

WNICER

WORLDWIDE NETWORK FOR INNOVATION
IN CLINICAL EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

WNICER Newsletter - Fall 2020 Edition



Michael Farkouh, MD
Founder, WNICER

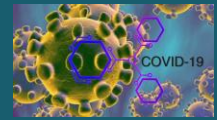
In collaboration with colleagues from across the globe, the Worldwide Network for Innovation in Clinical Education and Research (WNICER) was founded as a not-for-profit organization to mitigate the limitations of siloed and specialized characteristics of medicine. As a Cardiologist, I observed that patients with cardiovascular disease went on to develop, or were at risk of developing diabetes or stroke. Similarly, patients with obesity were at higher risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, cancer and kidney disease. Recognizing that chronic diseases are interconnected, we wanted to create opportunities for interdisciplinary discovery. Drawing from a pool of world-class experts in academia, not-for-profit and private arenas, we created a global network of multidisciplinary clinicians and clinical investigators to collaborate on innovation, research and knowledge exchange with the aim of improving human health. WNICER's diverse membership of 60+ lead investigators and 400+ team members spans across 10 countries: USA, Canada, Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Germany, India, Israel, Mexico, and the United Kingdom.

Within a span of three years, WNICER evolved from an informal gathering of like-minded colleagues collaborating on clinical trials, to the global not-for-profit research and innovation think-tank it is today. Uniquely built on the model of partnership and leveraging on the leadership's unique strengths, the Network has facilitated the completion of numerous [impactful global trials](#) that promote social change and improve treatment approaches to reduce morbidity and mortality.

One of the trials WNICER members collaborated on, [TAILOR-PCI](#), was published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) on August 25, 2020. This study highlighted the potential clinical impact of a personalized strategy to managing antiplatelet therapy after percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI). With 5,300-patients enrolled in 41 locations across four countries, TAILOR-PCI was a truly collaborative research endeavor. We would like to congratulate and thank WNICER members Drs. Naveen Pereira, Michael Farkouh, Derek So, Vergheze Mathew, Shaun Goodman, Mandeep Sidhu, Jean-Francois Tanguay, Yves Rosenberg and other colleagues for their tireless efforts towards moving the margins of medical science and education.



Vergheze Mathew, MD
Director, WNICER



John Brooks III, M.S.
President & CEO, WNICER

In these challenging and unprecedented times, WNICER is poised to assist in the global fight to eradicate COVID-19. Our members' innovative ideas for research in the prevention, prediction, diagnosis and treatment of this protean and highly infectious virus have attracted grant funding.

Dr. Peter Liu was awarded \$1.176 Million by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research for his project 'Improving Outcomes in Individuals diagnosed with COVID-19 with Renin-Angiotensin System Inhibition: The COVID-RASi Trial'. The study seeks to find out if angiotensin medications increase a patient's susceptibility to COVID-19. Another recipient, Dr. Derek So, was awarded \$751,520 by the Government of Ontario for his research project, 'The RAPID COVID Study - Application of Point-of-Care COVID-19 Testing to Optimize Patient Care, Resource Allocation and Safety for Frontline Staff'. This study will determine the role of point-of-care testing as a tool to improve care of COVID-19 patients while conserving resources. An immediate diagnosis of COVID-19 among carriers could provide more expedited advisement and expedited treatment, prevent clinical deterioration, and help healthcare workers avoid the unnecessary risk of exposure.

Our strength is our people. Working collaboratively, the Network is able to overcome hurdles that plague clinical trials, such as slow or insufficient patient enrolment. With the rapidly evolving nature of COVID-19 infection patterns, having a worldwide network has been especially beneficial in ensuring that target patient enrolment numbers are met. When a once hard-hit region starts to see a reduction in COVID-19 cases, patient enrolment can seamlessly shift to other members' geographic regions that are still experiencing an uptake in cases. One such trial is the Antithrombotic Therapy to Ameliorate Complications of COVID-19 (ATTACC). This study, led by WNICER's Dr. Patrick Lawler, aims to establish whether therapeutic-dose parenteral anticoagulation improves outcomes for patients hospitalized with COVID-19 (e.g., reduces intubation or mortality). The investigators aim to enrol 3,000 participants in 62 sites across USA, Canada, Brazil and Mexico.

Since the outbreak, WNICER has consulted with numerous companies and has offered leadership and key opinion insights on various innovative devices, nutraceuticals, and pharmaceutical compounds designed to prevent or combat COVID-19 infections and its complications. One such exciting and innovative project WNICER is currently consulting on is a study geared towards keeping front-line essential workers healthy through automated digital devices that monitor and hence detect early signs of possible COVID-19 symptoms. This proprietary platform receives vital sign data from an Apple Watch with the goal of detecting early infection and prompting further evaluation and testing to confirm COVID-19 infection. This intervention leads to early isolation and mitigated spread in an area. Two hospitals in New York and Houston see this platform as highly invaluable and will be enrolling their emergency room personnel in the study. This user-friendly, automated technology can be expanded to schools, universities, large factories and warehouses where individuals by necessity need to congregate on a regular basis. Implications for the economy are immense.

Training and Education



Liz Thuo, MBA
Administrator, WNICER

WNICER is invested in training the next generation of leaders and in providing hands-on, clinically relevant educational programming. Equipped with lessons learned from various clinical trials, we hold roundtable discussions at major global medical congresses with the aim of ensuring that clinical trial insights are rapidly disseminated and implemented by healthcare professionals.

In 2019, the Toronto branch of WNICER facilitated an accredited Canada-wide continuing medical education program on the topic of managing diabetes patients with or at risk for cardiovascular disease. A total of nine sessions were held in seven cities across Canada, reaching an audience of more than 350 clinicians.

WNICER is slated to participate in the [5th International Vatican Conference](#) in partnership with the [Cura Foundation](#) on May 6-8, 2021 at Vatican City, Rome. Organized and supported by the Pontifical Council for Culture, the Cura Foundation, the Science and Faith Foundation and Stem For Life, the Conference will bring together the world's leading physicians, scientists, leaders of faith, ethicists, patient advocates, policymakers, philanthropists, and influencers to engage in powerful conversations on the latest breakthroughs in medicine, health care delivery and prevention as well as the anthropological outcomes and the cultural impact of technological advances.

Participants will focus on advances in medical innovation and seek to catalyze the creation of new, interdisciplinary approaches and partnerships for curing disease and improving health, wellbeing and understanding human uniqueness. The event will be moderated by renowned and expert journalists. The participants will explore the role of religion, faith and spirituality, and the interplay of mind, body and soul and look for areas of convergence between the humanities and the natural sciences.



Robin Smith, MD, MBA
Senior Advisor, WNICER
President, Cura
Foundation



WNICER, in partnership with the Cura Foundation, will lead a unique multidisciplinary pre-conference event on "[Inflammation: Shared Pathways in Diverse Diseases](#)" on May 4-5, 2021. This event that will unite inflammation specialists from leading global institutions will focus on building bridges between disciplines to advance knowledge and public health. The goals of this gathering are to better understand inflammation in diverse diseases, provide a structured assessment for its evaluation and improve therapeutic approaches to modulate inflammatory pathways and processes.

WNICER/CURA FOUNDATION WEBINARS



WNICER is invested in not only training clinicians, but in educating the public on how to improve their health. In partnership with the [Cura Foundation](#), WNICER is planning a series of webinars over the fall and winter months that will be geared toward the public. These discussions will tackle topics such as COVID-19, inflammation, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, food as medicine, and cancer. We will send email invitations to register for these webinars once finalized. Stay tuned.

To view archives of our past webinars on *The Long-Term Effects of COVID-19* and *Acute and Chronic Cardiovascular Complications of COVID-19*, visit our website www.wnicer.org (News/Events page).

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