

## **Letter from the Acting President and Acting Scientific Director**

Two decades ago, the Government of Ontario made a bold commitment to a future where people with cancer would live longer and healthier lives. The creation of the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research (OICR) in 2005 transformed the cancer research landscape in the province—fostering collaboration, strengthening research infrastructure, supporting top talent, and accelerating the path from discovery to the clinic through a focused commercialization strategy. OICR is a unique provincial asset, and over the past 20 years we’ve worked tirelessly with our partners to turn that vision into reality.

We are now happy to share OICR’s 2024-25 Impact Report, “20 Years of Changing Lives”, which details the evolution of OICR through the past two decades and the life-changing impact we’ve made, thanks to a community of remarkable people, partners and collaborations.

Over the last year, OICR has continued to work towards our vision of Cancer Solved Together and we are immensely thankful to all those who contributed to our progress. Special thanks goes to members of the OICR Patient and Family Advisory Council and OICR Patient Community, who have helped bring the voice of patients to OICR research, generously sharing their guidance, expertise and unique lived experience.

The Institute has also continued to benefit from the leadership of our dedicated Board of Directors, especially in their support for the development of our next five-year strategic plan. We thank all Board members for their contributions and welcomed Dr. Amin Mawani and Dr. Alyssa Vito to the Board this year.

An important part of OICR’s story is the strong partnerships we have formed with hospitals, universities and research institutes across Ontario. As we continued to grow together, we have been able to develop and enhance our cancer research ecosystem to deliver meaningful benefits to Ontarians with cancer. We extend our thanks and appreciation to all of the organizations that have been and continue to be key partners in OICR’s success.

As you read this report you will see that the story of OICR is punctuated by many scientific discoveries and success in moving discoveries toward the clinic. These achievements were only made possible by the dedication, ingenuity and hard work of OICR’s staff and funded researchers and the staff at FACIT. It is inspiring to work alongside people who are so deeply devoted to making a difference. You are the bedrock of the OICR community, and we thank you for your daily contributions towards our collective vision.

It is hard to overstate the immense contributions of Dr. Steven Gallinger, who retired this past year after leading our highly successful PanCuRx pancreatic cancer research program for many years and more recently serving as Head, Clinical Translation. His passion for research and a deep desire to make a difference for patients were key ingredients in the breakthroughs the program has made. We know Steve's leadership and the foundation he built will continue to benefit the Institute and those with cancer for years to come. Thank you, Steve.

We also welcome Dr. David Cescon as the new Scientific Director, Clinical Translation, where he will lead clinical and scientific aspects of OICR's Clinical Translation initiatives. We look forward to working closely with Dave in the years ahead.

A lot can change in 20 years, and indeed that is the case at OICR as we have evolved to meet the challenges of cancer, embraced new technologies and navigated the changing world around us. However, one thing has remained constant — the unwavering support of the Government of Ontario. We thank Minister Nolan Quinn and our colleagues at the Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security for believing in our work and enabling science that is saving and improving lives, all while strengthening Ontario's life sciences economy.

We hope that you enjoy this special report, which shows how OICR's unique approach to cancer research has resulted in tangible, positive changes for those with cancer, their families, our healthcare system and economy. We look forward to working with all of our partners in cancer research to ensure that the next 20 years bring us even closer to realizing our vision of a brighter and healthier future.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Christine Williams**

Acting President, OICR

**Dr. Lincoln Stein**

Acting Scientific Director, OICR