



## A letter from OICR's President and Scientific Director



Every day, researchers at OICR and across Ontario make progress on projects like discovering new drugs and biomarkers, decoding the cancer genome, and developing technologies to help scientists carry out their work. These dedicated individuals are laser-focused on achieving success in their work to help advance cancer research. However, the immense scope and scale of cancer research sometimes make it difficult to see how all these efforts add up. The answer is represented by those most affected by cancer – patients. In the end, the big picture of our efforts can be seen in the impact our work has on patients today and in the future.

To bring our research to patients in Ontario and around the globe, OICR has continued to develop and recruit world-leading talent, forge partnerships, and invest in research infrastructure to develop a pipeline for innovations that also helps to boost the province's life sciences economy. As a result, major strides have been made in the earlier detection, precision diagnosis, monitoring and treatment of cancer.

In this report you can read about the numerous positive results of OICR's research strategy. These include new blood-based biopsies that are revolutionizing cancer treatment through cancer detection and improved monitoring of its recurrence, how OICR's Genomics Program has brought cutting edge technologies and capabilities to the Ontario cancer research community, and how OICR is training the next generation of cancer research leaders.

OICR's research and other activities also brings a significant economic benefit to Ontario. This year [FACIT](#) hit the amazing milestone of attracting \$1.5 billion dollars in follow on investment to the province via its portfolio of Ontario-based cancer biotechnology start-ups. This is a remarkable accomplishment attesting to the power of the OICR-FACIT model in creating economic value for Ontarians.

While patients are the focus of our research, they also contribute immensely to the work we do. OICR's Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) continues to provide their

indispensable advice and input into our research programs. I thank Diana Lemaire for her outstanding leadership as Chair of PFAC over last few years and am excited to have Beth Ciavaglia as the new Chair. Thank you to all our patient partners for your invaluable contributions to our research.

Sadly, this year we also lost an invaluable advocate in the Ontario cancer research community and member of our PFAC with the passing of Jill Hamer-Wilson. Jill was a champion for the voice of the patient in cancer research and will be missed by many. She will continue to inspire our work and reinforce our determination to make a difference.

We have also benefitted immensely from the contributions of our Board of Directors, who volunteer their time and skills as volunteers. Thank you for helping us chart a path towards our vision of solving cancer together. Particularly, I thank Sharon Chandler, Dennis Giokas and Dale Lawr for their service to Institute who recently ended their Board terms and welcome Rodney Cheung, Andrea Redway and Anne-Marie Mes-Masson as new Board members.

Partnership is essential to cancer research, and I thank all our research partners at hospitals, universities and other organizations in Ontario and beyond for your collaborative spirit and your role in supporting the Institute's accomplishments this year. These accomplishments would also not have been possible without the continued support of the Government of Ontario. Thank you for believing in our vision and enabling life-changing research to create a healthier and stronger Ontario.

Lastly, I acknowledge and thank every OICR staff member and funded researcher who is doing the heavy lifting of cancer research every day. Your dedication and passion to help others through your work is hugely inspiring. I look forward to continuing our important mission together and to continue to push the boundaries of cancer research to continue breaking new ground towards new breakthroughs to help those with cancer.

I hope you enjoy reading how OICR and its partners have harnessed the power of Ontario's cancer research ecosystem to propel discoveries into concrete solutions for patients. If you have any comments or questions about our research, please contact us at [info@oicr.on.ca](mailto:info@oicr.on.ca).

**Dr. Laszlo Radvanyi**

President and Scientific Director