Division of Respirology

- Excellence required in all 3 areas

- Address the Research directions only
Current Respirology Research Foci

- Sleep and control of breathing
- Lung inflammation & acute lung injury
- Diseases of the airways

Set in ~ 1992
One external review
Review of Division in 2008

- 57 members of Division (includes those doing Critical Care)
  - 39 (65%) doing research
    - 13 CS
    - 14 CI
    - 7 RS

- A very young Division
  - 55% in first 10 yrs of appt
  - 30% in first 5 yrs
  - 10% to retire within 5 yrs
Process of Determining Research Foci for the Division

- Review of research in Division
  - Town Hall meetings (2)
  - Questionnaire sent to all members of faculty
  - Review of current research foci and productivity
    - Review of last 4 years of grants and publications from the Division
    - Review of scored abstracts submitted to Research Day over 5 yrs
  - Review of trainees in program 1972-2004
Research review

- Looked at grants (PI) and publications (1st or last author)

- Abstracts submitted to Research Day (scored)

- Identified 2 research areas with significant productivity
  - Sleep
  - Acute lung injury

- Productive individual researchers
Process of Determining Research Foci for the Division

- A one day meeting of Research Advisory Group
  - Division Director
  - Research Directors of Division of Respirology
  - External reviewer
  - Division Heads of Critical Care, Thoracic Surgery and Pediatric Respirology
  - Vice Chair of Medicine (Research)
Problems identified during review of program

- Respirology not a priority at any hospital
- No critical mass in any one research area
- Investigators spread across many sites
- Limited salary support for senior researchers
- No salary support for Clinician Investigators
- Lack of mentorship
- Lack of excitement / apathy
Problems identified:
Lack of engagement

- Poor turnout to Town Hall meetings
- Poor turnout to Research in Progress Rds
- Few researchers willing to present at RIP Rds
- Poor response rate to questionnaire (50% of researchers)
- Low numbers of abstracts submitted to Research Day
Review, discussion & thought

- Work from current strengths
- Position Respirology within environment
  - Hospitals, University, funding agencies, MOHLTC
- Develop collaborations/partnerships
  - Break barriers/build bridges
- Re-energize research environment
- Determine an objective review process with clear outcome measures
Respirology Research at University of Toronto

Vision:

- International leadership in innovative, productive and world-class respiratory research and training programs
What is the purpose of research foci?

- Create a critical mass of investigators in a theme or area
- Drive recruitment which will be competitive and focused
- Direct resources, focus fund-raising
- Guide residents interested in research
Research Foci

- City-wide areas of excellence
  - Defined as research programs that have a critical mass of researchers and have met benchmarks of research productivity and grants

- Areas of opportunity
  - Based on infrastructure or emerging research excellence
City-Wide Areas of Excellence

- Sleep and control of breathing
  Recruit and strengthen

- Acute lung injury/Critical Care
  Re-integrate within Respirology

- Lung transplantation
  Recruit and strengthen
Accountability for city-wide areas of excellence

- Establish director within each area of excellence
- Establish 3-year goals for each area
- Annual review process for all researchers
- Required presentations at RIP Rds
- Formal 3-yr review process by independent external reviewer
Areas of opportunity

- Cystic fibrosis
- Airways disease including impact of the environment
- Rare lung diseases
- Health outcomes / knowledge translation

Not a priority for resources compared with areas of excellence
Accountability for areas of opportunity

- No formal leaders
- Up to individual researchers within area to decide what group looks like
- Annual review process for all researchers
- May participate in formal 3-yr review process by independent external reviewer
- Required presentations at RIP Rds
What about those researchers who do not fit into these areas?

- Valued members of Division
- Can still be successful and productive
- Will not have same degree of resources
- Consider collaborations outside of Division of Respirology to maximize opportunities
- Annual review process for all researchers
Formal Review Process

- Annual assessment of all researchers using job description and guidelines for 3 yr review or promotion

- Annual report of research activities of the Division

- Formal 3-yr review process by independent external reviewer

- Fluid system….change is possible and desirable

  - Areas of opportunity may become city-wide areas of excellence
Outcome measures: how do we measure success?

- Recruitment
- Grants
- Publications
- Fellowships/studentships
- Invited presentations (Canada and international)
- Research Day abstracts
- Attendance at research activities (eg RIP Rds)
Summary of research directions

- New way of defining foci:
  - City-wide areas of excellence
  - Areas of opportunity

- More structure and feedback:
  - Formal review process

- More opportunity for change/growth:
  - Short cycle for review
My goals

- Facilitate success of individual researchers in their careers

- Promote meaningful and successful collaborations
  - Build bridges / break barriers

- Facilitate development of internationally renowned research programs

- Re energize the Respirology research group
Next steps

- Today was the overview

- For discussion and details:
  - Come to meet with me
  - Come to NEW Research-in-progress Rds which will start in September
An open road…
opportunity…
excitement …
a great journey

Thank you