniversary by reconfirming its mission and finding better ways to reach its audience. In March 2021 a new position of Managing Director, Development and Operations was created with the mandate to rebuild and reposition CFDR as the voice of

practice-based dietetic research in Canada and this socially distanced globalizing world. At the virtual Dietitians of Canada National Conference, a \$30 for 30th Anniversary donation campaign was launched to increase individual giving with existing and new target audiences.

In a socially distanced world, whether it be 6 feet apart or a shared screen, CFDR is committed to improving its digital landscape to ensure it remains engaged on various platforms. A new brand relaunch is in the works for CFDR, and we are looking forward to a post-pandemic rebirth to ensure we provide timely and critical research to advance dietetics and nutrition for all segments of our community.





## REPORT OF THE CHAIR

# CAROL CLARKE

This year is CFDR's 30th anniversary ... and the COVID-19 pandemic continues with its same challenges over the past year. One difference is the availability of effective vaccines, and with continued uptake we may get to some level of normality by late Spring. Recognizing the need to really focus during this second year of the pandemic, our theme was Learn from the Past, Question in the Present, and Research into the Future.

### LEARN FROM THE PAST

CFDR has steadfastly funded practice-based dietetic research in Canada for 30 years. We have a robust granting process in place to support dietitians. This past year, we had 17 letters of intent for grant funding, 11 of which proceeded to full proposals, and in June we announced 6 projects funded for a total of about \$110,000. We also learned the existing operating model could not continue, and we had a restructuring process which limited fundraising, and COVID-19 disrupted Canadians' lives and our further capacity to fundraise.

Despite these difficulties, there are bright lights, as exemplified by a few quotes from CFDR grant recipients' success stories noted on page 4.

### QUESTION IN THE PRESENT

Reflecting on the previous four years, the CFDR Board identified we needed to bring CFDR into the 21st century. Our 2020/21 year has set the stage for a revitalization process for CFDR. In March we hired a part-time Managing Director, Development and Operations who is helping guide CFDR into the future with the support of the Board. I also want to recognize Janis Randall Simpson for her volunteer work in keeping the granting process and Research

Showcase going over the past 4 ½ years, and for helping to ensure a smooth transition to our new Managing Director, Ravi Sidhu. We established two new Board Committees: Future Focus Working Group and Brand and Marketing Committee. This is to set the stage for updating our branding, revamping the website, developing a social media presence, and implementing a development and strategic plan. We reviewed our priority research directions for 2022 to ensure they are diverse, inclusive, and reflective of today's environment. In celebration of our 30th anniversary, we initiated a \$30 for 30 Campaign which was promoted through a revived Twitter account, DC Networks, DC Newsletter, the Canadian Nutrition Society, and DC Conference.

### RESEARCH INTO THE FUTURE

We are currently developing a strategic plan for 2021/22 and beyond building on our accomplishments of this past year. It is in this next year we hope to rebrand and revitalize our logo, our digital landscape, and our commitment to corporate and individual partners alike. We are looking to reconnect relationships, build new ones, and improve our communications. As the Greek philosopher Heraclitus noted "the only constant is change." ... and so, it will be for CFDR, but we will continue to recognize that CFDR is special and remain true to our mission to cultivate, fund, and disseminate practice-based dietetic research in support of evidence-based decisions as we navigate the future in a post-pandemic world.

**CAROL CLARKE**  
CFDR BOARD CHAIR



## REPORT OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR, DEVELOPMENT & OPERATIONS

# RAVI SIDHU

As the entire world plans to renew and establish themselves in a post-pandemic world, CFDR has leveraged this past year to review and rebuild a stronger organization that is bound by its mission to support nutrition and dietetic research. With more information than ever before at our fingertips, all individuals and communities alike are looking for evidence and practice-based research in health-based decisions more than any past generations of our time. Prevention, sustainability, and healthy food choices are entrenched in our day-to-day lives and CFDR is positioned to advance research that supports equitable and sharable knowledge transfer.

I joined CFDR in March 2021 and my primary role is in development to ensure that CFDR not only survives but thrives to continue to provide funding for dietetic evidence-based research. Operationally, this has included extending the call for proposals for the annual CFDR grant competition and overseeing the Scientific Review Committee (SRC) and Abstract Review Committee (ARC) activities.

CFDR's strategic development plan includes a modernization of our brand and value proposition, improving our channels of communication through digital and social media platforms and safely reintroducing fundraising initiative through live events. We will improve our stewardship of long-standing allies while also identifying and cultivating new relationships with a stronger benefit asset inventory to sponsors and improved recognition of individuals who are passionate about our work.

After years of continuing our mandate, we need more access to funds to be more relevant and sustain our important work for years to come. In celebrating our 30th year anniversary, an astonishing achievement for

any charitable organization, it is time to relaunch with a stronger focus that is more inclusive and with an increased ability to share our work. We look forward to maintaining our relationships, building new ones, and forging ahead with a new revitalization and focus on our long-standing mission towards the dietetic profession.

I look forward to guiding a sustainable rebuilding for CFDR's work that amplifies the organization into a new phase of growth as it enters the foreseeable future. Here's to the next 30 years!

**RAVI SIDHU**  
MANAGING DIRECTOR, DEVELOPMENT  
& OPERATIONS

### EXCERPTS FROM PAST GRANT RECIPIENTS

*"CFDR supported the growth and development of my research skills, and I feel that I can tackle and contribute to other research projects. I believe that this kind of funding is a gap in our profession."*

*"It's critical to have grants targeted specifically towards answering clinical practice questions. This type of grant allows a broader number of dietetic practice-based research questions to be answered. It grows our field and provides the evidence we need to practice within dietetics."*

*"We are grateful to CFDR for funding that enabled us to demonstrate a program mandated for use by public health in Ontario, serves as an effective assessment tool and education intervention."*

## CFDR 2021 RESEARCH AWARDS

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Annually, CFDR provides research grant awards to dietitians and members of Dietitians of Canada who wish to explore a question that relates directly to their practice and will be directly applicable to improving the nutritional health of Canadians.

For 2021, we had 17 letters of intent for grant funding, 11 of which proceeded to full proposals, and in June we announced 6 projects funded for a total of about \$110,000. Priority research directions for the 2021 CFDR grants were identified and are outlined in the five category descriptions below.

1. Practice-based challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Outcomes of intervention: objective measures of the effect of a nutrition intervention in all practice areas.
3. Expanding roles for dietitians in meeting health needs of all people living in Canada: education, training, implementation, and evaluation of novel service delivery.
4. Identification, assessment, and risk reduction strategies for groups at risk of nutritional vulnerability.
5. Determinants of food choice: identification of factors and attitudes that influence the food choices made by consumers.

CFDR was looking for a diversity of skills, knowledge, background, and viewpoints and strongly encouraged applications from First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, racialized persons and those who identify as 2SLGBTQ+. Preferences were given to project submissions that reflect a collaborative approach to research.

The following six projects were approved for funding:



### **Examining longitudinal associations between dietary sugar and anthropometric measures among young children in the Guelph Family Health Study**

**Andrea Buchholz & Anisha Mahajan,**  
University of Guelph

There is a critical gap in our understanding of the impact of total, free and added sugar intake on anthropometric measures in preschool-aged children. This research study will examine longitudinal associations between total, free and added sugar intake (from various food sources) and anthropometric measures among young children (aged 1.5 to 6 years) at baseline, 6 months and 18 months. The proposed study is a part of an ongoing family cohort study, the Guelph Family Health Study. This study can inform frontline health professionals when providing dietary guidance to parents of young children such as to limit free and added sugars from various food sources.



## CFDR 2021 RESEARCH AWARDS

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### **Informing evidence-based practice in nutritional genomics: an educational needs assessment of dietitians and development of an evidence summary prototype**

**Sophie Desroches,**  
Université Laval

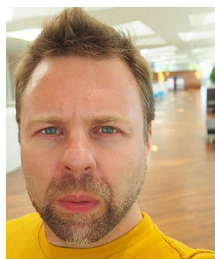
The overarching purpose of our study is to inform training/education materials in nutritional genomics, in order to promote evidence-based personalized nutrition in dietetic practice. To do so, we will distribute an online cross-sectional survey (French and English) related to nutrigenomics training/education to nutrition providers (both RDs and non-RDs). In addition to assessing reasons why nutrition providers have chosen to incorporate nutrigenomics into their practice or not, we will also identify their nutrigenomics training/education experiences and needs, and compare whether and how RDs and non-RDs responses differ.



### **Plant-based dietary patterns and coronary artery calcification in adults with heterozygous familial hypercholesterolemia**

**Jean-Philippe Drouin-Chartier,**  
Université Laval

Using X-rays, researchers from Quebec will assess the amount of calcium in arteries across the heart – a robust risk factor for developing a heart attack in the future – and link it with diet quality, as per Canada's Food guide principles, in 270 adults with inherited high blood cholesterol. This project will outcome on a unique demonstration of the relationship between diet quality and heart health in people with inherited high blood cholesterol.



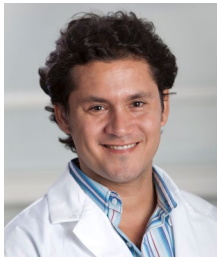
### **Exploring registered dietitians' perception, knowledge of, and experience with implementation of weight-related evidence within the nutrition care process**

**Shannan Grant & Phillip Joy,**  
Mount Saint Vincent University

The goal of this project is to investigate Dietitians' perceptions, knowledge, and experience with implementation of evidence related to weight. Our overall objectives are to conduct a scoping review of the literature that explores, to develop and implement a questionnaire to capture Canadian Dietitians' perception, knowledge of, and experience with implementation of evidence related to weight, and to explore the impacts of COVID-19 on weight-related evidence implementation. This project will provide insights into how Canadian Dietitians understand and describe their collective practice and enable them to make informed professional decisions about whether inclusion/ exclusion of weight in their practice is evidence-based.

## CFDR 2021 RESEARCH AWARDS

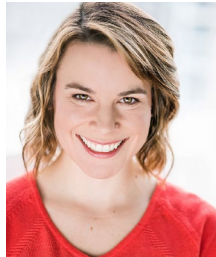
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### **Association between nutrition, biomarkers and genetics on male fertility**

**Ahmed El-Sohemy & Matineh Rastegar Panah,**  
University of Toronto

Infertility affects ~16% of Canadian couples, with the male contributing to about 35% of cases. Previous studies suggest that prudent diets rich in fruits, vegetables, fish and whole grains with limited intakes of refined sugars, saturated fat and processed meats are associated with improved markers of fertility in men. However, the relationship between nutrition and male fertility has not been thoroughly investigated in humans and findings have been inconsistent. Amongst infertile men, the extent of hormone differences, sperm abnormalities and infertility varies. The proposed research aims to evaluate the association between nutritional status and markers of fertility in men. The study objectives are to (1) assess the association between nutritional status of key micronutrients (dietary intake and serum concentrations) and male fertility parameters; (2) determine the association between genetic variation in nutrient metabolism and male fertility parameters; and (3) assess whether genetic variation in nutrient metabolism modifies the association between micronutrients and male fertility parameters. The proposed study design is a cross-sectional analysis involving 200 men attending the largest male infertility clinic in Canada. Participants will complete a validated food frequency questionnaire and have their venous blood analyzed for nutritional biomarkers and DNA isolated for genotyping. Fertility outcomes are semen parameters (sperm count, motility, morphology, viability and semen volume), sperm DNA fragmentation and reproductive hormones (follicular stimulating hormone, luteinizing hormone, prolactin and total testosterone). The proposed research will be the first study to examine the interplay between dietary intake, nutritional biomarkers and genetic variation in nutrient metabolism on various measures of male infertility. This study will generate the knowledge necessary to consider nutrition as a first line approach for treating men with infertility, and it may lead to the incorporation of nutrition assessments and nutrition interventions by registered dietitians into standard care for men with infertility.



### **Development of a self-management App for adults with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)**

**Kevan Jacobson & Jessica Pirnak,**  
University of British Columbia

Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is a complex and debilitating illness impacted by multiple factors, including diet. Currently, there are a lack of evidence-based diet resources for individuals with IBD to help guide modifications in diet to help control disease. The MyHealthyGut smartphone app is being developed with input from IBD patients for IBD patients, to provide an evidence-based and user-centred self-management tool that promotes regular monitoring of diet, symptoms, and access to IBD-focused diet resources.

# CFDR 2021 RESEARCH SHOWCASE

Twenty-four Early Bird abstracts were submitted for the 2021 CFDR Research Showcase that was held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The DC virtual conference included eight Lightning Round presentations from the CFDR Early Bird abstracts.

The feedback from the presenters was very positive given the circumstances. Evaluation by DC found that an overwhelmingly majority of respondents felt that the Lightning Round presentations were useful and added to the value of the program.

All Early Bird abstracts have been published in the fall issue of the Canadian Journal for Dietetic Practice and Research and on the CFDR website.

Nineteen Late Breaking Abstracts were submitted as virtual poster presentations and are posted on the CFDR website.

## Creating an Interactive Timeline of Canadian Dietetic History: Media Dietetics

E. Pellizzari<sup>1</sup>, A. Proulx<sup>1</sup>, T. Babic<sup>1</sup>, L. Dietrich<sup>3</sup>, M. Wyatt<sup>2</sup>, Q. Zhan<sup>1</sup>, P. Brauer<sup>1</sup>, J. Randall Simpson<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Guelph, Guelph, ON, <sup>2</sup>London, ON, <sup>3</sup>Toronto, ON

### Introduction

The recent advent of “media dietitians” and new methods of disseminating nutrition information to the public through means of media has yet to be documented. The lack of historical record will be accounted for in the present research study.

### Methods

- ❖ A draft timeline was created
- ❖ Eleven key informants (n=11) completed semi-structured telephone interviews
- ❖ Recordings were transcribed and coded using thematic analysis
- ❖ A social ecologic framework was used to organize themes

### Results

Five main meta-themes emerged from the interviews:



- (1) Media involvement and the expansion from traditional to social media: “I just see how one form of media becomes a continuum into our social media” (P202).
- (2) Advances associated with using media in dietetic practice: “It’s allowed us to be in front of millions of eyes sharing science and food messages” (P206).
- (3) Challenges associated with using media in dietetic practice: “You’re competing with everybody because of the media, because of social media” (P210).
- (4) Media dietetics emerging through DC initiatives and advocacy:

(5) Implications of COVID-19 on the role of media dietitians: *editors were looking for COVID related content (...) because consumers, they wanted to know what should I eat to protect my immune system. (P210).*

### Objectives

To develop a timeline and conduct key informant interviews to describe the historical experience of dietitians working in traditional and social media from a Canadian perspective.

### Participant Characteristics



Interviewees worked in 9 provinces reporting 6–41 years of dietetic work experience in the media (mean: 22.2 years  $\pm$  SD 13.3 years).

### Conclusion

Media dietitians play a key role in educating the public and act as trusted and credible sources of nutrition information.

### Relevance to Practice

- Address the concerns expressed by participants
- Strengthen dietetic students’ professional identity
- Inform students and dietitians about the history of the profession
- Guide future developments

### References

1. Dietitians of Canada (n.d.). *History of Nutrition Month*. Dietitians of Canada - History of Nutrition Month.
2. College of Dietitians of Ontario. *Social Media Awareness for Regulated Healthcare Professionals Pause Before You Post Learning Module*. CDO, 2013 [cited 2020 Oct 18].





## 2021 CFDR RESEARCH RESULTS

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CFDR congratulates investigators for completion of several projects in the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Highlights of these projects are presented. Full abstracts for all completed CFDR-funded projects can be found in CFDR's Research Room at: <http://researchroom.cfd.ca/about.asp>



### **Exploring experiences of accessing nutritious foods and perceive outcomes among low-income adults participating in the BC Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program**

**Dana Olstad and Stephanie Caron-Roy**  
University of Calgary

**Background:** The British Columbia Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program provides low-income households with \$21/week for 16 weeks to purchase healthy foods in farmers' markets. The purpose of this study was to explore changes, differences and similarities in participants' experiences and short-term outcomes of this program.

**Methods:** We used qualitative descriptive methodology with a longitudinal approach. Data generation occurred during and after the program ended. Data for each time point were analyzed separately using directed content analysis, followed by a comparative analysis between time points.

**Results:** Some program experiences and outcomes were temporary, such as increased financial support and improved diet quality, while others endured post-program, such as increased nutrition knowledge and enhanced social connections.

**Conclusion:** Food subsidy programs in farmers' markets may improve access to nutritious foods and enhance nutrition knowledge and social connections among low-income adults. However, participants struggled to maintain healthy eating practices post-program due to financial constraints.



### **The Nutrition in Cirrhosis Guide: An Implementation Study**

**Chantal Bémour, RD, PhD.**  
Université de Montréal

Liver disease affects almost 10 million Canadians and kills 2 million people annually worldwide. One of the most prevalent complications of chronic liver disease (cirrhosis) is malnutrition, which greatly affects the quality of life of patients. The Nutrition in Cirrhosis Guide, an evidence-based resource, was developed by a national team of hepatology and nutrition experts as well as patients and their caregivers. Using a pilot randomized controlled study, we were able to demonstrate that a 3 months intervention in the form of a nutritional educational strategy such as the Nutrition in Cirrhosis Guide exerts a beneficial impact in terms of quality of life and nutritional literacy in patients receiving the Guide and standard care compared to patients receiving standard care only. Our study is first step towards the management of chronic liver disease that includes modification of lifestyle and provides patient-oriented education improving self-management.

## 2021 CFDR RESEARCH RESULTS

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### **A Mixed Methods Evaluation of a Randomized Control Trial to Evaluate the Effectiveness of the Pure Prairie Living Program in Type 2 Diabetes Participants**

**M. Carolina Archundia-Herrera, Fatheema B. Subhan, Cathy Sakowsky, Karen Watkins & Catherine B. Chan**

University of Alberta, Sherwood Park Primary Care Network

**Background:** We developed a menu plan/cookbook and education program (Pure Prairie Living Program, PPLP) to help people living with diabetes to follow a healthy diet which, together with education, lowered HbA1c by 0.7% in a research setting. Here, its effectiveness and feasibility in a primary care setting was tested. A qualitative follow-up study was conducted to identify ways to overcome barriers to healthy eating.

**Methods:** A parallel-arm randomized, controlled trial was conducted with 49 patients of a primary care clinic in Sherwood Park, Alberta. Evaluation was conducted at baseline, 3 and 6 months.

**Results:** There was no change in HbA1c in either group at 3 or 6 months from baseline. Dietary adherence scores increased in the PPLP group. Participants interviewed identified multiple barriers and had many suggestions for programming to support healthier diets.

**Conclusions:** Translating interventions from academic to primary care settings needs to take into account the personal, healthcare and environmental supports needed to assist people living with diabetes to overcome barriers.

## SUMMARIZED BALANCE SHEET

As of August 31st 2021

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
Cash	737,144	225,586
Investments	1,410,814	2,041,921
Sundry Receivables	20,482	19,408
	<b>2,168,440</b>	<b>2,286,915</b>
<b>CAPITAL ASSETS</b>		
	<b>\$2,168,440</b>	<b>\$2,286,915</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current	75,768	71,841
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Restricted	1,695,937	1,821,551
Unrestricted	397,862	393,523
	<b>2,092,799</b>	<b>2,215,074</b>
	<b>\$2,168,440</b>	<b>\$2,286,915</b>

## SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND FUND BALANCES

As of August 31st 2021

<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
Donations - Corporate	40,000	45,602
Donations - Individuals	21,550	12,598
Revenues from Fundraising Events	-	-
Directed Research	-	2,000
Investment Income	74,783	66,991
Unrealized gain on investments	24,711	28,697
		<b>155,888</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Research Program		
Open Grant Competition	108,814	80,620
Expenses	19,904	15,724
Administration	48,968	31,947
Governance	30,966	46,206
Research Communications	25,640	19,501
Fund-raising events	49,117	29,913
	<b>283,409</b>	<b>223,911</b>
<b>DEFICIENCY OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>(122,275)</b>	<b>(68,023)</b>
<b>NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>		
<b>NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR</b>	<b>2,215,074</b>	<b>2,283,097</b>
	<b>\$2,092,799</b>	<b>\$2,215,074</b>



CFDR is grateful to our corporate partners who believe in the value of dietetic and nutrition research in building a healthy Canada. Our partners contribute funds and human resources to support the work of the Foundation.

CFDR is proud to have worked with the following donors for 2020-2021 at all levels of financial support.



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Managing Director, Development & Operations  
Toronto, ON



Canadian Foundation  
for Dietetic Research

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CFDR relies on the dedicated volunteers who help ensure the success of our programs. Thanks to all of those who donated their time and expertise this year.

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Canadian Foundation for Dietetic Research  
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