



UNC CFAR

Newsletter

September 2016

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IAC 2016: CFAR Contributions & Reflections

The International AIDS Conference (IAC) is the largest conference on any global health or development issue in the world. First convened during the peak of the epidemic in 1985, it provides a unique forum for the intersection of science, advocacy, and human rights. The conference brings together those working in the field of HIV, as well as policy makers, persons living with HIV and other individuals committed to ending the pandemic.

The 2016 conference, held in Durban, South Africa focused on the theme "Access Equity Rights Now". The meeting celebrates that the global AIDS response has been transformed in the last decade. We've reached the goal of providing 15 million people with access to life-saving HIV treatment by 2015. Additionally, UNAIDS estimates that from 2002 to 2012, expanded access to HIV treatment averted 4.2 million deaths globally and contributed to a 58% reduction in new HIV infections. However, more than 60% of people living with HIV remain without antiretroviral therapy; marginalized

groups remain under-prioritized in the response. Widespread violations of human rights including criminalization continue to undermine effective responses. The conference theme was intended to draw attention to those being left behind.

The UNC CFAR was represented at the International AIDS Conference this year, with investigators presenting new data and participating in vital discussions with other leaders in the field. UNC School of Medicine Professor Lisa Hightow-Weidman, presented on "Incidence and Correlates of STIs among Black Men Who Have Sex with Men Participating in a US PrEP Study". Audrey Pettifor, Associate Professor in the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, presented on "The Impact of a Cash Transfer on Young South African Women's Mental Health".

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Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Network Conference

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CFAR Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Network Conference in Miami

October 20-21, 2016



In October, Dr. Carol Golin, director of the UNC CFAR Social and Behavioral Sciences Core, Dr. Rainier D. Masa, assistant professor at the School of Social Work at UNC, and Caressa White, Director of the UNC CFAR Office of Community Outreach, Dissemination, and Education (CODE) will travel to Miami, Florida and attend the 10th Annual CFAR Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Network (SBSRN) conference. Following a long tradition of cross-CFAR collaboration, UNC CFAR members will share strategies with other behavioral and social scientists and attend panels on current topics in the behavioral sciences regarding HIV/AIDS.

At the conference, Caressa White will represent the UNC CFAR and participate in a panel discussion on the Intersection of Social Justice and HIV in Faith Communities. The panel will lead the audience in a guided discussion on how to engage faith communities in a conversation on framing the message to gain support and acceptance from faith leaders. The session will also provide resources that center efforts in social justice and

mobilization. Dr. Rainier Masa was selected to attend the SBSRN Mentoring Day, which provides early career investigators an opportunity to meet with senior-level researchers to share research and receive one-on-one mentorship. The daylong orientation also provides a variety of seminars tailored to the mentees needs, including crafting a successful NIH grant, mechanisms for support for early career and transitional investigators, HIV research priorities, and a brief review of HIV prevention research.



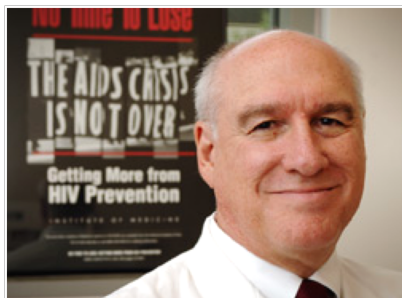
KEY SPEAKERS WILL INCLUDE:

Keynote address: Health Equity: Improving Outcomes in Hard to Reach Populations - Carlos Del Rio, M.D. and FIDSA professor of medicine, Emory University School of Medicine

Biomedical Prevention: Implementation of PrEP-in the South, Challenges and Solutions - Susanne Doblecki, M.D. and associate professor of medicine, University of Miami School of Medicine

Keynote address: Next Gen Bio-Behavioral HIV Prevention: Challenges and Opportunities for a Lasting Impact on the Epidemic - Kenneth Mayer, M.D. and professor of medicine, Harvard University

CFAR IN THE NEWS



HPTN 052 Final Results

The final results of the **HPTN 052** study were published in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM). The final results showed a 93 percent reduction of HIV transmission when the HIV-infected person started ART when their immune system was relatively healthy. HIV transmission from HIV-infected study participants to their partners was not observed when viral replication in the treated individual was stably suppressed by ART.



Joseph Eron - Vice Chief of ID

Dr. Joseph Eron has agreed to serve as Vice Chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases. Dr. Eron has been a leader in the Division and University since he joined the faculty in 1992. He is internationally recognized as a clinician, researcher and teacher

UPCOMING EVENTS

UNC CFAR Biostatistics Core Research Group Meeting

Stephen R. Cole, PhD

Professor of Epidemiology

Type 3 rationality is to optimize causally-expected utility, within reason. Examples from HIV will be discussed.

Wednesday, October 5, 2016

9:30 – 11:00 am

McGavran-Greenberg Hall 1304



Angela Wahl, Research Assistant Professor at UNC, attended the IAC conference in Durban this year.

IAC 2016

Angela Wahl, is a Research Assistant Professor in the Division of Infectious Diseases at the UNC School of Medicine. She specializes in HIV research and attended the 2016 conference. She shared, "This year, I was particularly struck by a group of young African women that took the stage as the Minister of Health of South Africa began to introduce a speaker. Their goal was to draw attention to the alarming number of young girls in South Africa that miss school every week because they don't have access to sanitary napkins. In addition, they demanded increased access to condoms to help prevent the spread of HIV to young women. Another morning I sat in a large room with thousands of other conference attendees and when the speaker asked those who are taking antiretrovirals in the audience to raise their hand, both women sitting on either side of me raised their hands with tears in their eyes." Wahl reflected that this year's conference in Durban gave her "a face for the HIV epidemic for the first time. It also gave me hope after seeing that there are young women in South Africa who are defying cultural norms and demanding reform that will help empower women to end the cycle of HIV infection and after meeting men who recognize the particular vulnerability of

young African women to HIV."

Jennifer Tang, an Assistant Professor in the UNC Division of Global Women's Health and conducts research in Lilongwe, Malawi. This year was her first time attending the IAC, and she "found it to be both inspiring and educational as I got to hear from some of the world's most prominent HIV activists and researchers. As an OB-GYN, I was particularly interested to hear about strategies to improve the health of women living with HIV and prevent HIV infection among high-risk girls, such as long-acting antiretroviral therapy and pre-exposure prophylaxis implementation programs targeted towards youth. It was also a terrific opportunity for me to network and discuss my study findings with other researchers with similar interests."

The International AIDS Conference is a chance to assess where we are in the provision and development of HIV/AIDS care and prevention, evaluate recent scientific developments and lessons learned, and collectively chart a course forward. UNC CFAR investigators continue to play an integral role in moving the field forward both locally and globally.

Director's Corner

by Ron Swanstrom

Dear CFAR Members and Colleagues,

Our CFAR was first funded in 1998. As of August, 2016, we started our 19th year of continuous NIH funding and a new five-year funding cycle. With every renewal we challenge ourselves to define what is essential to and identify unmet needs of our CFAR membership. Our CFAR Core Directors are a selfless group of local and national leaders who welcome the challenge of making our CFAR as relevant to our membership as possible. For my own part I am honored to be part of our CFAR leadership as we work for you our members.

After delivering that good news I guess I should point out the obvious - for 18 years we have never had a column from our CFAR Director. With this issue of our CFAR newsletter I decided it was time. Of course it is only time if there is

something to say.

And there is. I want to talk about the return of Dr. Prema Menezes to our CFAR as our new Administrative Director. Many of you will remember Prema as our former Associate Director of the CFAR Clinical Core where she worked closely with Joe Eron. For fifteen years she helped organize core activities that supported countless clinical studies and secured specimens for a wide range of laboratory and translational studies. Prema played an active role in organizing our yearly World AIDS Day Symposium where it was common to have members of our patient panel express their strong personal link to Prema as a caregiver. We all came to understand her commitment to excellence and her attention to detail as she played an important role in the success of our CFAR for its first 15 years.

Professional and personal reasons caused Prema to move to the Medical College of South Carolina in January 2015 then back to North Carolina this year. As we were writing our most recent CFAR renewal we came to the conclusion that our Administrative Core needed a person who could provide day-to-day leadership and continuity in guiding our CFAR. We were fortunate that we came to this decision as Prema was planning to return to North Carolina. It was not a difficult decision to bring Prema back given her detailed knowledge of our CFAR and her experience in a leadership position.

It has already been a pleasure for me to work with Prema in her new role as we start the next cycle in the life of our CFAR. The reason it has been a pleasure is that it is very apparent that our CFAR Administrative Core will be much more dynamic and effective because of Prema's efforts, something we can all celebrate. Expect to get emails from Prema either trying to help you or trying to get you to help the CFAR. If you sense there is something wrong with the CFAR you are welcome to tell any of us in the CFAR leadership but telling Prema will improve your chances of getting a quick response and fix. Expect to see Prema speaking on behalf of the CFAR and representing our interests wherever necessary.

Welcome back Prema. We will all be better for your return.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Prema

PREMA_MENEZES@MED.UNC.EDU

Meet Dr. Rainier D. Masa

What are your HIV/AIDS research interests?

My HIV/AIDS research interests focus on the intersection of poverty and HIV treatment in low-resource settings. I am particularly interested in addressing the social and economic barriers to engagement to HIV care and ART adherence.

Hard to Reach Populations, NIH Trends and Priorities, The Intersection of Social Behavioral Biomedical Strategies and Biological Outcomes, Bringing Lessons from International Research Home

Special sessions on Retention and Engagement to HIV Care and the Use of Biomarkers in Behavioral Research Studies

How long have you been a UNC CFAR member?

One year.

What are you most looking forward to for the SBSRN conference?

I am looking forward to the mentoring day and to meet and engage with NIH representatives and senior HIV/AIDS investigators in my area of interest.

I am also looking forward to the mixed methods training day and to learn advanced and innovative methods that can help increase the rigor of my research. I am also looking forward to learning about new developments in the social and behavioral sciences research on HIV/AIDS, and how these developments can inform my research.

Which presentation or keynote are you looking forward to the most?

There are a number of interesting presentations that I am looking forward to attending, including:

New Methods in CBPR, New Methods in Quantitative Empiricism, Advances in SEM, and Biomarkers and Behavior

Health Equity: Improving Outcomes in



Dr. Rainier D. Masa

Assistant Professor, School of Social Work

It's not too late! If this looks exciting to you, you can still register for this meeting!

Register here:

http://www.med.upenn.edu/sbsrn/next_meeting.shtml



NIH Funding to improve health of young adults at risk for HIV/AIDS

The Collaborative Studies Coordinating Center (CSCC), housed in the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health's Department of Biostatistics, has been awarded funding by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to serve as the coordinating center for the Adolescent Medicine Trials Network for HIV/AIDS Interventions (ATN), a research network devoted to the health and well-being of adolescents and young adults with HIV or at risk for HIV infection.

The funding for the ATN, which will be up to \$24 million in 2016, establishes three research hubs across the United States, one of which includes researchers at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The ATN Coordinating Center, led by co-principal investigators Myra A. Carpenter, PhD, senior investigator at the CSCC, and Michael Hudgens, PhD, professor of biostatistics at the UNC Gillings School, will serve as the central resource for network communications and research operations including cataloging of biosamples, data management and statistical analysis.

ATN aims to obtain care for at-risk youth, while at the same time offering them opportunity to participate in research trials that have potential to improve their health and the health of others. The newly funded ATN centers will conduct studies aimed at preventing HIV infection among youths. They also will seek to enroll HIV-infected youths into treatment studies to improve their health and reduce their chances of spreading the virus.

ATN is funded by the NIH through the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development with supplemental funding from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institute of Mental Health, and the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities.



Dr. Michael Hudgens



Dr. Myra Carpenter

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CFAR CODE Office

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