

AB093. Ocular tissues bank for vision health research

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Background: This infrastructure delivers biological material necessary for several research projects to Vision Health Research Network investigators (VHRN).

Methods: Héma-Québec is the organism in charge obtaining consent and retrieving donor eyes for patient treatment or for research. In Quebec City, donor eyes are sent to the eye bank of the “Centre Universitaire d’Ophtalmologie” (CUO) of Saint-Sacrement hospital. Technicians at the eye bank evaluate the quality of the tissues. Those unfit for graft are transferred to the infrastructure where the coordinator encodes samples prior to their distribution.

Results: Between 2013 and 2017, 27 fundamental investigators, clinical investigators and collaborators supported by 60 students, trainees and laboratory assistants used this infrastructure to move forward their projects. Since 2013, results from those projects generated 21 scientific publications and 232 presentations. The infrastructure helped VHRN investigators obtain near 4 million dollars in grants from many organisms (CIHR, NSERC, Foundations, etc.). These grants allowed recruitment and formation of highly qualified personnel. Last year (April 2016 to March 2017), 189 corneas and 23 eyes transited through the infrastructure.

Conclusions: This infrastructure is available for all investigators that are members of the VHRN. Many original projects have been elaborated thanks to the human ocular tissues provided by this infrastructure. These projects will advance our knowledge in vision health. A better understanding of eye functions will lead to new treatments for eye diseases.

Keywords: Human ocular tissues for research; fresh tissues

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