



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

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## Student presentations top workshop agenda

CCORT summer and fellowship students from across Canada met with investigators in June at a research methods workshop held in Toronto.

Following Dr. Jack Tu's welcome and introductions, Dr. Peter Austin taught how to use hierarchical models in health care research. Summer student, Mariko Welch, University of British Columbia, (Supervisor, Karin Humphries) said that Dr. Austin's lecture showed her how she could apply such a model to her own project. Other lectures by CCORT members on topics such as privacy, writing a scientific paper and grant application writing, made for a thoroughly enjoyable and informative day, according to the students.

During the day, students had the opportunity to present their research projects and answer questions. They received feedback on their presentations afterward and said this component of the workshop was extremely valuable. Highlights of the research topics presented included:

- Effect of increased distance from a tertiary care centre on access to invasive cardiac care services following AMI;
- The use and effectiveness of perioperative cardiac medical therapy among patients undergoing CABG surgery;
- Prognostic value of troponins in acute congestive heart failure;
- Exposure to Canadian lifestyle as a risk factor for coronary artery disease in immigrant populations;
- Waiting list issues in CABG surgery in BC;
- Economic evaluations within the health policy forum.

### National meeting

The student day was followed by a two-day national meeting in Toronto hosted by CCORT, where members exchanged ideas and heard updates on research projects, such as the EFFECT report ([www.ccort.ca/effect.asp](http://www.ccort.ca/effect.asp)) and next steps-Phase II and Phase III, as well as updates on

quality indicators for CABG, primary care, and plans for the new national CCORT Atlas, due for release later this year. The remainder of the meeting generated several key ideas for further consideration in terms of future CCORT research.



Fifty CCORT members gathered recently at a national meeting to discuss CCORT research (both past and future projects)

### CCORT Makes the Rounds

*This is the first quarterly highlights of CCORT presentations and publications column. To help us keep CCORT's list up-to-date, please send your contributions to [susan.brien@ices.on.ca](mailto:susan.brien@ices.on.ca).*

- June 2004, Jack Tu presented key findings of the EFFECT report at Sunnybrook Medical Rounds, and at the American College of Cardiology's International Heart Failure Summit in Toronto.
- June 2004, Dennis Ko presented key findings of the EFFECT report and discussed local results with Strathroy Middlesex Hospital.
- Ko D et al, "Adverse effects of beta-blocker therapy for patients with heart failure: a quantitative overview of randomized trials" *Arch Intern Med.* 2004; 164 (13):1389-1394.
- Ko D, Alter D et al, "Lipid-lowering therapy with statins in high-risk elderly patients: the treatment-risk paradox" *JAMA* 2004; 291(15):1864-1870.
- Lee D, Mamdani M, Austin P, Gong Y, Liu P, Rouleau J, Tu J, "Trends in heart failure outcomes and pharmacotherapy: 1992 to 2000" *Am J Med.* 2004; 116(9):581-589.
- Guru V, Fremes S, Tu J, "Time-related mortality for women after coronary artery bypass graft surgery: a population-based study" *J Thorac Cardiovasc Surg.* 2004; 127(4):1158-1165.



CCORT Investigator, Dr. Louise Pilote, has been awarded an operating grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The title of Louise's successful application is: "Gender and Sex Determinants of Cardiovascular Disease: from Bench to Beyond". CCORT co-applicants on her grant include: J Cox, M Eisenberg, W Ghali, KH Humphries, C Norris, JV Tu  
Congratulations Louise!

## CCORT Calendar

**Oct. 23-27, 2004**

Canadian Cardiovascular Congress (CCC)  
Calgary, AB

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

**Oct. 26, 2004**

CCORT Workshop at the CCC,  
Time: 11:00 am to 12:30 pm,  
"Highlights from the CCORT  
Canadian Cardiovascular Atlas"

**Nov. 7-10, 2004**

American Heart Association Scientific Sessions 2004 (AHA), New Orleans, Louisiana

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

### Call for Abstracts

**Mar. 6-9, 2005**

ACC '05—54<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Session and Exhibition (American College of Cardiology), Orlando, Florida, Abstract Submission Site  
Opens: Aug. 2, 2004;

**Abstracts due: Sept. 8, 2004**

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

## Heart health, all in a day's workout

Some CCORT members are at the front of the pack when it comes to turning knowledge into action. Appreciating the benefits of aerobic activity, research

coordinator, Susan Brien, says: "Not only is running a great cardiovascular workout, but it's easy to do anywhere, anytime." She recently completed a 42.2k marathon and a half-marathon.

Investigator, Bill Ghali, also a distance runner, has run four marathons including the Boston Marathon and shows no signs of slowing down. He clocked a time of 3:21 in his most recent run. Investigator Greg Hirsch recently completed a triathlon in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and is now training for an Olympic Distance event (1500m swim, 40k bike, 10k run) in September. "It's an excellent way to keep fit and incorporate joint-sparing cross-training into your routine," he says.

Diane Galbraith and Fiona Shrive are training for their first marathon race this winter in Honolulu, Hawaii. Veena Guru ran a charity race in support of a camp for kids with cancer, and says she will continue to train.

For more inspiration or tips on healthy living, visit the Heart and Stroke Foundation's website at [www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca).



CCORT staffers Nemir Al-Azzawi, Bruce Haan, Susan Brien, and Linda Donovan at the YMCA 5 K Relay Race in Toronto. Absent from photo: Veena Guru, Tara O'Neill, and Sharon Van Ihinger

## Atlas papers

"Population rates of hospitalization for atrial fibrillation/flutter in Canada" by Karin Humphries, Cynthia Jackevicius, Yanyan Gong, Larry Svenson, Jafna Cox, Jack Tu, Andreas Laupacis, has been published in the July issue of *Canadian Journal of Cardiology* and will be available online at [www.ccort.ca/Atlas.asp](http://www.ccort.ca/Atlas.asp). "Cardiac arrest care and emergency medical services in Canada" by Christian Vaillancourt and Ian Stiell is in press for August publication. Four more Atlas papers are scheduled for publication and will complete the scientific series.

## Atlas book

CCORT, with the assistance of Jane Coutts, of Coutts Communicates, is publishing a user-friendly Atlas due for release later this year. The book will contain key research findings on the current state of cardiovascular health care delivery in Canada, e.g., the burden of cardiac disease, treatment strategies, and outcome patterns. Maps, figures and interviews with patients, researchers and physicians will bring the information to life. For more information or to receive a copy of the Atlas, visit [www.ccort.ca/Atlas.asp](http://www.ccort.ca/Atlas.asp).

## Map technology

A recent magazine article detailed the development of CCORT's interactive maps ([www.cccort.ca/maps.asp](http://www.cccort.ca/maps.asp)). The story, "Mapping Cardiovascular Disease in Canada" Vol. 7 No. 2, p.14-15, appeared in *ARC North News*, a publication for geographic information systems specialists. It explained how CCORT combined detailed data with a geodatabase to produce useful maps that illustrate cardiovascular health services information at the health region level.