



Medico-Legal Society of Toronto

Professional Development and Continuing Education Program

Brain Injury: Diagnosis, Treatment, Litigation

Thursday, October 24th, 2019 | Presentations: 1:00 – 4:30pm; Reception 4:30 – 5:30pm

Royal Canadian Yacht Club - 141 St. George Street, Toronto

Over the last few years, increased focus on the effects of concussion and brain injury have led to new assessment technologies as well as improved treatment and management approaches. Join us to hear Canada's leading experts in this developing field for a discussion of today's art, science and law.

AGENDA

- 1:00pm **Registration**
- 1:30pm Introductory remarks by **Kadey Schultz**, Schultz Frost LLP and **Dr. David Corey**, Brain Scan Diagnostics
- 1:35pm Dr. Nick Reed, PhD, MScOT, OT Reg. (Ont), Associate Professor, Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy Member, Rehabilitation Sciences Institute University of Toronto Adjunct Scientist, Bloorview Research Institute
- 2:35pm **Afternoon break**
- 2:50pm **Dr. Alain Ptito**, Senior Neuroscientist, McGill University discusses "Concussion and Neuroimaging: Making the Invisible – Visible"
- 3:50pm Panel: Plaintiff & Defendant
Panelists: **Alison Burrison**, Burrison Law, **Jason Frost**, Schultz Frost LLP
- 4:30pm Closing remarks, followed by a networking reception
- 5:30pm **Close of event**

Brain Injury: Diagnosis, Treatment, Litigation-Presenters

Alison Burrison, Burrison Law

I began in 2003 defending negligence claims brought against physicians, as well as motor vehicle drivers; however I quickly realized I only wanted to advocate for people that had been injured. In 2006, I began exclusively representing injured Canadians and families who had lost a loved one. I used my knowledge gained from working for insurance companies to properly prepare cases for settlement, and if need be, trial. Over the past 10 years, my passion to represent children and families who have suffered catastrophic injuries grew when one of my sons suffered a head injury at a very young age. I now know from both a personal and professional perspective what matters most to my clients and how to help them through the health care and legal process.



As a lawyer, I have appeared numerous times in the Superior Court of Justice in Ontario and in the Supreme Court of British Columbia and the Court of Appeal. I have litigated complex cases involving children who have suffered severe brain injuries, spinal cord injuries and orthopaedic injuries. I am frequently asked to speak at legal conferences held by the Law Society of Ontario, the Advocates' Society and Osgoode Hall Law School, Professional Development. Since 2016, I have been recognized by Best Lawyers in the area of personal injury litigation for Canada, which is a recognition based entirely on the independent survey of leading lawyers about the professional abilities of their colleagues. Before starting Burrison Law, I was a partner at one of the top personal injury litigation firms in Ontario.

I am a member in good standing with the Law Society of Ontario and the Law Society of British Columbia. I am a member of the Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation, Lawyers for Possibility Cabinet; I am an appointed Member-at-Large of The Advocates' Society, Personal Injury and Insurance Practice Group; and I am the Corporate Secretary of the Leaside Hockey Association.

Jason Frost, Schultz Frost LLP

Jason was the recipient of the 2017 Richard B. Lindsay QC Exceptional Young Lawyer Award by Canadian Defence Lawyers for exceptional contributions to the legal profession in Canada.

Jason regularly teaches, trains and collaborates with clients, industry participants and fellow lawyers on changes to the SABS, implementation of the LAT and developing caselaw.

He focuses his practice on insurance defence litigation. He has motion, arbitration, trial and appeal experience at the LAT, FSCO, WSIAT, Superior Court and Court of Appeal. Several of his published decisions have changed prevailing approaches to priority and loss transfer disputes in Ontario.



Jason has particular expertise with accident benefits claims, loss transfer arbitrations, priority arbitrations and WSIAT applications. He also specializes in examinations under oath, investigating and prosecuting claims fraud, as well as managing accident benefits litigation risk.

Dr. Alain Ptito, PhD, Senior Neuroscientist, McGill University

Alain Ptito's research investigates the mechanisms involved in cerebral reorganization and plasticity in patient populations (hemispherectomy, callosotomy, Parkinson's Disease, stroke and TBI). For the past several years, he has been using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to investigate motor recovery in stroke and the neural substrates of residual vision in the blind visual field following hemispherectomy. He has also demonstrated that this technique, along with Diffusion Tensor Imaging and evoked potentials, can be used to explore the neural mechanisms underlying traumatic brain injury, particularly in athletes.



In recent years, Ptito has explored new methods of using fMRI for examining brain trauma. In athletes, he has been using fMRI to investigate the neural mechanisms underlying working memory. He has been able to carry out baseline fMRI and neuropsychological testing with hockey and football varsity athletes and to repeat the tests immediately after concussion and subsequently until symptom resolution. His results show that fMRI is sensitive enough to detect abnormal activation patterns in symptomatic concussed individuals and that it could provide an objective way to measure the severity of or recovery from a concussion. More recently, he has been investigating mild TBI in motor vehicle accident victims and in children. He and his team are also investigating treatments, including transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS). This involves targeting injured regions of the brain with a magnetic field in order to increase blood flow. This is important because blood carries oxygen, a necessary ingredient for a functioning brain. Pilot tests with an MRI system are encouraging as they show TMS does increase blood flow and patients report improvement. In a separate neurostimulation study, sponsored by the U.S. Army and aiming to stimulate neuroplasticity, cerebral reorganization and recovery following mild TBI, Dr. Ptito is investigating whether electrically stimulating the tongue, combined with intensive physiotherapy, is an effective treatment for relieving gait and balance deficits following mild to moderate traumatic brain injury. The tongue is connected to two cranial nerves (V and VII), which are in turn linked to the brain stem. He hopes to show that stimulating the tongue via electrodes stimulates the entire brain and encourages uninjured regions to take over for injured ones.

**Dr. Nick Reed, Associate Professor, University of Toronto
Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy**

Nick Reed completed his Bachelor of Kinesiology at McMaster University, his Masters of Science in Occupational Therapy within the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy at the University of Toronto, and his PhD within the Graduate Department of Rehabilitation Science at the University of Toronto.



Nick joined the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy at the University of Toronto as an Associate Professor in August, 2019. Previously, Nick was a Senior Clinician Scientist within the Bloorview Research Institute, Co-Director of the Concussion Centre and the Holland Family Chair in Acquired Brain Injury at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital. Nick remains an Adjunct Scientist within the Bloorview Research Institute at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital.

His work focuses on developing, delivering and evaluating research, educational and clinical programming specific to youth and concussion.

His passion is helping youth do the things they need, want and love to do in their lives.

In addition to his research and clinical work, Dr. Reed has lived a life immersed in competitive sport, and more specifically, competitive contact sport. Playing competitive lacrosse from the age of five, he has participated at all levels of the sport and has spent 12 years coaching minor lacrosse within the Toronto area.

Program Chairs:

Dr. David Corey, Brain Scan Diagnostics

I have devoted my career to treating people with chronic pain, cognitive impairments and emotional distress arising from injury, including traumatic brain injury (TBI). These patients often struggle to convince funding sources that their injuries are real because they usually have no objective organic findings. This happens due to the fact that structural MRI and CT scan findings are usually “normal” in cases of mild to moderate brain injury, because brain dysfunction can occur because of damage too microscopic for the scans to detect or there may be metabolic changes such as neurochemical or neuropeptide imbalances in the brain caused by the injury. And these metabolic changes are not detectable by structural MRI or CT scans. Functional MRI (fMRI), however, can detect the brain dysfunction itself.

Kadey Schultz, Schultz Frost LLP

Over 17 years of insurance defence litigation practice with significant arbitration, trial and appeal experience at the FSCO, Superior Court, Divisional Court and Court of Appeal, I am your strategic business partner, combining big picture thinking with refined technical skills: delivering exceptional service and advice... and I love what I do.

My practice focuses on accident benefits claims, tort defence and anti-fraud, defending and prosecuting against opportunistic and organized auto, property, life and health fraud. I also act as appellate counsel for accident benefits, loss transfer and priority matters. I am thrilled to be honoured with the Lexpert Rising Stars, Leading Lawyers under 40 Award, as well as more recently, the Lexpert Zenith Mid-Career Excellence Award.



In addition to my practice, I am an adjunct professor at the University of Windsor Faculty of Law, teaching the Lawyer as Conflict Resolver and the Professional Identity and Legal Skills (PILS) courses.

I am also a committed contributor to the insurance industry, having published and lectured extensively with numerous organizations such as the Ontario and Canadian Insurance Adjusters' Associations, the Insurance Institute, the Canadian Defence Lawyers Association, RIMS Canada, the Ontario Bar Association and Osgoode Hall's Professional Development Programme. I recently was appointed to the Council of the Medico-Legal Society of Toronto for a three year term.

Volunteering is a very important part of my life. I am a member of the WICC Gala Committee and volunteer/fund raise with several charities. My primary fundraising focus is with Holland Bloorview Kids Rehab Hospital, working to raise funds for the Biggar Endowment in an effort to help end Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.

As a lawyer, mother, mentor, educator and thought leader, I am rewarded when those around me shine to their fullest potential.

Upcoming MLST Events

MLST Young Practitioners Speed Mentorship Event

Vantages Venues, 150 King Street West, 27th Floor
Monday, November 11, 2019 | 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

If you have questions you need answered; want advice on tough topics, or are looking for a little direction, then this event is for you! Join us for a lively evening of 'speed mentoring' where our expert lawyers and physicians share their experiences, and learn about yours.

- Managing difficult client/patient relationships
- Navigating workplace dynamics
- Being an advisor and advocate
- Achieving and maintaining work/life balance

NOTE: Registration for this event is only open to Young Practitioners (in practice less than 5 years).

9th Annual MLST Wine & Cheese Social

Royal Canadian Yacht Club - 141 St. George Street, Toronto
Thursday, November 21, 2019 | 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Join us for our 9th annual holiday get-together. Enjoy a celebratory evening in the company of your MLST colleagues. *With thanks to our RCYC host, Douglas J. Mitchell*

Information & Tickets

For more information and to register, visit our website: www.mlst.ca, or contact Cristina Ramos-Tziamouranis, Events & Program Administrator at 416 494 1440 ext. 258

CAT Program

Vantages Venues, 150 King Street West, 27th Floor
Wednesday, February 12, 2020 | 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM