



Re: Mid-Term Project Update, Preeclampsia Foundation of Canada Vision Award:

Dear members of the Vison Award operating committee,

I am very pleased to provide you with an interim update on the status of my research project “Assessing the Postpartum Mental Health of Women who have experienced a Hypertensive Disorder of Pregnancy: A Pilot Study”.

Since study start, we have obtained consent and enrolled 51 cases (as of May 28, 2024) who will be followed, as per our study protocol, across the first year postpartum. A majority of these patients have been recruited at 3 months postpartum after attending their Postpartum Vascular Clinic first appointment, where the study has been introduced to them by their treating care team. The majority of these are individuals who have experienced severe preeclampsia. It is my impression from recruiting colleagues that they have been very enthusiastic to hear that research focused on understanding and improving mental health recovery is being supported.

After trialing several different local Obstetrical clinics to recruit our control population, we have run into some barriers due to the structure and operations of these clinics. Recently, we have had more success by recruiting patients antenatally (then screening and recontacting postpartum). We have now enrolled 31 control cases and are working on several strategies to improve recruitment after consent to contact has been obtained. If these do not prove successful over the coming months, we will amend our local ethics submission to capture the delivery admission. Alternatively, I will reach out to my midwifery colleagues for assistance in identifying eligible control participants during their postpartum visits. We are meeting as a research team monthly to continue to work through recruitment on both arms, and will evaluate retention rates as we move forward in the same vein.

Funding from the Vision Award has made these efforts possible. In addition to being able to provide gift certificates to the participants, we have also been able to take on a Bachelor of Health Sciences “summer research partnership student” to work on our research team over the next two months. This is a program whereby funds from McMaster and the research team are matched, providing increased exposure for undergraduate students in medical research, and an enthusiastic summer student, to help us continue to move forward with our recruitment plan over the summer months.

I do already anticipate that I will need to request a one year extension once this next six month period is complete, as I aim to recruit study participants for the full 1 year granting period to improve our total study sample size. This will mean that our study will need to continue for a total of one and a half more years to see these participants through the first year postpartum. Should we obtain our target numbers earlier than this, we will review retention rates and preliminary data, to determine whether to stop or continue recruitment for the full duration.



I thank you once again for supporting me in this work. I am immensely grateful to the Preeclampsia Foundation of Canada for your efforts to support holistic research so we may move the care of our patients forward. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you require further information regarding any aspect of this study or information discussed above.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Serena Gundy'.

Serena Gundy, MD FRCPC  
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