

# Ontario

# Degenerative Cervical Myelopathy

## Virtual Summit 2020

### Executive Summary

Degenerative cervical myelopathy (DCM) refers to age-related osteoarthritic and congenital spinal column disorders that cause progressive narrowing of the spinal canal and compression of the cervical spinal cord, resulting in functional impairment (Badiwala, et al., 2020). DCM is the leading cause of spinal cord impairment in adults worldwide.

#### Summit Purpose

Develop an Ontario-based plan for DCM in a white paper to inform healthcare challenges, advocate for better care, advance an Ontario-based DCM strategy, and create a plan for future DCM knowledge translation activities.

#### Summit Scope

Build an Ontario approach to DCM that aligns with research, evidence, and consensus work on the topic in other jurisdictions.

#### Summit Findings

Our work – alignment with the AO Spine RECODE-DCM Consensus – will focus on the following priorities

- **Raising Awareness** - Three presentations conducted in each of primary care, spine surgery, orthopedic surgery, and community
- **Diagnostic Criteria** - We will have identified gaps in our understanding of diagnostic tools and clinical signs. We will have a list of DCM red flags warranting further assessment. For mild to moderate, what can we accomplish with just an x-ray?
- **Assessment and Monitoring** - Literature review and an Initial clinical tool
- **Rehabilitation** - Ontario Consensus Guidelines for the Treatment and Management of DCM - divide into parts, only one part in Year 01

#### Summit Next Steps

The information from the Summit will inform the development of the following.

- Formation of Steering Committee to guide work of DCM priorities.
- Create a set of Working Groups to work on research towards identified priorities and/or help oversee or facilitate research projects towards DCM priorities.
- Establish a 2021 follow-up event to continue working on an Ontario DCM strategy to include funders, community partners and policy makers.
- Publish the ODCM work in the form of an Editorial to further advance the importance of DCM in Ontario.