



CCORT PULSE

Volume 2, Issue 3

December 2003

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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Funding provided by:



CCORT 2003 meeting highly productive



Students were recognized for their contributions to CCORT at a special reception and dinner following the day-long team meeting. Back row, from left: Frank Zhou, Diane Galbraith, Ansar Hassan; Front row, from left: Jack Tu (Investigator), Fiona Shrive, Kris Filion, Colleen Norris, and Susan Brien (Research Coordinator).

Best dissemination strategies for the Atlas project, potential research topics and future funding opportunities topped the agenda at this year's annual national meeting.

A capacity crowd, including clinicians, decision makers, non-government organizations and industry gathered from across the country. Six of the 10 Canadian provincial health ministries were represented.

The group welcomed the opportunity to interact and share their knowledge and ideas. Mary Lewis, Senior Manager, Government Relations, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, presented a knowledge translation perspective on the *Cardiovascular Health & Services in Ontario Atlas 1999*. This led to a lively

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First arm of EFFECT study nears completion

Enhanced Feedback for Effective Cardiac Treatment (EFFECT) is the largest component of the CCORT project and, once completed, will be the largest randomized trial of cardiac report cards in the world.

Will collecting and providing hospital-level feedback on a wide range of AMI and CHF quality indicators ultimately improve the quality of cardiac care?

This is the question the EFFECT study aims to answer through its review of detailed clinical data at 104 Ontario hospitals.

Data collection is nearing completion and

the first report is due out in early 2004. The report will be posted at www.ccort.ca.

Many nurses, physicians, hospital staff and

others have worked diligently on this massive project. Special thanks to the health records departments across Ontario for their timely assistance and support.





CCORT 2003 meeting highly productive *cont'd from page 1*

discussion on the CCORT Atlas and how it can be made better.

Good suggestions were brought forward regarding the packaging of the Atlas and the recurrent theme was that producing a traditional Atlas was no longer desirable. Here's what some of the audience members had to say: *Publication of the technical papers in the Canadian Journal of Cardiology, and digital posting of these online at*

www.ccart.ca, allows for more flexibility in terms of content, format and packaging for the new Atlas; and: Produce a "highlights" book in plain language to empower clinicians, decision-makers, and the public to benefit from the information.

Another theme to emerge from discussions throughout the day was the need for a national cardiac registry, in order to improve data collection practices and existing studies.

During the latter half of the day, smaller groups participated in breakout sessions where they focused on cardiac topics of interest to them. These included primary prevention, drug utilization, and cardiac procedures. Groups identified key issues within these topics, and prepared work plans for presentation to the larger group afterwards. Common threads emerged during the presentations, namely further investigation of several topics including risk factors, broader determinants of health, and "real-world" effectiveness of cardiac drugs.

The CCORT steering committee met recently to discuss how the valuable feedback will be used to develop the next Atlas, scheduled for release in Summer 2004.



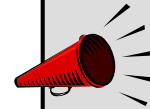
CCORT student Ansar Hassan (left) from Dalhousie University, thanks Dr. Bruce McManus, MD, FRCPC, PhD, Scientific Director, CIHR-Institute of Circulatory and Respiratory Health. Dr. McManus spoke about funding opportunities.



CCORT student Fiona Shrive (left), from the University of Calgary, thanks Alison Stephen, PhD, Director, Research & Analysis, Heart and Stroke Foundation. Dr. Stephen presented an overview on research funding.



CCORT's meeting was held at McLean House, a Georgian-style mansion on Sunnybrook Estates.



Calling all

CCORT Students and Investigators:

Are you interested in hosting or participating in a summer student exchange?

This is an opportunity for CCORT students to learn new methodologies at another CCORT institution. **Please contact Susan Brien**

for more details at:
416-480-4055, ext. 3874
or susan.brien@ices.on.ca

Atlas update

Canadian Cardiovascular Atlas papers are published first in the Canadian Journal of Cardiology Our multidisciplinary team of outcomes researchers continues to write about important cardiovascular topics. CCORT's Susan Brien has been hard at work preparing manuscripts for review and submission to the journal. Here are some upcoming topics for 2004:

- Secondary prevention after acute myocardial infarction
- Valve surgery rates
- Valve surgery outcomes
- Physician services for cardiac care
- Cardiac procedures after acute myocardial infarction

Past Atlas articles are available online at www.ccart.ca. For reprint requests, contact: Sharon Van Ihinger at 416-380-4055, ext. 3119 or send an email to: vanihinger@ices.on.ca.



Profile Science guy, Kristian Filion

Kris Filion is a CCORT student who, under the supervision of Dr. Mark Eisenberg, is completing a Masters of Science degree at McGill University in Montreal. Majoring in epidemiology, his thesis topic is "The use and effectiveness of perioperative cardiac medical therapy among patients undergoing bypass surgery".

Fluent in both English and French, Kris is also currently completing a Fonds de Recherche en Sante du Quebec fellowship. Kris says his love for science and the challenges surrounding it steered him towards the health sciences. "I wanted to include a human component in my work," he says, citing the opportunity to help people as a key motivating factor.

Through his work as a research assistant at the Centre of Clinical Epidemiology and Community Studies, Jewish General Hospital in Montreal, Kris says he is gaining valuable hands-on experience. Some of his projects include coordinating a multi-centre "cost of illness" study (Perioperative Myocardial Ischemic Injury Study) and preparing grant proposals and manuscripts.

To round out his studies and work, Kris volunteers as an epidemiology councillor at McGill, is a member of McGill's Epidemiology and Biostatistics Student Society, and is also an advisor for the McGill First Aid Service. He served as its vice president of finance for the past three years. During this time, the first aid service realized a five-fold increase in its operating budget, thanks in part to Kris's strong leadership skills.

When he is afforded the luxury of

leisure time, Kris says he is an avid sports fan, enjoys playing basketball and tennis, and watching movies with friends.

He has several scientific presentations, abstracts and publications to his credit and is in the midst of preparing more papers for submission.

Upon completion of his MSc, Kris has his sights set on entering medical school and pursuing a career as a physician-scientist.

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Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Fellowships

Several graduate student and postdoctoral fellowships are available for students who wish to work with senior researchers on cardiovascular outcomes research projects

As part of the Canadian Cardiovascular Outcomes Research Team (CCORT)*, potential candidates are expected to be either:

- MDs who have completed their clinical training in a relevant discipline (e.g. cardiology, medicine)
- PhDs in Clinical Epidemiology, Health Services Research or a related discipline
- Students enrolled in Masters or PhD programs in Clinical Epidemiology, Health Services Research, or a related discipline.

Training positions are available at several sites across Canada.

Start date: July 1, 2004 (flexible)

More details and an application form, are available at www.ccort.ca.

Completed applications should be sent by **January 30, 2004** to:

Dr. Susan Brien, CCORT Research Coordinator, ICES,
G106-2075 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M4N 3M5
or fax to: 416-480-6048

Questions can be directed to Dr. Brien at 416-480-6100, ext. 3874

Fellowships will be for one year (renewable once)

*A project funded by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada.



CCORT in the News

CCORT research is disseminated to the media, the Canadian public, health care workers and decision makers in an effort to ultimately improve the quality of cardiac care for Canadians.

The Atlas paper titled "Trends in cardiovascular drug utilization and drug expenditures in Canada between 1996 and 2001" by authors Cynthia Jackevicius, Karen Tu, Woganee Filate, Jack Tu, Susan Brien (Citation: Can J Cardiol 2003; 19(12): 1359-1366), garnered its share of media attention in November. CBC television broadcast an interview with Jack Tu. The OHA Executive ran the story in their newsletter, and the following newspapers also picked up the story:

- *Medical Post*
- *Canadian Press*
- *The Globe and Mail*
- *Times-Colonist*, Victoria, BC
- *The Prince George Citizen*, Prince George, BC
- *Fort McMurray Today*, Fort McMurray, AB
- *The London Free Press*, London, ON
- *The Hamilton Spectator*, Hamilton, ON
- *Toronto Star*, Toronto, ON



- *Metro*, Toronto, ON
- *The Intelligencer*, Belleville, ON
- *The Daily Gleaner*, Fredericton, NB
- *Cape Breton Post*, Sydney, NS
- *The Telegram*, St. John's, NFLD

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CCORT investigator Douglas Lee's paper on "Heart failure mortality prediction" was published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, (Citation: JAMA 2003; 290(19):2581-2587), and posted on <http://www.ccort.ca/chfriskmodel.asp> which to date has received over 2,000 hits. Media including the *Canadian Press*, *The Windsor Star* and *The Hamilton Spectator* ran articles about the risk model. Canada.com and Healthday.com also picked up the story.

In one of the articles, a cardiologist from a Windsor hospital said that plans were underway to modify a care pathway with the risk index being used with every heart failure patient, and the risk score on each patient's medical chart.

CCORT Calendar

Jan. 27-31, 2004:

4th Annual CCS Winter Symposium: "Implementing best practices through evidence-based knowledge translation", (Canadian Cardiovascular Society), Cancun, Mexico

Contact: www.ccs.ca

Jan. 30, 2004:

Deadline for completed applications for CCORT graduate student and postdoctoral fellowships (see p. 3 for more details)

Contact: Susan Brien, CCORT Research Coordinator, ICES, G106-2075 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, ON M4N 3M5; fax: 416-480-6048; tel: 416-480-3874

Mar. 7-10, 2004

Annual Scientific Session 2004: "Crossing Borders in Cardiovascular Medicine", (American College of Cardiology Foundation), New Orleans, Louisiana

Contact: www.acc.org

May 15-17, 2004

5th Scientific Forum on Quality of Care and Outcomes Research in Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke (American Heart Association), Washington, DC

Contact:

www.americanheart.org; email: scientificconferences@heart.org; tel: 214-706-1543

Call for Abstracts

Abstracts due: Feb. 26, 2004

July 17-20, 2004: 4th World Congress on Heart Disease: "New trends in research, diagnosis and treatment", (International Academy of Cardiology), Vancouver, BC

Contact:

www.cardiologyonline.com

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