

Introducing Braden Manns

Article by Braden Manns, Associate Chief Medical Officer, Strategic Clinical Networks™ (SCNs)

Good day! My name is Braden Manns and I am honoured to serve as your Associate Chief Medical Officer for the Strategic Clinical Networks (SCNs). As a Professor in Health Economics and a Kidney Specialist at the University of Calgary, I partner with patient and family advisors in my research.

In my past roles, I worked with patient and family advisors to find ways to provide better care for people with chronic diseases like diabetes, kidney disease and heart disease. I served as a co-lead for the Canadians Seeking Solutions and Innovations to Overcome Chronic Kidney Disease (www.Cansolveckd.ca) and the Interdisciplinary Chronic Disease Collaboration (www.ICDC.ca).

Aside from my interest in improving patient outcomes, my health economics background fuels my curiosity for health policy, specifically around the structuring and funding of health care systems. I have served on provincial and national committees for drug evaluation, including a term as Chair of the Canadian Expert Drug Advisory Committee, a committee that recommends which new drugs should be paid for within publicly funded drug formularies.

On a personal level, I grew up near Clavet, Saskatchewan, and did my post-secondary training in Saskatoon, Toronto, Calgary, and York, England. I have three boys (between the ages of 19 and 27), and after living for years on an acreage with cattle, chickens and various pets, things are quiet in my home – no animals or kids! This life change has led me to start curling and playing hockey again - I love to stay active. My biggest passion is mountain biking, and I have held several SCN meetings out on the trails.

I am most proud of working with patient partners to determine the top ten research priorities in the area of advanced kidney failure. And after several years, to be part of a research network that received \$40 million in funding to address many of these priorities. I now know how heavy a home peritoneal dialysis cyclor machine is - helping my very first patient partner through two airports with his special luggage enroute to a network planning meeting taught me this valuable lesson.



Photo courtesy of Braden Manns



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Working with patient partners over the past seven years has brought me great joy – and taught me a lot about how (and how not) to work with patient partners! Patients want to and can contribute across many aspects of the research process. They certainly don't want to be added in a tokenistic way! Researchers don't automatically know how to engage patients in research – we also need training. My experiences have taught me that in order to effectively include patients, we need to use plain language, include them early in our process, and encourage them to talk, as once they get comfortable, they have lots to say!