

# Excelerating Tumor-Infiltrating Lymphocytes (TIL) as a Treatment for Melanoma (TIL-ME)

Duration: 11/1/2024 to 10/31/2026

## Targeted Cancers:

### Melanoma

Researchers will work with clinicians to optimize a clinical trial using tumor-infiltrating lymphocytes (TILs) to treat melanoma. By refining trial design, addressing therapy financing, and enhancing patient and physician participation, this project will streamline trial efficiency and regulatory alignment, accelerating the delivery of TIL therapy to Canadian melanoma patients.

## Biotherapeutic:

**Adoptive Cell Therapy**

## Project Value:

**\$215,594**

BioCanRx Contribution:  
**\$215,594**

## Key Investigators:

### Project Lead:

**Dr. Dean Fergusson**

**Dr. Manoj Lalu**



## About the project:

Melanoma is the most dangerous skin cancer with poor survival rates and a lack of effective treatment options when it has progressed to an advanced stage. Nevertheless, hope persists because of new treatment approaches. One of most promising is the use of tumor-infiltrating lymphocytes (TIL), which improve an individual's ability to attack the cancer by 'super-charging' their own immune system. This research team will be working in parallel with funded BioCanRx collaborators who are preparing for a clinical trial aimed at bringing TIL therapy to Canada as a treatment for melanoma. To

maximize chances of success, it is important to generate evidence that will inform trial design and therapy financing, and improve patient and physician participation. This is particularly relevant for TIL therapy because it is expensive and resource intensive. The team will use their established 'Exceleator Platform', an evidence-informed methodology to inform this trial, prior to its start, to help address frequently encountered problems. First, they will synthesize information from previous TIL trials to directly inform design of a new TIL trial (deliverable 1). Second, they will conduct a prospective study (deliverable

2) that will identify problems related to trial participation by patients and physicians. Third, they will investigate economic factors that may hinder trial completion, by conducting and publishing an early economic evaluation (deliverable 3). Finally, they will conduct a retrospective cohort study (deliverable 4) to identify real world eligibility criteria for our proposed clinical trial. Overall, this research will contribute to BioCanRx's mandate of making all cancers curable by facilitating the fast and effective implementation of this new and effective therapy in Canada.



-  Research
-  Virus Manufacturing
-  Cell Manufacturing
-  Clinical Trial Site
-  Industry Collaborator
-  Core Facility (research services)
-  Non-profit/Governmental/  
Patient/End-User Group

**Research:**

Ottawa Hospital Research Institute,  
Ottawa, ON  
Dr. Justin Presseau,  
Dr. Kednapa Thavorn,  
Dr. Stephen Daniels

**Key  
Deliverables**

1. Clinical systematic review on TIL therapy
2. Implementation of a diagnostics survey identify obstacles limiting participation in a TIL clinical trial
3. Early Economic Evaluation for TIL therapy clinical trial
4. Retrospective cohort study on participant recruitment and retention for the proposed clinical trial.

The power to kill cancer lies within us. Let's tell our bodies how.