



UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA

May 25, 2017
FortWhyte Alive
Siobhan Richardson Field Station
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Strategic Plan Report 2017-2022



SPINAL CORD
RESEARCH CENTRE



Spinal Cord Research Centre Strategic Plan Retreat, May 25, 2017, Siobhan Richardson Field Station, FortWhyte Alive.

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Executive Summary

On May 25, 2017, the Spinal Cord Research Centre held a strategic planning retreat to begin the process of developing our strategic plan. With thirty-three members in attendance, the group spent some time reflecting upon successes and discussing preferred futures, as well as the centres mission and vision statements.

Using appreciative inquiry as a planning tool, the group identified four strategic goals for the centre:

- 1. Developing the team to ensure it is flexible and positioned for success and attracts quality trainees.**
 - a. Supporting graduate students was seen as necessary to build a common and shared knowledge base, as well as to build skills/competence in a variety of techniques.
 - b. Mentorship was seen as an important component of this, particularly in the area of grant writing
 - c. Team flexibility was seen as important to be able to attract a wide variety of grants.
- 2. Enhance collaboration, both internal and external.**
 - a. Internal collaboration was seen as necessary for cross pollination, Centre cohesiveness, and for obtaining team grants. It was also seen as necessary for enhancing the skills of graduate students and post docs.
 - b. External collaboration was seen as necessary for obtaining grants, as well as doing translational and clinical work. External collaboration was also seen as a mechanism of increasing the reputational power of the Centre, as well as a source of funding.
- 3. Enhance communication, both internal and external.**
 - a. Members identified communication as important so that the good work of the Centre is known, and that it is seen as a leading multifaceted institution attracting good trainees.
 - b. External communication was seen as critical to increasing awareness of the Centre, promoting it as a centre of excellence, and securing non-traditional sources of funding.
 - c. Internal communication was seen as important to the effective functioning of the Centre, and to enhancing collaboration and developing the team
- 4. Expand Clinical Research and link current research to patient related outcomes.**
 - a. SCRC noted the area of human clinical research as having strong future potential for research
 - b. Linking research to care, whether basic science, translational, or clinical, was seen as important, though members recognized that all types of research were important to the SCRC mission. The Centre and its members noted that it was important to be able to discuss and promote the Centre's research in terms of its impact on clinical outcomes, clinical processes, or patient quality of life.

Within each of these areas the group identified what these goals meant for the Centre, methods to achieve them as well as the resources that would need to be mobilized to be successful in these areas. These issues are discussed in the body of this report. Next steps will be to develop an operational plan for the achievement of these goals.

Background

As part of the strategic planning process for the Spinal Cord Research Centre (SCRC), Centre members (faculty members, graduate students, postdoctoral affiliates, research technicians and staff) needed to engage in priority setting, and building consensus around Centre goals for the next three to five years. To this end, a research strategic planning session was planned as a key activity to both develop a research strategic plan, as well as build consensus in the Centre around strategic directions for the Centre as a whole. A planning committee was established, and met four times to plan the retreat. The committee included Phillip Gardiner (Director, SCRC), Sharon McCartney (Assistant, SCRC), and Joanne Hamilton (Office of Educational and Faculty Development).

“Appreciative inquiry” was chosen for the strategic planning methodology as it fosters a positive and community-building approach to the process of planning and priority setting (appreciative inquiry backgrounder – appendix 1). A general invitation was sent to all members of the Spinal Cord Research Centre, with 36 members attending the retreat (attendance list – appendix 2). The retreat was a half-day event, starting at 8am with an introduction to the day, background information on appreciative inquiry, and a brief discussion of the mission and vision (agenda – appendix 3; slide deck – appendix 4). An ‘off-site’ location with adequate parking was chosen (Fort Whyte Centre). A facilitator from outside the department was selected and included in the planning process (Joanne Hamilton from the RFHS Office of Educational and Faculty Development).

Results

Appreciative inquiry uses a four stage strategic planning process: Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny. Results are organized around each of these stages in this report. In addition, faculty members were asked to reflect on the mission and vision statements of the SCRC and identify the significant issues facing the SCRC in the future, which are outlined on page 10 of this report. Four goals were identified by participants, as well as a number of actions that the Centre could undertake to meet these goals. The next steps in the process will be to gather consensus from Centre members on these goals, and then develop timelines for each of the goals and actions, and measure of success for each.

Discovery

In small groups designed to maximize diversity of opinion, participants were given the questions in the sidebar “discovery small group questions”. They were asked to reflect upon the questions, then discuss



each question as a group, recording their discussion on the worksheet provided. In a thematic analysis of responses a number of themes emerged. (Individual responses included as appendix 5)

Question 1. In terms of research and scholarly activity, what do members in the SCRC do well?

A. We do good research. Participants noted that in the area of spinal cord research, the members of SCRC do impactful research, focused on solving problems. This includes long standing work in areas of locomotion, and newer work in the areas

of spinal cord injury, regeneration, and developing models. This research has led to an international reputation as a centre that works from single cell to system. This has also resulted in a history of success in attracting grants from both competitive and private sources.

- B. We are flexible in adapting to the scientific field.** This was noted both in the area of technique and through adapting to new developments in knowledge (neurobiology, remyelination). Participants also noted that this flexible approach has allowed the Centre to take advantage of opportunities with regard to the translation of research.

Question 2: In terms of research and scholarly activity what are we most proud of within the SCRC? Why?

- A. Participants identified a strong research presence in the area of spinal cord function: with discoveries in the area of gap junction function, neuroprotection, neuropharmacology, regeneration, locomotion, sensory control, and electrophysiology.
- B. The SCRC is known internationally, with graduates of the training programs finding positions across the globe.
- C. Participants also noted a collegial supporting environment exists in the research Centre, with sharing of staff and equipment, and open doors, which is very unique.
- D. Many of the research discoveries have stood the test of time.

Discovery Small Group Questions

1. In terms of research and scholarly activity, what do members in the SCRC do well?
2. In terms of research and scholarly activity what are we most proud of within the SCRC? Why?
3. What are the possibilities or opportunities for advancing our research mission?

- E. The multifaceted approach to spinal cord physiology, using a clinically relevant approach with relevant models (transplantation, regeneration, exercise effects), has also been a source of pride.

Question 3: What are the possibilities or opportunities for advancing our research mission?

Four themes arose in the suggestions from participants.

- A. **Communication strategies.** Participants suggested that the Centre could do a “better job of ‘bragging’ or broadcasting our accomplishments and how they have been applied”. This could include enhancing the website, developing a ‘where are they now’ page for our trainees and graduates, and being more ‘vigorous’ in the visiting speaker program to enhance visibility with partners and stakeholders.
- B. **Clinical research.** The area of linking with clinical research was also a theme in the participants’ responses. This included collaborative research with clinicians from various specialties, encouraging the inclusion of clinical applications to research projects, or making sure research had some clinical connection articulated.
- C. **Supporting collaboration and cross pollination.** This was a strong theme in the comments. Collaboration was described as within the Centre, between labs, as well as with those external to the Centre (e.g. with technology field, or with clinicians). Collaboration was also seen as linked to grants. Many saw collaboration as a key factor to future success “No opportunities without productivity, and no productivity without collaboration”. There were a number of suggestions for increasing collaboration, including the creation of an advisory committee, and regular PI meetings. A couple of participants noted that collaboration should be an expectation, and enforced with “each person is required to initiate a new project with another member within SCRC”. Although this may be viewed negatively by some, the intent of the suggestion reflects a sentiment that in some way, collaboration should be an explicit expectation of members of the Centre.
- D. **Supporting graduate students.** This was also a major area of focus when participants discussed how the research mission could be advanced. Participants identified both the need to support grad students, but also had suggestions regarding how this might be achieved. Previous graduates of the program were seen as a source of ‘reputational power’ in that their positive experience in the program and perception of the program as excellent was both a source of pride for participants and a source of cultural capital that could be drawn upon. Suggestions included technical journal clubs, shadowing in different labs, and standard lab rotations for students.



Dreams

Dreams, in the appreciative inquiry process, is the approach used to identify positive possibilities for future action. In the activity associated with this process, participants were again asked questions, as a small group activity. (Questions outlined in the sidebar on Page 7). These questions were discussed for whole group discussion after the small group discussion.

Q1) As researchers and scholars, what are we deeply passionate about? What difference do we hope to make with our activities in these areas?

Most participants focused on making a difference with their research, through advancing knowledge, new discoveries, and finding mechanisms of disease. For example, one participant captured this as “Passionate about discoveries. Make a difference in SCI patients’ life. Make discoveries relevant to SCI, seeing preclinical discoveries being tested in clinical trials”. Minor themes arose in the participants’ responses, in areas of education, communication, and collaboration, reflecting the responses to question #3 in the discovery phase. This congruence between these two sections strengthens the findings.

Q2) What other key strengths/ areas of research and scholarship would we like to nurture and/or develop? As a group? For individual faculty members? Who do we want to become or what do we want to be best known for?

The retreat participants had a number of suggestions for areas to develop. They reflected the four areas identified for advancing the research mission: Communication strategies; clinical research; collaboration and cross pollination; and supporting graduate students. The responses from participants that identify what the SCRC might want to become might best be summarized by this quote:

“To continue to develop clinically relevant research and get clinicians involved with the intent to improve the quality of life in patients with spinal cord injury and neurodegenerative diseases.”



In terms of the four strategic areas, members identified key goals for the Centre as follows:

1. **Communications strategies.** This area focused on ensuring the good work of the Centre is known, and that it is seen as a leading multifaceted institution attracting good trainees. The website was noted as a place where this could be achieved.
2. **Clinical related research.** Building on feedback in previous sessions, SCRC noted the area of human clinical research as having strong future potential for

Dreams Small Group Questions

1. As researchers and scholars, what are we deeply passionate about? What difference do we hope to make with our activities in these areas?
2. What other key strengths/areas of research and scholarship would we like to nurture and/or develop? As a group? For individual faculty members? Who do we want to become or what do we want to be best known for?

research, with a number of specific areas mentioned (e.g. neuroprotection and regeneration into functional recovery and cell replacements, cell replacement therapy). This was expressed by one respondent as “To continue to develop clinical relevant research and get clinicians involved with the Centre to improve the quality of life in patients with spinal cord injury and neurodegenerative diseases”; “multifaceted Centre from basic science to preclinical and translational” and “become a multi-faceted center for basic/preclinical/ clinical human research in SCI. Increasing our success for attracting high quality trainees. Implement mechanisms to become a center of excellence. Go for big team grants to be able to implement our dreams.” This was a major theme for this question – the desire to have a multi-faceted Centre that linked bench to bedside.

3. **Collaboration and Crosspollination:** Similar to the section in the discovery phase of the day, participants noted the importance of collaborating between the labs in the Centre and with others external to the Centre. They noted the importance of human based clinical collaboration throughout the discussion. However, they also saw a need to collaborate and cross pollinate between labs to enhance the experience of students.
4. **Supporting Graduate Students.** This was also a theme in this area. SCRC members suggested a number of areas could be developed to support students. These included short and long courses, cross pollination between labs (especially as it relates to different laboratory techniques), journal club with a focus on approaches/techniques, electives/rotations through labs, students participating in rehab (hospital) rounds, and mentorship in grant writing.

Design

For the theme area selected, each small group was asked to reflect upon and answer three questions (see sidebar page 8 for the questions).

Q1) What measurable results do we want to see? What measurable result or goals do we want to be known for? What would ‘success’ look like 5 years from now?

SCRC members identified measurable results in all four areas that had been identified as priorities in the dreams phase of this process.

Not surprisingly, a number of the measureable results that SCRC members noted were in the area of grants and publications – including number of grants, team grants, and number of publications. Further, a number of these included a trajectory towards an increase in the number of clinical projects, but noted that these needed to be bridged with current projects.

However, a number of other important deliverables were noted by members. First, one area of deliverables commented on was in the area of student training, with a number of metrics proposed (# of trainees & quality, co-supervising students, increased/enhanced teaching and mentoring of trainees, where trainees find employment after graduation, including medical residents in research, the

Design Small Group Questions

For the theme areas identified:

1. What measurable results do we want to see? What measurable results do we want to be known for? What would ‘success’ look like 5 years from now?
2. What would it take to create the change we want to see? What resources are needed to implement our preferred future?
3. What important steps/considerations need to be in place to achieve this goal?

implementation of institute courses, quality of applicants, success of students – grants, publications, success in next position).

The area of collaboration and crosspollination had fewer measurable results noted. Collaboration related measurable results included regular meetings of PI's taking place, attendance at journal clubs increased, and the obtaining of team grants, and new collaborative research between Centre members.

No measurable results were noted in the area of communication, however as the goal of the communication strategy was to increase the awareness of the Centre and its achievements, outcome measures related to this would be closely related to grant success, student admissions, and perhaps publications. Short term outcomes for this area could be measured by a simple survey of stakeholders regarding awareness.

Q2) What would it take to create the changes we want to see? What resources are needed to implement our preferred future?

Although SCRC members had a number of suggestions, this area was better addressed by a dotmocracy exercise that allowed members to identify the priority areas that the Centre must address to achieve its goals. The list of priority areas was brainstormed by the planning committee, and members were invited to add to the list at the retreat. Each member was given 11 dots with which they could vote. Voting consisted of placing their dots on the area(s) they deemed to be priority (e.g. all dots on one priority area, one on each, or any combination of dots/areas). Resources identified by SCRC members in their discussions (appendix 5, design phase, question 2) aligned with the dotmocracy results (table 1).

Table 1 Dotmocracy results.

Area of focus	Frequency	Percentage
Internal collaborations	60	16%
Private/corporate/foundation funding	54	15%
Sustained technical support	50	13%
Outreach activities	39	11%
External (outside of UofM) collaborations	36	10%
Frequency/Type of SCRC group events	29	8%
Quality of office/lab facilities.	24	6%
Access to potential graduate students	22	6%
Age/demographics of members	18	5%
Sustained administrative support	14	4%
Access to potential PDFs	10	3%
SCRC group size	4	1%
External advisory panel	3	1%
Workshops to promote collaborations	3	1%
Collaborative mechanisms to do so	2	1%
Internal advisory panel	2	1%

Geographic proximity of SCRC members	1	0%
	371	

Q3) What important steps/consideration need to be in place to achieve this goal?

SCRC members also had a number of suggestions for important steps to achieve the goals they identified. The main theme arising from these comments was the need for some sort of ‘advisory group’ or committee that would help ensure mechanisms were in place to foster collaboration, oversee communication (website, social media), proactively prepare responses for equipment and other opportunistic funding opportunities, plan a supplementary curriculum for graduate students, and set short term and long term goals for the Centre.

Mission and Visioning Exercise

After completing the Discovery, Dream, and Design phases, members were asked to consider the Mission and Vision statements in the context of the goals for the Centre that emerged in these discussions.

The current mission of the SCRC and a ‘straw dog’ of a vision statement were provided to participants to stimulate discussion. The **current** mission of the SCRC:

The Mission of the Spinal Cord Research Centre of Winnipeg is to provide an environment for world-class spinal cord research and training, through our leadership and expertise in the areas of locomotor control and spinal cord physiology from membrane properties to systems physiology, neuronal networks and regeneration.

Comments regarding the mission included suggestions for revision and general comments.

General comments:

- Too limited
- add clinical emphasis x 3
- for research clinical relevance
- missing clinical, preclinical and rehabilitation
- The mission should be focusing on improving the ability of patients to walk again. All aspects of research should be considered.
- Collaboration, communication
- Outdated – things have changed. Labs direction have changed.
- What to be known for

Suggestions for revision

- Add circuitry

- Should include bench to bedside, rehabilitation, and cellular aspects
- Add 'preclinical models to clinical applications' after 'systems physiology'
- Use the word cellular instead of membrane
- Include physiology and pathophysiology of spinal cord injury, and function
- add 'human'
- For spinal cord injury research, including pain, motor, and sensory neurons
- Add injury x 2
- Add neural circuitry
- Replace the phrase "provide an environment for" with conduct
- Glial cell biology? Understanding the biology of the spinal cord tissue
- Not only locomotor, (but) pain, sensory, autonomic injury – sensory
- Understanding of spinal cord biology, physiology, and pathophysiology (expand the 'spinal cord physiology' phrase to include these)
- Change locomotor control to spinal cord function
- Add basics of preclinical and clinic
- Add disease mechanisms and pathophysiology of spinal cord injury to the mission
- Removed phrase 'locomotor control' and change 'spinal cord physiology from membrane properties...' to 'physiology and pathophysiology of spinal cord function from cellular properties to systems physiology, neuronal networks and regeneration'.
- Add statement 'clinically benefit people with spinal cord injury'
- An emphasis on regeneration should be included in the statements (enticing to prospective students)
- Words missing: cellular properties, pathophysiology, to reflect human – preclinical models to clinical application, knowledge translation to enhance the lives of those living with spinal cord injury; regeneration, rehabilitation –restore function and therapeutic benefit

A suggested mission statement that emerged from the discussions was:

The mission of the Spinal Cord Research Centre is to provide an environment for world-class preclinical and clinical spinal cord research and training, through our leadership and expertise in the areas of spinal cord function from cellular properties to spinal cord pathophysiology, to enhance the lives of those living with spinal cord injury

Vision Statement:

The proposed or 'straw dog' version presented at the SCRC retreat was:

Within 5 years, the SCRC will be known internationally for its unique unified effort through research to not only understand the basis of spinal cord control and its response to injury from the subcellular to the systems levels, but to also apply this

generated knowledge through programs designed to improve the quality of life for individuals with spinal cord injuries.

Feedback on the vision:

- Change the phrase ‘understand the basis of spinal motor control and its response to injury’ to ‘understand spinal cord neural systems and their responses’.
- Use the term ‘neuro-systems’ instead of motor control
- Write out the word five
- Add ‘be the premier centre’ or ‘centre of excellence’
- Spinal cord pathophysiology and function should be used instead of motor or locomotion
- Suggestion for vision “be the world-class centre of excellence for basic, preclinical, and translational research in spinal cord injury and diseases”
- SCRC is an acronym, write it out (consistent with mission)
- Vision should be longer term...and more grand
- Add clinical component
- More collaboration are required for better vision for future
- Web communicate research
- The statement ‘will be known internationally’ – I think this is already realized
- Delete the phrase ‘not only’ and change the phrase ‘but to’ to ‘and’
- Vision will not be met with a disparate group --- too little collaborations, lacking collaboration. Disconnection between members of the SCRC. Need opportunities
- Add complications associated with spinal cord injury
- Suggestion for mission “To become a centre of excellence for basic, preclinical, and [missing] human spinal cord research and spinal cord injury’
- Add rehabilitation

A suggested Vision came out of the discussion:

Within five years, the Spinal Cord Research Centre will be a world-class centre for basic, preclinical and translational research in human spinal cord research and spinal cord injury designed to improve the quality of life for individuals with spinal cord injuries and disorders.

Conclusions

Based on the consultations at the retreat, four goals were identified, with a number of suggested actions for each of the goals.

Goal: Developing the team to ensure it is flexible and positioned for success and attracts quality trainees.

TRAINEES:

Action: Develop regular workshops for graduate students and post docs on topics such as laboratory techniques, career planning, (cv development/job search, Non-university professional opportunities, and how would trainees of the SCRC be well positioned for these opportunities), management/business skills.

Action: Develop courses for graduate students over the entire scope of spinal cord research – grant funding, human research area development, techniques, etc.

Action: Develop a 'where are they now' portion of the Centre website to highlight the success of our students.

Action: Host technical journal clubs to focus on emerging and innovative skills and techniques.

Action: Have students shadow in different labs on a regular basis as part of their orientation to the Centre. Position these as standard lab rotations for students.

Action: Have students work with medical residents and attend teaching rounds to learn about the clinical side of the discipline.

Action: Develop a mentorship program for grad students particularly in the area of grant writing.

Action: Create more opportunities for trainees in teaching.

Action: Create opportunities for student exchanges, and international opportunities.

Action: Outreach to Fort Garry, to get local students attracted to the SCRC.

FACULTY AND STAFF:

Action: Hold regular meetings in the Centre.

Action: Monthly journal clubs for professional development.

Action: Co-supervise trainees.

Action: Have overlapping funding for contingency planning to promote stability for staff and faculty.

Action: Initiate grand rounds (or workshop series) to keep members update on changes in the field across the scope of spinal cord research

Action: Host technical journal clubs to focus on emerging and innovative skills and techniques.

Action: Develop 1 – 2 Canada Research Chair proposals, ready for submission.

Goal: Enhance collaboration, both internal and external.

INTERNAL:

Action: Supervise resident research projects, as a way to build collaboration between clinical and basic sciences.

Action: Work towards more team grants.

Action: Long term co-supervision students.

Action: Implement a monthly journal club that brings everyone together

Action: Schedule regular meetings of PI's.

Action: Consider space planning to promote collaboration

EXTERNAL:

Action: Get involved in outreach to the community (e.g. Café Scientifique).

Action: Recruit clinicians to research projects.

Action: Invite others to meetings, events, workshops, such as med rehab, biomedical engineering, etc.

Action: Create an advisory panel with internal and external members including international members. Possibly create international advisory council.

Action: Require each member to initiate a project with another member of the Centre.

Goal: Enhance communication, both internal and external.

EXTERNAL:

Action: Enhance website, include videos about research to promote the Centre and attract high quality students.

Action: Initiate grand rounds

Action: Use social media to promote the Centre and its research.

Action: Develop a 'where are they now' portion of the Centre website to highlight the success of our students.

INTERNAL:

Action: Have regular meetings of the Centre, and regular meetings of PIs.

Action: In the Centre meetings, set short and long term goals individually and as a group. Have annual review of progress against goals.

Goal: Expand clinical research and link current research to patient related outcomes.

Action: Have strategic research projects and equipment proposals ready to go, based on Centre priorities, ready for short notice grant opportunities. Compile requests for infrastructure proposals so they can be submitted on short notice.

Action: Strike an opportunities committee that can develop proposals and scan for traditional and non-traditional research and funding opportunities.

Action: Develop partnership with clinics.

Action: Supervise resident research projects.

Action: Participate in the recruitment in clinical areas (neurology, neurosurgery).

By achieving these four goals, members envisioned the Spinal Cord Research Centre would be recognized as a centre of excellence for bench to bedside spinal cord research, attracting high quality graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. Existing grants would be maintained, and new grants would be secured, including a Canada Research Chair(s). Findings from research would be published in high quality journals. And the results of the research done by the Centre would have a positive impact on the lives of people affected by spinal cord injuries or diseases.

Next Steps

The draft plan will be reviewed by Centre members, with solicitation of suggestions and revisions, particularly as it relates to actions to achieve the goals, and timelines for the actions. A finalized plan will be developed and submitted to the Director, SCRC, for approval, and to the Head of the Department of Physiology and Pathophysiology, and to the Dean of the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences for information. Subsequent to the approval of the plan, next steps will include the striking of an action committee(s) to develop an action plan with timelines and priorities.



Appendices 1-5

Appendix 1

Appreciative Inquiry as a method for strategic planning

Adapted from Stavros, Cooperrider, & Kelley, 2003

Appreciative Inquired is based on this premise:

- Change requires action.
- Action requires a plan.
- A plan requires a strategy.
- A strategy requires goals and enabling objectives.
- Goals and objectives require a mission.
- **A mission is defined by a vision.**
- **A vision is set by one’s values.**

The Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach to strategic planning starts by focusing on the strengths of an organization and its stakeholders’ values and shared vision.

Use strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results (SOAR) rather than SWOT.

- Build on their strengths (the positive core).
- Discover ‘profitable’ opportunities (profit in terms of value and meaning’.
- Visualize goals and strategic alternatives.
- Identify enabling objectives.
- Design strategies and tactics that are integrated with most successful programs
- Implement a strategic plan that is a dynamic, continuous, and living document

Uses a cycle of change –the 4-D Cycle: based on four stages: **discovery** – focusses on excellence, core values and best practices; **dream** - envisioning positive possibilities; **design** - the structure, processes and relationships that support the dream; **destiny** - an effective inspirational plan for implementation

Strategic Inquiry – Appreciative Intent: Inspiration to SOAR

<p>Strategic Inquiry</p>	<p>Strengths What are our (greatest) assets; what can we build on; What are we doing well; what do our strengths tell us about our skills</p>	<p>Opportunities What are the best possible opportunities; what are our stakeholders asking for; how do we collectively understand outside threats; how can we reframe to see the opportunity; how can we best partner with others</p>
<p>Appreciative Insight</p>	<p>Aspirations What is our preferred future; what do we care deeply about; considering our strengths and opportunities – who should we become How can we make a difference for our organization and its stakeholders</p>	<p>Results What are the measurable results; how do we know we are succeeding; how do we tangibly translate our strengths, opportunities and aspirations</p>

(adapted from Stavros, Cooperrider, & Kelley, 2003)

Potential questions for SOAR

(Adapted from Stavros, Jacqueline, & Hinrichs, 2011 and UofGuelph Associate VP, Academic, nd).

Strengths: What can we build on?

1. What are we most proud of as an organization? How does that reflect our greatest strength
2. What makes us unique? What can we be best at in our world?
3. What is our proudest achievement in the last year or two?
4. How do we use our strengths to get results
5. How do our strengths fit with the realities of the profession/our field
6. What do we provide that is 'world class' in our field.

Another way:

1. What are we doing well?
 - What key achievements are we most proud of?
 - What positive aspects of the research program have or others commented on?
2. What are we known for?
 - What makes us unique?
 - Why do students choose our program?
3. What key resources and areas of expertise give us an advantage?

Developing Strengths:

In small groups....

- Each person will describe examples of stories that shows the organization at its best and
- When s/he felt proud to be part of it.

Each group will report back to the large group the major themes that came up in their discussions.

Opportunities: what are our stakeholders asking for?

1. How do we make sense of opportunities provided by external forces or trends
2. What are the top three opportunities on which we should focus our efforts
3. How can we best meet the needs of our stakeholders...including students, patients/clients, employers, and the general public
4. How can we reframe challenges to be seen as existing opportunities
5. What new skills do we need to move forward

Another way:

1. What changes in demand do we expect to see over the next years?
 - What external forces or trends may positively impact the program?
2. What future external opportunities exist for the program?
 - What are key areas of untapped potential?
 - What are students, employers and/or other community members asking for?
3. How can we highlight our program strengths and distinguish ourselves from competing programs?
4. How can we reframe perceived challenges to be seen as opportunities?

Aspirations: What do we care deeply about?

1. When we explore our values and aspirations, “what are we deeply passionate about/”
2. Reflecting on our strengths and opportunities, who are we, who should we become and where do we go in the future?
3. What is our most compelling aspirations?
4. What strategic initiatives (e.g. projects, programs, processes) would support our aspirations

Another way:

1. What are we deeply passionate about?
2. As a program, what difference do we hope to make (e.g. to learners, the institution, employers, the community)?
3. What does our preferred future look like?
4. What projects, programs or processes would support our aspirations?

Developing aspirations:

In small groups discuss...

- What are we deeply passionate about?
- What are our most compelling aspirations?

Each group will report back to the large group the major themes that came up in their discussion.

Results: how do we know we are succeeding?

1. Considering our strengths, opportunities, and aspirations, what meaningful measures would indicate that we are on track to achieve our goals?
2. What are 3-5 indicators that would create a scorecard that addresses a triple bottom line of ‘**our own metrics**, people and planet?
3. What resources are needed to implement vital projects?
4. What are the best rewards to support those who achieve our goals?

Another way:

1. Considering our strengths, opportunities, and aspirations, what meaningful measures will indicate that we are on track in achieving our goals?
2. What measurable results do we want to see? What measurable results will we be known for?
3. What resources are needed to implement our most vital projects and initiatives?
4. What are the 3-5 key goals would you like to accomplish in order to achieve these results?

Developing Results

In small groups discuss

- How do you define success as a professional?
- How do you know you are succeeding?

Each group will report back to the larger group the major themes that came up in their discussions.

Appendix 2



**Spinal Cord Research Centre
Strategic Plan Meeting
Thursday, May 25, 2017
FortWhyte Alive, Siobhan Richardson Field Station**

Agenda

8:15am - 8:45am Registration and continental breakfast

8:45am - 8:55am Welcome and introduction to the day, organization and process

Break out sessions

10:30am - 10:40am Coffee break

Break out sessions

Noon -1:30pm Working lunch

Organizers: Dr. Phillip Gardiner, Sharon McCartney

Facilitator: Joanne Hamilton, Director, UM Office of Educational and Faculty Development

Break Out Groups

Group 1

Faculty: Dr. Brian Schmidt, Dr. Chris MacDonell

Students: Arsalan Alizadeh, Prabhpal Kaur Bhullar, Hardeep Kataria (Postdoc)

Staff: Erika Couto

Group 2

Faculty: Dr. Dave McCrea, Dr. Kristine Cowley

Students: Scott Dyck, Chris Hart

Staff: Jahanzeb Ansari, Dr. Santhosh Kallivalappil

Group 3

Faculty: Dr. Jim Nagy, Dr. Eftekhari Eftekharpour

Students: Katrina Armstrong, Sarah Chen (Postdoc), Ghazaleh Shahriary

Staff: Gilles Detillieux

Group 4

Faculty: Dr. Larry Jordan, Dr. Katinka Stecina

Students: Alisha Beaudoin, Ramiro Morfin, Imamul Islam (Postdoc)

Staff: Shannon Deschamps, Jessie Shea

Group 5

Faculty: Dr. Brent Fedirchuk, Dr. Soheila Karimi

Students: Mona Nazzal, Nagakannan Pandian

Staff: Kalan Gardiner, Maria Setterbom

Appendix 3
Spinal Cord Research Centre Strategic Plan
Meeting Agenda

Fort Whyte Alive
May 25, 2017

8:15- 8:45	Breakfast/Registration	Sharon
8:45 – 8:55	Welcome; introduction to day organization/process	Joanne – brief powerpoint of the appreciative inquiry process: discussion of ‘list of issues that need changing process; small group process – recorder/reporter;
8:55 – 9:30	Mission/vision discussion	Phillip present mission/vision and process for review over course of day
9:30 – 10:00	Discover	Small groups with key questions
10:00 – 10:30	Discover – large group	De brief one question from small group work
10:30-10:40	Coffee break	
10:40-11:10	Dream	Small groups with key questions
11:10 – 10:40	Dream – large group	De brief one question from small group work
11:40 – 12:30	Design	Small groups with key questions
12:00 – 12:30	Design – large group	Debrief small group discussions – introduce dotmocracy for ‘list of issues that need changing process’.
12:30 – 1:30	Working Lunch	Discuss/summarize day – Philip: summarize suggestions for ‘research areas’ (Joanne and Sharon to provide list from earlier discussion); revisit suggestions around the mission statement (from poster and from table sheets); Collect all working sheets from tables – will collate into a report for the group – Next step – develop ‘operational plan’ for the strategic plan developed through today’s meeting (using data produced at the meeting) Wrap up and thanks

Appendix 4**Slide Deck**

SCRC

Mission: To provide an environment for world-class spinal cord research and training, through our leadership and expertise in the areas of locomotor control and spinal cord physiology from membrane properties to systems physiology, neuronal networks and regeneration.

VISION: Within 5 years, the SCRC will be known internationally for its unique unified effort through research to not only understand the basis of spinal motor control and its response to injury from the subcellular to the systems levels, but to also apply this generated knowledge through programs designed to improve the quality of life for individuals with spinal cord injuries.

Appreciative Inquiry

- A strategic planning tool
 - strengths, values and shared vision
- Uses a 4-D cycle of change
 - **Discovery** – focusses on excellence, core values and best practices
 - **Dream** – envision positive possibilities
 - **Design** – the structure, processes and relationships that support the Dream
 - **Destiny** – an effective inspirational plan for implementation



- ## Agenda
- **Welcome**
 - **Discover**
 - Small group discussions – identify strengths, linkages, what works, preferred future
 - **Discuss**
 - Large group discussions – share thoughts, establish process for decisions
 - **Dream**
 - Small group discussions – envision what “can be”
 - **Discuss**
 - Large group discussions – what did we hear; what did it mean
 - **Design**
 - Small group discussion – what should we do to make our vision a reality
 - **Wrap up and Next steps**

Appendix 5

Discovery phase - Group and Individual Responses:

Q1) In terms of research and scholarly activity, what do members in the SCRC do well?

- Well on the basics.
- Broad base of cellular understanding.
- Broad spectrum of expertise.
- Great models.
- Successful basic science labs.
- Current grants – CFI, CIHR.
- Individually, the researchers in University of Manitoba are doing very well, but small collaboration. Good models, good funds and environments for students. But it would be great if we can also work on patients for research. We can work on CNS related diseases. Glial cells are also important to investigate not just neurons.
- General OK, needs advanced techniques.
- Basic + clinical – connecting – only KNSC.
- Neuro-protection E.E.; regeneration S.K; transplantation (L.J/S.K) loco and post control.
- Neural control of posture, locomotion, trunk etc.
- Afferents involved in control of stance, foot- diabetes.
- Basic research, techniques (model systems), neuroprotection, neuro-regeneration, transplantation, posture control, bone loss, recovery, effect of exercise, pharmacological activation of propriospinal cells.
- Electrophysiology: 35 years focus on one behavior (locomotion).
- Regeneration.
- Publishing/ funding/training.
- 1) Electrophysiology: motor locomotion; 2) Regeneration; 3) Publication.
- Basic research understanding the physiology of spinal cord and pathology of SCI have put SCRC at a place where near complete understanding is attempted and had been achieved.
- Molecular biology, electrophysiology.
- Spinal cord sensory and motor systems, neurobiology of spinal cord injury, strategies to promote regeneration and decrease effects of SCI, electrophysiology, acute and chronic models of SCI, locomotion, immuno-histochemical approaches, mentor trainees.
- Electrophysiology of motor and sensory, regeneration & re-myelination, discoveries of SCI mechanisms/ addressing these directions to find new therapies.
- Broad approach, working extensively with basics.
- SCRC has a longstanding track record in using a multimodal attack on a specific biological question with results that stand the test of time. From single cell to whole animals. Attracting funding both competitive- private. Consistent publications in high quality journals. Development of independent researchers.
- Individually doing reasonably well. Jim expertise in gap junctions. Good models, Katinka & Larry DREADD Models. SCI – Kris contribution to human, glial cell biology. Soheila + MS.
- Maintain our strength in electrophysiology while adding/ expanding/ adapting to new strong areas in scientific community. Molecular biology invitro.

- General ability to adapt to changing research technologies including diversity to the general started the locomotion research. Locomotion research. Regenerative spinal cord research. Have good history of tracking students that go on in the area.
- Dave: 2 courses: 1) basic clinical aspects of SCI, 2) cross poll courses, 3) journal club.
- Cellular, molecular aspect of SCI regeneration. Locomotion- electrophysiology= spinal, sensory, electrophysiology, molecular biology.
- Used to be more in locomotion with electrophysiology, not much in sensory has become more in molecular biology. Regeneration has been added. Pathophysiology of SCI- should be added to mission. Flexible in adapting to the scientific field- neurobiology, re-myelination. Many models of SCI – acute, chronic, histochemical approach.
- Discovery. Understanding mechanisms. Being able to make a meaningful contribution to disease. Emphasized that basic discovery is the foundation to meaningful clinical trials. Development of realistic approaches to disease research. We hope to make new discoveries and make meaningful. Best known for integrity and reliable results.
- Focused research goal- i.e. one problem intensely, long history of problem based research according to a particular research goal – i.e. locomotion from single cell to system. Regeneration- attracting funding, publication, being attentive to changing trends in the field. Goal oriented in terms of publication quality and aiming for high quality journals. Establishing a center and adapting to new opportunities with regard to translation of the research, taking advantage of available expertise. Mentorship. Long history of developing independent researchers. This includes support for students and facilitating growth and development. Generation of quality impact on the field. Stand the test of time.

Q2) In terms of research scholarly activity, what are we most proud of within the SCRC? Why?

- Thorough understanding of the basics science underlying fxn (function) and injury.
- Ask where the trainees that have gone through the SCRC today – active/strong faculty throughout the world.
- People understand the training environment at the SCRC.
- Basic science discoveries: Gap junction function: Pre-synthetic inhibitor, mixed synapses, c-terminal, neuroprotection, neuropharmacology, regeneration.
- Motor neurons: experts, gene expression, receptors, transplants.
- Locomotor: motoneuron properties, identified interneuron model, descending command.
- Sensory control: pair afferents , gene expression, exercise, diabetes
- Cell replacement: oligodendrocytes, raphe neurons.
- 1) past accomplishments; 2) individual desperate accomplishment
- Group known internationally.
- Fundamental discoveries.
- Regeneration.
- Electr 4rth floor
- Electrophysiology, regenerative therapy, training program is good, student support is great, diversity of research group.
- Contributions of group to locomotion field, produce well-trained and well-rounded grads, many have continued in research/academia, collegial environment where PI's and trainees and technical support personnel all feel they are on the same team and facilitate others' work.

- Proud of pioneering discoveries have been made by the SCRC. Excellent trainees that SCRC has generated. The competitive grants that various investigators have attracted.
- Establish regeneration research which has been highly successful to new opportunities to apply their research skills to new questions. Evolution in recent years to translate basic discovery to the clinical setting. International reputation.
- Past accomplishments (LONG past). Current individual despite (?) accomplishments.
- Strong contribution to electrophysiology field.
- Proud of training program. Turning out competent researchers who are successful in the field and continue.
- Collegial supporting environment. Open doors. Helpful. Unique environment. Sharing staff and equipment.
- Starting locomotion research and moving toward molecular technologies and adapting to changing research.
- Have very collegial attitude within the labs. Cross cooperation between labs. Share equipment personnel.
- Soheila- cellular and molecular mechanisms, more cohesion. More interaction and cross pollination, collaboration, communication, cohesion, cross pollination.
- Locomotor field especially electrophysiological regeneration and molecular field. Training programs. Collegial atmosphere. Supportive and healthy environment. Doors are open for help. No barriers in approaching PI's. Attention to future trainees. Diversity of the fields.
- More collaboration – “clinical” and “basic” people. Having made meaningful contributions to our understanding of how CNS function and to increasing our understanding of disease mechanisms. Having improved the quality of life of patients.
- Proud of research quality – test of time. Respect from other respective fields. Multifaceted approach to spinal cord physiology. Being able to work towards a clinically relevant approach with relevant models as in transplantation and translation. Models that work. Beginning to apply basic- applied.

Q3) What are the possibilities of opportunities for advancing our research mission?

- More emphasis on clinical application
- Better job of ‘bragging’ or broadcasting our accomplishments and how they have been applied.
- Website. Alumni page. Where are they now?
- What drew/ draws existing trainees to the SCRC? What should attract high quality trainees to the SCRC?
- Breadth of research approaches. Journal club.
- Neuroscience specific courses for grad students especially who don't have background in neuroscience.
- Partnerships private funds
- Collaborative research: with clinicians; physiology, medicine, neurology, neurosurgery, physiotherapy. Input from SCI population. Joint projects in basic science. Afferent control of locomotor and standing. Cell replacement therapy. Neuroprotection. Positive control (Basic and clinical) (Foundation grants).
- Mitacs.
- Networking for fundraising.

- Scaling up current projects.
- Collaboration for better research mission.
- Robotics/ technology partnerships/medtronics.
- Clinical connection.
- Group grants- collaborative discussion (more!).
- Work with clinical side, FES (functional electrical stimulation) - (research and training).
- Partner with technology field.
- Advertise with industry.
- Collaboration amongst groups within SCRC group grants.
- High quality personnel.
- Including workshops, practical demonstrations.
- Have a more vigorous visiting speaker program to enhance SCRC visibility amongst other Universities/ groups/ centers (particularly important for emerging Human Lab.)
- Increasing internal and external interactions, increasing visibility of SCRC in the community, build on existing strength and add new insight and direction through collaborations.
- More collaboration. Develop opportunities for undergraduate graduates, post graduate students to have exposure to other SCRC labs. Foundation grant? Advisory committee cross pollination.
- Enforced collaboration. Directive - someone to oversee to create collaboration. All individuals collaborating together is a great opportunity.
- No opportunities without productivity, and no productivity without collaboration.
- (Inviting researchers in order to create awareness of SCRC. Attend conference and meetings to create awareness). Broadcast our accomplishments.
- To increase visibility by increasing visiting researchers who have had no previous awareness. Have technical based journal club. Broadcast past trainees. Better collaboration between locomotor and regeneration labs.
- Nagy 1) collaboration; Cowley 2) bragging about our accomplishments; Katinka 3) facilitation of clinical partnerships; Kalan 4) increase visibility to those who do not know the SCRC; 5) Technical based journal club partnerships.
- Bringing in visitors to increase visibility participating in conferences. Need for more integration between the electrophysiology and molecular biology group. Take it to the next level in the form of more collaboration. Using the Journal club for presenting techniques. Having more diversity in the student committee. Clinical research. At one time 90% of locomotor, now we are doing different things. Proud of long past in locomotion. Collaboration between each other. No opportunities without productivity. Take more interest with each other, collaborate and be more efficient in productivity. Web site design. To make it more known broadcast better.
- Possibilities are higher quality personnel. More collaboration within group (i.e. SCRC). Getting to know other labs. Annual event or shadow for a day. Structured lab rotation - for a part of graduate program. PDF access to teaching with other groups. Develop opportunities for undergrads to work in lab. Exposure.

Dream phase - Group and Individual Responses:

Q1) As researchers and scholars, what are we deeply passionate about? What difference do we hope to make with our activities in these areas?

- To encompass translation.
- Sustained development and turn-over of SERC- promote.
- Development of education.
- Enrich communication strategies e.g. Website.
- We hope to make new discoveries and make meaningful contribution to the field.
- Focus on finding mechanisms of diseases and way to address them.
- Discovery. Generating questions and exploring the possible answers.
- Advance knowledge.
- Knowing and discovery of the mechanisms of neuroscience.
- Discovery, application, translation.
- Maintaining big picture perspective with respect to spinal cord physiology and pathophysiology including how we got to where we are.
- Passionate about discoveries. Make a difference in SCI patients' life. Make discoveries relevant to SCI, seeing preclinical discoveries being tested in clinical trials.
- Passion- knowing. Discovery. Translating and selling these ideas (for funding).
- Telling a story visually and communicate effectivity using visual aspects.
- Being a multifaceted training program. "Producing" top quality researchers. Successful in future.
- Strengthen collaboration between labs.
- Basic knowledge of spinal cord. Passionate about. Good training program. Remain visible.
- Making new discoveries and meaningful contributions. Finding mechanisms and applications to quality of life.

Q2) What other key strengths/ areas of research and scholarship would we like to nurture and/or develop? As a group? For individual faculty members? Who do we want to become or what do we want to be best known for?

- Strengthen collaborations between labs.
- Develop some courses 1) understanding the pathophysiology of SCI – and the effects on the systems affected by SCI; 2) Cross pollination of different labs – what are the electrophysiological techniques needed to demonstrate function of regenerating neurons.
- What can confocal microscope be used for?
- Electives/rotation through labs. Graduate students following anat/rehab rounds.
- Website animations.
- JC Seminar Series. Focus on approaches/techniques to direction of the field opens door to collaboration and greater understanding.
- Strengthen collaboration within the groups.
- Team grant.
- Basic discoveries can be built upon.
- Animal models- keep building (Chopek).
- Incorporate new recruit with expertise on movements & identified spinal cord neurons
- Cell replacement therapy consortium could be developed.
- Genetically identified interneurons and their role in the 2 layer CPG model.
- Incorporate neuroprotection and regeneration facilitation into functional recovery and cell replacements.

- Nurture clinical research and increase collaboration.
- New people coming to be recruited J. Chopek- micro-circuits.
- Outside of university research group with increased potential for experimentation.
- Course development in relation to SCI: 1) Strengthen group collaborations; 2) build on previous accomplishments and strengths; 3) BME; physiotherapy; software development; 4) Alumni of SCRC to webpage; 5) animations of “SCI-Work” for teaching /promotions.
- Clinical collaborations
- Strengthen internal collaboration with basic science labs.
- To continue to develop clinical relevant research and get clinicians involved with the SCRC to improve the quality of life in patients with spinal cord injury and neurodegenerative diseases.
- Human based clinical collaboration.
- Solid meaningful contribution.
- Success in human research would be essential for the SCRC success.
- Be known as a multifaceted center from basic science to preclinical and translational.
- Become a leading destination for trainees.
- Strengthen collaboration. Courses that improve skills of trainees.
- Mentorship in grant writing for getting money.
- Multifaceted center addressing all the stages of research of one basic to translational approaches.
- Human neurophysiology lab. Its success over next couple of years will be very important to SCRC success.
- Be recognized as a multi-faceted research enterprise including basic science, pre-clinical and translational components. Maybe with many project incorporating aspects of all.
- A leading destination for trainees seeking multifaceted training program.
- Become a multi-faceted center for basic/preclinical/ clinical human research in SCI. Increasing our success for attracting high quality trainees. Implement mechanisms to become a center of excellence. Go for big team grants to be able to implement our dreams.
- Discovery based research and eventual translational. Clever forefront discoveries. Adopting new technologies (nurture / develop). Nurture each other’s grant applications (develop/ nurture). Grant writing ability to produce one. Mentorship (money / grants). Getting money and spinal cord research. Having an impressive publishing record. What do we want to be known for? Areas of research to develop: cell physiology, BBB.
- SCRC in transition with Kris, Katinka new grant. Human neurophysiology - nurture. Develop pragmatic details. Space, equipment, staff support.
- Human basic research along with traditional Neurophysiology Basic Research.
- Maintain past success in graduating competent researchers.
- Being a leading multifaceted institution attracting good students.
- Mentorship in grant application writing.
- Have technical talks. Have visitors to talk that don’t know the SCRC. Database of lab technologies and expertise.
- Protocols as a group. Foundation grants- conference presentations, workshops, technical immuno, computer imaging, stats and graphics, surgical. Comprehensive website of SCRC. Human facility- translational addition. Keep all the basic research areas in addition to moving into human research. Attract high quality trainees. Better marketing.
- Katina- strengthen collaboration with clinical. Destination for trainees by emphasizing basic to clinical. Katrina- mentorship in grant writing change journal club. Kris- develop courses healing with

techniques, research questions in different labs. Brent- nurture development of translational research. Phil- outreach.

- Success in SCRC in succeeding with human transplantation especially will need nurturing in regards to space and other. CFI grant in regards to a group. Team grants to show our diversity and nurture the basic research. Broadening our vision that includes human research that has basic and pre-clinical models that can be considered translational. Be known for broad research model, basic science and preclinical, human. Bring in more money for research. Attract trainees and maintain the have better visibility. Leading destination for trainees. Nurture our outreach. Mentorship in grant writing for getting money.

Design phase: Group and Individual Responses:

Q1) What measurable results do we want to see? What measurable result or goals do we want to be known for? What would 'success' look like 5 years from now?

- Because of broader training opportunities the collaboration had more joint funded research projects.
- Human research labs up and running.
- 1 or 2 residents projects completed been through the lab.
- Where are the trainees that received training at SCRC?
- Teaching and mentoring opportunities for students. More than informal summer trainees-change structure of funding to incorporate prep (?).
- Team grants.
- Identify our major past-contribution and how to build upon them.
- Advisory committee (annual).
- External evaluation (one-off, international).
- Translational results from collaborations.
- PTs / residents? – (grants; # pubs)- to close for 5 years to advise (?).
- Increase teaching for PhD. and MSc students possibilities.
- Co-supervise of students.
- More students, more funding, more publications.
- Grants mentorship, publication, trainees.
- Success of trainees in their destinations.
- Trainee attraction.
- Grant success.
- Recruitment.
- Publications.
- # of trainees and quality.
- Co-supervising of students.
- Facilities updated infrastructure.
- Recruitment of clinicians.
- Teaching and mentoring of trainees.
- Better journal club attendance.
- Getting grants, publications.

- New collaborative research initiatives between SCRC members. New grants secured. Increased # trainees of very good quality. Secure finding for ongoing technical support.
- Increase in operating funds. Increase in annual publications. Increasing the number of trainees. Dedicating more times to meet regularly. Trainees. Infrastructure (applying for NSERC RTI, Groups CFI).
- Resident research projects. Clinical/ human lab increase interactions resulting from broader exposures of students PDF's and RA to other labs.
- Better interaction between the groups/ better discussion and attendance (e.g. journal clubs). Money and publications. Graduated students.
- Long term- co-supervision of students (measurable outcome). Grants. Publications.
- Increased number of trainees.
- Mentorship in grant writing (e.g. Scope, breadth etc. of study would increase grant \$) Application success.
- Increased/ improved infrastructure.
- Institute courses- overview of entire scope of SC research. Grant funding. Human research area development. Quality of trainee applicants.
- Review of SCRC.
- Brian- funding # students. PDF. Success rate, support, publications, advances in technology. Gaps that need to be filled. Link with clinicians. Create more opportunities for trainees in teaching.
- Grants and funding for SCRC. Number of students and post-docs. Awards, studentships and recognition for students. Ability to collaborate with the centers that are well-known in the field. Publications quality and then quantity. Some fields are harder to publish. Success rate of the graduates in their next position. Where do they end up? Enhancing visibility. What success looks like in 5 years? Having balanced progress in all fields above. Getting feedback is one way of measuring success.
- Measurable results- increase number of students and post docs. Success rate. Collaborate with center that are well known. Increase publications. Update resources and infrastructure. Success progress in all of the fields. Hard to have clinical in 5 years. Bridge with current clinical projects, Create teaching and mentoring component in SCRC trainees. (Better opportunities).
- Better interaction especially journal clubs. Altruism-individual success dependent upon other successes of members- groups.
- Short term achievements for the present. In-line of mentorship. More cohesiveness. Initial next baby steps (e.g. everyone attends journal club.)
- Change short-term goals to help achieve the long-term goals.
- Workshops build in our strengths. International awareness on what is going on here and the various areas. Advising groups like CPA, ICORE, maximize impact strength.
- Strategic planning meeting. CRC proposal ready to go. Name different flavors. Growth of group and plan in place to submit to department for CRC Chair. Infrastructure grants – positive strategically ready for INF Grants. Catalogue of priorities that can be used on short notice.
- Regular meetings of PI's (4 to 5 per year).
- Attract future grad students and PDF's. Website. Video about research - Facebook/ Twitter / social media.
- In training programs tailored to be broader. Student clinical rounds. Business give a talk about... *"What academic/ non-academic careers look like?"*

- Review of SCRC- International experience for graduate students. One time group SCRC heads or leaders evaluate or assess the SCRC research.

Q2) What would it take to create the change we want to see? What resources are needed to implement our preferred future?

- 1) Create the ability for our trainees to teach/mentor within the SCRC; 2) effort from SCRC to find and promote physical location for human research lab; 3) create time for broader training within program (ranging from ward rounds and professional development) skills – CV develop/ job search; 4) Changing website /social media development – clinical trials? /shadow doctors/e.g. K. Ethans 5) Different CRC chair and infrastructure requests ready to go.
- Promote interactions. Incorporate people from Med rehab, Physiotherapy, Biomedical engineering, etc.
- Participate in recruitment in the clinical areas (Neurology, Neurosurgery).
- Push forward on previous fundamental research.
- Outreach – CPA/ UofM admin (advisory group): clinical/ business/mod & companies/ outsiders/ neuro groups/ MPI
- Student exchange/ international experience.
- One time, international evaluator group- for recommendations to SCRC.
- Advisory group.
- International advisory group for administration (Dean’s office).
- Support from department, administration.
- What is the preferred future?
- Money. Communication. Recruits. Planning sessions. Space. Continued support from department. Giving trainees chances for mentoring and teaching.
- Visibility. Advertisement and outreach.
- Updating facilities and infrastructure.
- Collaboration both inside and outside the group.
- Grants. # of trainees. Increasing collaboration within and outside the university. Updating infrastructure.
- Ongoing support from department (e.g. w.r.t. space, mechanism for funding of core technical support. Grant money- Nancy Klos.
- Operating funds. Collaborations (internal and external). Outreach to community.
- Recruitment of students. Outreach to Ft. Garry Campus. Workshops to get local students attracted to SCRC. Social media accounts and contributing to events. Community outreach.
- Altruism
- Increase communication within the group to increase efficiency.
- Continued support from department.
- Funds. Dedicated. Move spaces to accommodate new study areas i.e. Human. Having planning sessions. Increase publication. Increase trainees. Regular PI meetings. Mentorship for grant writing for young PI’s and trainees.
- Advisory board, workshop (e.g. doing research). Be visible re: opportunities.
- Commitment to the plans/ decisions made in this meeting. Resources (i.e. space for new research).
-

Q3) What important steps/consideration need to be in place to achieve this goal?

- Useful to have a better understanding of the non-academic endeavors. Professional opportunities for trainees of the SCRC (+ physiology). How are CIHR employees selected? Pharmaceutical companies?
- Non-university professional opportunities, and how would trainees of the SCRC be well positioned for these opportunities?
- Mission: Cellular properties and pathophysiology of SCI (Spinal cord injury).
- Workshop to develop collaboration within the SCRC.
- Advisory Group with expertise in: Industry (Pharmaceuticals, engineering), clinical trials. CPA, neurology/neurosurgery, physiotherapy, UM administration, other neuroscience group leaders at UM, MPI.
- International members?
- Ad hoc committee to advise on continued development of SCRC.
- Webpage (i.e. start there).
- Communication.
- Advisory groups.
- Mentorship for grant writing. Improvements to the website. Social media should be utilized. Core stable mechanism to maintain. Shared technical expertise.
- Be in a position to take on recruitments and foster collaboration.
- CRC chairs gives potential for recruitments.
- Strategic opportunity planning done ahead of time.
- Be positioned to take advantage of potential recruitment opportunities that may spring up expectedly, (i.e CRC Tier I chair). We need to have 1 or 2 CRC proposals in hand and ready for submission with little advanced notice.
- Also compile requests for infrastructure proposals so they can be submitted on short notice.
- Meet regularly, set short and long term goals individually and as a group.
- Cooperation, collaboration, re-evaluation.
- Mandated collaboration. Managed Overview. Annual review. Each person is required to initiate a new project with another member within SCRC.
- Your survival is dependent on each other like bees.
- Preparedness for equipment grant opportunities and recruitment opportunities (e.g. Can Res. Chair, as well as donations).
- Regular PI meetings (e.g. 4-5 per year).
- Have overlap funding for contingency plan for unexpected opportunity of position (CRC) for equipment as well.
- "Opportunities committee". Infrastructure. Hiring CRC. SCRC meetings regular. Attracting students & PDF. Grand rounds. Presentation from Business Centre.
- Cooperation and collaboration. Re-evaluate goals at certain times. LinkedIn and ResearchGate pages – resources for SCRC specifically.

Miscellaneous Comments:

- Facilitate more clinical research. More partnership with clinics.
- Who is doing what? This is what we do.
- Develop idea about what can happen.

- Sense of stagnation. Tech evolving faster and we are not keeping up with it.
- Collaborate with private sector to help with funding for technology.
- No translation of knowledge to specific field.
- Look for partnerships with technology companies.
- Advertise more. Industry to know what we are doing.