



A Canadian Institutes of Health Research - Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada Interdisciplinary Health Research Team

## CCORT PULSE

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### CCORT OBJECTIVES:

- Improve quality of heart attack & heart failure care in Canada
- Improve invasive cardiac procedure outcomes in Canada
- Stimulate multidisciplinary and inter-provincial collaborative cardiovascular outcomes research
- Train the next generation of Canadian cardiovascular outcome researchers

### This issue

Student program	1
Atlas paper	1
Profile: Veena Guru	2
CCORT Calendar	2
Awards	2

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Funding provided by:



### CCORT Student Training Program

Three CCORT Fellowships for 2004-2005 have been awarded or renewed. Congratulations to Ansar Hassan, Division of Cardiac Surgery, QEII Health Sciences Centre, Halifax, Supervisor, Greg Hirsch; Janis McGladrey, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Supervisor, Karin Humphries; and John You, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto, Supervisor, Jack Tu.

Ansar's research project is a multilevel, population-based approach focusing on the impact of geographic and socioeconomic factors on outcomes following AMI and CABG surgery. Janis's research project is entitled "Cardiac Waiting List Issues in BC". John's research project will look at the prognostic value of troponins in acute congestive heart failure.

CCORT Summer Studentships have been awarded to the following five students: Daniel Amzallag, McGill University, Montreal, Supervisor, Louise Pilote; Kristin Konnyu, McGill University, Montreal, Supervisor, Mark Eisenberg; Daniel Rosenfield, Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences, David Alter; Philippe Violette, McGill University, Montreal, Supervisor, Mark Eisenberg; Desiree Yow, University of Calgary, Supervisor, Bill Ghali (Calgary).

CCORT wishes to extend a special thanks to the following reviewers for their time and dedication to this year's student training program: Kathryn King, Colleen Norris, Larry Svenson, Ansar Hassan, Kris Filion and Diane Galbraith.

### Atlas paper on cardiac procedures published

The Atlas paper titled "Cardiac procedures after an acute myocardial infarction across nine Canadian provinces" was published in the April 16, 2004 issue of the *Canadian Journal of Cardiology (CJC)* and can be accessed on the CCORT website at [www.ccort.ca/atlas.asp](http://www.ccort.ca/atlas.asp).

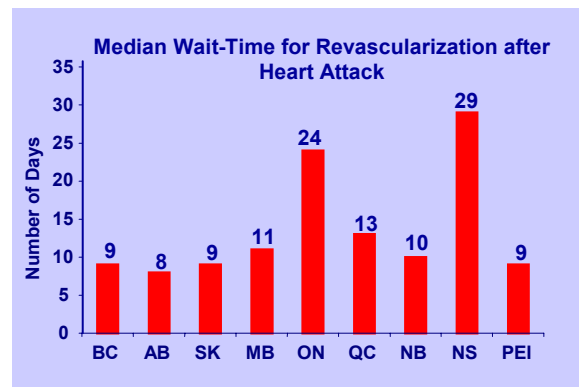
The study, authored by Louise Pilote, Patrick Merrett, Igor Karp, David Alter, Peter Austin, Jafna Cox, Helen Johansen, William Ghali and Jack Tu, concluded that significant variations exist in the use of cardiac procedures after AMI across Canada and this may represent potential inequalities in the treatment of AMI.

Cardiologist and spokesperson for the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Beth Abramson, said the study answers valuable questions about access to care and will hopefully lead to the exploration of reasons for regional variation.

National newspapers reported the differences across Canada in the use of and access to cardiac surgery after an AMI. One newspaper article featured an AMI Windsor resident who underwent

angioplasty in the United States at a cost of US\$500,000. *The Globe and Mail* reported that there are notable differences in the treatment of patients based on their age and gender; elderly women tend to wait the longest.

The most recent Atlas paper, titled "Regional Outcomes of Heart Failure in Canada", was published in the May 2004 issue of the *CJC*. Look for upcoming CCORT papers on atrial fibrillation treatments and outcomes, as well as cardiac arrest.





## Profile

### Veena Guru: Groundbreaking research

Veena Guru, BSc MD, is a Research Fellow in the Division of Cardiovascular Surgery at Sunnybrook & Women's College Health Sciences Centre and at the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences. She's a PhD student in the Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation, University of Toronto. Her supervisors are doctors Jack Tu and Stephen Fremes.

As part of her thesis, Veena is conducting research on which quality indicators are clinically relevant to cardiac surgeons. She recently held a one-day meeting where leaders in cardiac surgery from across Ontario, as well as representatives from Quebec, Alberta and the U.S., gathered to share their views on various quality of care indicators for coronary artery bypass surgery (CABG).

In cardiac surgery, CABG surgery has been used as a model for developing measures to evaluate, report and improve the quality of care delivered by both institutions and surgeons. Veena says she hopes to take this research

a step further by linking quality indicators to preventable death for CABG surgery.

During the Feb. 28 meeting, 132 process, structure and outcomes variables were discussed and rated using a Delphi process. Guest speakers included U.S. quality experts doctors Frederick Grover and Gerald O'Connor, who presented their regional experiences of improving quality of care for cardiac surgery.

To view webcasts of these presentations, go to [www.ccort.ca](http://www.ccort.ca) and click on CCORT then CCORT Presentations.

Veena says she anticipates the results from the meeting will form the foundation of CABG surgery quality assurance reports cards. "Hopefully these will become a vital tool in monitoring institutional performance for CABG surgery." Stay tuned for future updates.



Veena Guru facilitated a meeting on Feb. 28, 2004. Cardiac surgeons, researchers and intensivists from nine Ontario cardiac centres, and one in Quebec participated in a Delphi panel process and voted on quality indicators for coronary artery bypass graft surgery

### *Congratulations to CCORT members...*

Dennis Ko was awarded a Research Fellowship grant from the Heart and Stroke Foundation. His research topic is: Quality of Care of Diabetic Patients Admitted with Acute Myocardial Infarction. Co-investigators are Jack Tu and David Alter.

Douglas S. Lee received a CIHR Clinician Scientist award to conduct research at Boston University. His research is on clinical and genetic epidemiology of heart failure and left ventricular phenotypes in the Framingham heart study.

## CCORT Calendar



### May 15-17, 2004

5<sup>th</sup> Scientific Forum on Quality of Care and Outcomes Research in Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke (American Heart Association et al), Washington, DC

Contact: [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org) or tel: 214-706-1543; email: [scientificconferences@heart.org](mailto:scientificconferences@heart.org)

### May 28-30, 2004

Annual Cardiovascular Summit (Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto and the Canadian Heart Research Centre), Toronto, ON

Contact: [www.cvsummit.com](http://www.cvsummit.com)

### June 6-8, 2004

2004 Annual Research Meeting (Academy Health et al), San Diego, CA

Contact: [www.academyhealth.org/arm/register](http://www.academyhealth.org/arm/register)

### June 14, 2004

CCORT Student Day

Contact: Susan Brien at 416-480-4055, ext. 1-3874 or email: [susan.brien@ices.on.ca](mailto:susan.brien@ices.on.ca)

### June 15-16, 2004

CCORT Annual Meeting, Toronto, ON

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### July 16-19, 2004

12<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Heart Disease: New trends in research, diagnosis and treatment (International Academy of Cardiology), Vancouver, BC

Contact: [www.cardiologyonline.com](http://www.cardiologyonline.com)

### Call for Abstracts

**Abstracts due: May 28, 2004**

American Heart Association Scientific Sessions 2004 on Nov. 7-10, 2004, New Orleans, LA

Contact: [www.scientificsessions.org](http://www.scientificsessions.org)