



GOVERNANCE REPORT

2022

Defining the CART-GRAC organization structure

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Executive Summary

GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Contraception Access Research Team-Groupe de recherche sur l'accessibilité à la contraception (CART-GRAC) network will be managed by a Governing Council of 7-10 Directors: The co-Directors, the Directors of each research domain and a trainee member.

CORE VALUES

CART-GRAC is a network whose members share not only the aims and goals of the organization, but also in its core values, the "CART-Heart" or "Coeur de GRAC":

"CART-GRAC is a network that aims to support people equitably to realize their own goals for whether and when to have children. Through health policy, systems and services research and knowledge mobilization, and researcher training, CART-GRAC works to increase equitable access to high quality family planning knowledge, services, and methods. CART-GRAC connects collaborators, fosters the sharing of ideas and supports new interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral collaborations with a potential for health policy/healthcare change toward the organization aim. CART-GRAC as an organization maintains independence from industry sponsored research."

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in two categories (Full Member and Trainee Member) is available through an online application and requires references from two Full Members in good standing. Applications are reviewed by the Membership Chair and/or a committee of her choosing; information about nominated applicants is then circulated to all Full members in good standing for review. Membership is approved for two years, and renewable upon application.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Members will have access to a variety of networking opportunities, resources, and support through the following (depending on CART-GRAC resources):

- 1) A members-only website, that includes publications, study instruments, and other resources;
- 2) Online discussion and List-serves; *and*
- 3) Eligibility to apply for letters of support from CART-GRAC and/or permission to use the CART-GRAC logo.

Introduction

The Contraception Access Research Team-Group Research de l'Accessibilite sur la Contraception (CART-GRAC) was founded in 2011 as an initiative of the BC Contraception & Abortion Research Team (BC-CART) of the Women's Health Research Institute of BC Women's Hospital and Health Centre. BC-CART, founded in 2009, had engaged provincial health system decision makers, researchers, clinicians, advocates, and trainees to successfully identify priority family planning health care issues and barriers that could be addressed through collaborative research. CART-GRAC was founded to apply the same model in a national context.

In 2013, with growth of the CART-GRAC network to over 100 individual and organizational collaborators over the first two years, we sought to articulate the structure, process, and definition of membership and benefits.

On December 2, 2013, the Governance Working Group met in Toronto, Ontario to define a governance structure for CART-GRAC. As a result of that discussions, Drs. Lorraine Ferris, Angel Foster, Sheila Dunn, Shireen Mansouri and Wendy Norman developed the initial governance framework outlined in this document.

In November 2016, to acknowledge more completely the breadth of family planning research conducted throughout the network, the organization name was changed to **The Contraception & Abortion Research Team – Groupe de recherche sur l'avortement et la contraception (CART-GRAC)** retaining the acronym.

In November 2022, CART-GRAC network members met again in Toronto, Ontario to engage in a Visioning meeting co-chaired by Drs. Wendy Norman, Sarah Munro, Sheila Dunn, and Edith Guilbert, with facilitation from Dr. Dorothy Shaw. This Governance Report summarizes the renewed structure of CART-GRAC. It builds on the initial governance structure results first published in 2013. It integrates the results of the November 2022 Visioning Meeting discussion, as well as a post-meeting survey completed by attendees.

What Does CART-GRAC offer to members?

CART-GRAC is a network that aims to support people equitably to realize their own goals for whether and when to have children . Through health policy, systems and services research and knowledge mobilization, and researcher training, CART-GRAC works to increase equitable access to high quality family planning knowledge, services, and methods. CART-GRAC connects collaborators, fosters the sharing of ideas, and supports new interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral collaborations with a potential for health policy/healthcare change toward the organization aim. CART-GRAC as an organization maintains independence from industry sponsored research.

Mission Statement

The Contraception and Abortion Research Team-Groupe de recherche sur l'avortement et la contraception (CART-GRAC) conducts national, interdisciplinary, cross-sectoral collaboration performing research to support health services and policies to ensure equitable access to high-quality family planning knowledge, methods and services for women and families throughout Canada.

The network provides opportunities for members to collaborate, train, share and develop creative ideas for research, knowledge mobilization and training opportunities to improve the reproductive health of Canadians.

1. CART-GRAC offers members access to:
 - a. Reports, articles, and other publications. These materials will be available for online viewing and download.
 - b. Study instruments. A list and brief description of study materials will be included on the website and will be available by request from the individual investigators (contact information will be provided).
 - c. Access to samples of past research participants (including health care providers and others) who have consented to be contacted in the future for research participation.
 - d. Data from members' studies. Members of the network will be encouraged to share original data.

2. CART-GRAC will create opportunities for networking including:
 - a. Convening provincial and national meetings, hosting List-serves and discussion fora on issues of interest to members.
 - b. Newsletters, scientific statements, and/or policy briefs.

3. CART-GRAC will support individual members through:
 - a. Issuing letter of Support for members to use with grant applications, academic recognition, or in support of suitable policy or advocacy proposals as deemed appropriate by the Governing Council.
 - b. Permitting the use of the CART-GRAC logo by members (and their research teams) as appropriate for uses consistent with the CART-GRAC values.

Governing Council

WHAT EXISTED BEFORE

From 2013 to 2022, the governing structure within CART-GRAC, was co-led by Wendy Norman, Sheila Dunn, and Edith Guilbert. A governing council of 7 to 10 members was chaired by the Director and council members held 3-year terms.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

In 2022, the CART-GRAC governance structure was renewed to better reflect the evolving membership of the network and their collective vision. Drs. Wendy Norman and Sarah Munro were co-appointed as Directors. Drs. Sheila Dunn and Edith Guilbert were appointed to Emeritus Director positions. Dr. Dorothy Shaw was re-appointed as a senior Mentor for the network. The Governing Council was renamed from 7-10 'Council Members' to 7-10 'Research Directors' plus one Trainee Member.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR GOVERNING COUNCIL

- Members of the Governing Council are recruited and nominated by the Co-Directors, in consultation with the Emeritus Directors, and appointed by the Governing Council.
- The term for a Council Member is unfixed and honorary (unpaid).
- Council meetings will be virtual and/or in person and largely asynchronous dealing with the business of the organization as needs arise.
- Consensus decision making will be the preferred model, with voting by simple majority when consensus is not possible. The Directors may vote only when consensus, or a majority vote, is not otherwise possible.

Officer Positions

Co-Director (Wendy V. Norman)
Co-Director (Sarah Munro)
Emeritus Director (Sheila Dunn)
Emeritus Director (Edith Guilbert)
Mentor (Dorothy Shaw)

Council Members

Director, Digital Health Research
Director, Global Health Research
Director, Indigenous Health Research
Director, Midwifery Research
Director, Nursing Research
Director, Quebec
Director, Reproductive Epidemiology
Director, Social Work Research
Trainee Member

Inaugural CART Directors (2022-)



Co-Directors
Sarah Munro
Wendy Norman



Martha Paynter



Liz Darling



Carol-Anne Vallée



Abdul-Fatawu Abdulai



Stephanie Begun



Laura Schummers



Roopan Gill



Danette Jubinville

Policies and Procedures

MEMBERSHIP

Following the results of the 2022 Visioning Meeting, **membership categories** will be as follows:

1. Investigator
 - a. An Investigator role in CART-GRAC is open to a qualified independent researcher, appointed at or affiliated with at an accredited university, in Canada who is in good professional standing and has research interests in family planning, including contraception and abortion.
 - b. A Research Director role in CART-GRAC is open to a qualified Investigator , who has a faculty or affiliate appointment at an academic or training program at a recognized educational or academic institution, and, who has demonstrated leadership qualities and excellence in their conduct of research in family planning, including contraception and abortion.
2. Trainee Member
 - a. A Trainee member is any individual currently enrolled in an academic or training program at a recognized¹ educational or academic institution.
3. Member
 - a. A CART-GRAC partner role is open to any qualified individual in Canada who is in good professional standing and has an interest in family planning, including contraception and abortion.
 - b. Members may be individuals, or individuals on behalf of an organization.

Membership in CART-GRAC is free.

¹ Recognized institutions include those in Canada currently listed within the “Directory of Universities, Colleges and Schools in the Provinces and Territories of Canada” of the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC). <http://cicic.ca/664/directory-of-universities-colleges-and-schools.canada>, or an equivalent institution in the Trainee Member’s current country of residence.

MEMBERSHIP PROCESSES

1. The CART-GRAC network currently encompass over a hundred individuals or representatives of member organizations.
2. Those currently actively engaged within the network are *defacto* Members.
3. Membership applications and instructions for applying will be available from the public section of the CART-GRAC website.

PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

1. Notification of network activities and conferences.
2. Eligibility to apply for a letter of support for projects, grants, or academic evaluation.
3. Potential to apply to use CART-GRAC logo
4. Ability to acknowledge CART-GRAC where appropriate in knowledge translation activities and output
5. The privilege of CART-GRAC membership may be removed by the Governing Council by a majority vote. Any 5 members may bring a proposal to the Governing Council for this purpose.

ADDITIONAL PRIVILEGES OF RESEARCH DIRECTORSHIP

1. Leading research activities specific to their area of expertise,
1. Mentoring trainees,
2. Contributing to the expansion of CART-GRAC's impact to improve health,
3. Receiving senior and peer mentorship to support their research and funding success,
4. Collaboration with a community of researchers to foster research at the intersection of health policy, reproductive care and justice systems, and
5. Networking opportunities with health policy, system and community leaders to advance your independent program of research.

The privilege of CART-GRAC Research Directorship may be removed by the Governing Council by a majority vote. Any 5 members may bring a proposal to the Governing Council for this purpose.

ADDITIONAL PRIVILEGES OF TRAINEES

1. Receiving senior and peer mentorship to support their research and funding success,
2. Collaboration with a community of researchers to foster research at the intersection of health policy, reproductive care and justice systems, and
3. Networking opportunities with health policy, system and community leaders to advance your independent program of research.

The privilege of CART-GRAC Research Trainee membership may be removed by the Governing Council by a majority vote. Any 5 members may bring a proposal to the Governing Council for this purpose.

Support from CART-GRAC

A Letter of Support from CART-GRAC may be requested by any member.

1. Letter in support of a research proposal, grant application, or similar activity.
 - a. Requests for such letters will be forwarded to and considered by one or both of the co-Directors.
 - b. Submission of a draft outlining the suggested letter, in addition to a one page description of the Research Proposal or project is required before a request can be considered.
 - c. Requests should be submitted at least one month in advance of need. Applicants submitting requests after that time run the risk of not hearing back in time.
2. Letter in support of academic review
 - a. Members may request a letter indicating their role or degree of involvement in the organization.
 - b. Requests for such letters will be considered by one or both of the co-Directors.
 - c. Submission of a draft outlining the suggested letter, in addition to a paragraph describing the Member's involvement in CART-GRAC related activities, and the timing, is required
 - d. Requests should be submitted at least one month in advance of need. Applicants submitting requests after that time run the risk of not hearing back in time.
3. Letter in support of a policy or advocacy proposal
 - a. Requests for such letters will be considered by one or both of the co-Directors.
 - b. Submission of a draft outlining the suggested letter, in addition to a one page description of the policy or advocacy proposal in question is required.
 - c. Requests should ideally be submitted at least one month in advance of need. Applicants submitting requests after that time run the risk of not hearing back in time.

Use of CART-GRAC Logo

1. Members may apply to use the CART-GRAC logo in association with their individual or team research projects
2. Permission to use the logo may accompany a Letter of Support, but not necessarily so.
3. If granted, the terms of use of the Logo will be stated in writing to the Member by a CART-GRAC Co-Director.
 - a. Logo use would normally be considered appropriate on knowledge translation and exchange materials, and on consent forms.
 - b. Logo use would normally be considered appropriate in an acknowledgments section of a presentation or report, and would normally be accompanied by a disclaimer that the views/finding presented are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the officers or the network as a whole.

Acknowledgment of CART-GRAC affiliation or support

The CART-GRAC network encourages all members to acknowledge the organization appropriately in the knowledge translation and exchange materials produced related to collaborations and ideas generated within the network. This may include listing CART-GRAC in the acknowledgements section of a manuscript and/or listing CART-GRAC as part of an author's affiliation. All acknowledgements should include a disclaimer that the views/findings presented are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the officers or network as a whole.

Governance Working Group

January 20, 2014

Dr. Lorraine Ferris, BA, MA, PhD, CPsych, LLM
Dr. Angel M. Foster, DPhil, MD, AM
Dr. Sheila Dunn, MD, MSc.
Dr. Wendy V. Norman, MD, MHSc.

Governance Working Group

November 11, 2023

Dr. Dorothy Shaw, MD, FCPS(C), OC
Dr. Edith Guilbert, MD, MSc
Dr. Sheila Dunn, MD, MSc
Dr. Sarah Munro, PhD
Dr. Wendy V. Norman MD, MHSc
Dr. Fatawu Abdulai, RN, PhD
Dr. Stephanie Begun, MSW, PhD
Dr. Elizabeth Darling, RM, PhD
Dr. Roopan Gill, MD, MPH, FRCP(C)
Dr. Janusz Kaczorowski, PhD
Dr. Sabrina Lee, MD, MSc (SRH), MSc (Public Policy)
Dr. Ruth Martin-Misener, NP, PhD
Dr. Regina Renner, MD, MPH, FRCP (C)
Dr. Julie Thorne, MD, FRCP(C)
Dr. Carol-Anne Vallee, MD, FRCP(C)

Summary

The Governance Working Group has developed a proposed framework of governance, including policies and procedures, for the CART-GRAC network. The initial Governance Working Group formed an inaugural Governing Council in 2013, which was renewed in 2022.

Contact Information

CART-GRAC

E202-4500 Oak Street, Vancouver, BC V6H 3N1

Tel 604.875.2424 ext 4880

Toll Free: 1.877.922.7890

Email: cart.grac@ubc.ca

Twitter: [@cartgrac](https://twitter.com/cartgrac)

Web: www.cart-grac.ca