Ten Queen’s University researchers including Meredith Chivers and Randy Flanagan from the Department of Psychology were awarded over $5.35 million from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) during the 2012/13 fiscal term. The funding is being used to support the creation of new scientific knowledge that could lead to better understanding of illnesses and disorders and, ultimately, better health of Canadians.

“The support of the CIHR is vital to our researchers,” says Steven Liss, Vice-Principal (Research). “Queen’s is a leader in health research and this funding will help our researchers remain on the leading edge of those breakthroughs.”

Dr. Meredith Chivers’ laboratory is dedicated to understanding gender differences and similarities in sexuality, including sexual psychophysiology, sexual orientation, and sexual functioning.

"We conduct both basic research, such as examining sexual response in women and men in the laboratory, and clinical research, such as understanding factors that contribute to healthy sexual functioning," Dr. Chivers says. "Sexual arousal and desire problems affect up to one third of women, yet effective treatments do not yet exist. Our primary objective is to understand the relationships among sexual arousal, sexual desire, and sexual health in women. The proposed research will have direct implications for identifying risk factors for sexual arousal and desire problems, inform treatment decisions, and decrease the burden of sexual dysfunction and its negative impacts for Canadian women.”

Dr. Randy Flanagan says this new funding from CIHR will enable him and his co-applicants – Drs. Jason Gallivan and Ingrid Johnsrude – to investigate, using fMRI and advanced analysis techniques, the neural processes underlying dexterous object manipulation.

"Skilled object manipulation is a basic requirement for many daily tasks and as a consequence, the loss of manipulation skill – which often occurs following stroke and neurological disease – can be particularly devastating," explains Dr. Flanagan. "By providing a better understanding of how the brain
plans and control manipulation tasks, we hope that our research will be useful for characterizing deficits resulting from neurological diseases and for developing more effective therapies for rehabilitation.

*Other Queen’s researchers awarded funding include:*

**Sameh Basta (Biomedical and Molecular Sciences)** – Dr. Basta is investigating how viral infections influence our immune response to other stimuli. This will help in the development of new therapeutic approaches to alleviate ill health.

**Ian Chin-Sang (Biology)** – Many diseases, including Parkinson’s disease and epilepsy, are caused by malfunctions of the nervous system. Dr. Chin-Sang’s research is focused on understanding cell movements in the brain, in particular cells of the nervous system.

**Colleen Davison and William Pickett (Public Health Sciences)** – Drs. Davison and Pickett are researching how family factors including communication and organization affect a child’s health. This includes physical, social, emotional and spiritual health.

**Ana Johnson (Public Health Sciences; Centre for Health Services and Policy Research)** – Dr. Johnson is researching treatment for bleeding often caused by new medication given to the elderly suffering from atrial fibrillation. This heart condition can cause strokes. She is examining elderly patients who are on these drugs and are hospitalized with bleeding to determine the course of treatment, the costs associated with that treatment and patient outcomes.

**Linda Levesque (Public Health Sciences; Centre for Health Services and Policy Research)** – Dr. Levesque is studying the impact of human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination programs, designed to reduce the occurrence of genital warts and cervical cancer, in Ontario. Although the programs have been offered free-of-charge to all Grade 8 girls since 2007, there continues to be controversy about the real-world effects of the vaccine on this young population. Dr. Levesque’s study aims to address critical questions to help young girls and their parents make more informed decisions about HPV vaccination.

**Martin Petkovich (Biomedical and Molecular Sciences; Cancer Research Institute)** – Dr. Petkovich is examining whether inhibiting or removing retinoic acid can prevent or reverse the formation of bone in soft tissues, called ectopic bone formation, which can lead to cardiovascular disease and death. Currently there are few treatments for this type of bone formation.

**Robert Ross (School of Kinesiology and Health Studies)** – New research suggests preventing weight gain is actually more effective than a strategy of weight reduction. Dr. Ross is investigating behaviour change techniques and encouraging goal setting, planning and working toward a healthier lifestyle to help stem the rise in obesity.

**Graeme Smith (Obstetrics and Gynaecology)** – A significant number of heart attacks occur in women in the absence of risk factors including high blood pressure, smoking or diabetes. Dr. Smith has created the Maternal Health Clinic which has been set up to follow women with pre-eclampsia, often a determining factor in cardiovascular risk. His research will develop new ways to screen and treat these women.

Visit the [CIHR website](https://cihr-icrhc.gc.ca/) for more information about the most recent grant announcements.