The Centre for International Child Health (CICH)
Quarterly eUpdate
Issue 3: March 2017

Centre Updates

Congratulations
Dr. Mark
Ansermino

We’re pleased to announce that Dr. Mark Ansermino has accepted a permanent position as Director of the Centre for International Child Health. Dr. Ansermino has been leading CICH as Interim Director since July 2015. He brings to CICH a wealth of global health experience and strong commitment to improving the health of children worldwide.

Welcome Bella, Maja, and Randi

A warm welcome to the three newest members of the CICH Team: Bella Hwang, who joins CICH as our new Program Manager; Maja Klempner, our new Administrative Assistant; and Randi Weiss, who will be supporting CICH as a part-time Project Coordinator. We’re excited to have Bella, Maja, and Randi on board!

We need your vote to build a better world, faster!

BC Children’s Hospital Foundation has been chosen as a finalist for the Google.org Impact Challenge Canada. Google.org is granting $5 million to Canadian nonprofits. Your vote helps decide where that money goes.

Pocket Doc for Pneumonia is an mHealth initiative led by CICH Director Dr. Mark Ansermino and CICH Chair Dr. Tex Kissoon. The goal is to develop a simple and effective diagnostic tool for health workers in remote and low-resource parts of the world. This cost-effective tool will be designed for caregivers with a variety of different education levels and resources available. The Pocket Doc will help diagnose and recommend inexpensive and life-saving care. Simply, it will save the lives of some of the one million children under the age of five who die every year from pneumonia.

“This is an unprecedented opportunity to change the way we diagnose and treat children. It is an exciting opportunity to be part of something so meaningful and impactful.”

Pocket Doc for Pneumonia is a mobile app designed to help diagnose and recommend treatment for children with pneumonia. This cost-effective tool will be designed for caregivers with a variety of different education levels and resources available.
treat the leading killer of children worldwide,” says Dr. Ansermino. “This funding will enable us to deliver a smart integrated technology platform to help save children with pneumonia.”

Help us do more! Vote for Pocket Doc for Pneumonia. Share the news via Twitter, Facebook and email to help us get more votes.

MNCH Tech: Building a road map for technology and global health

From February 22 to 24, innovators in the global health field came together in Stellenbosch, South Africa, to talk about the intersection of technology and global health. Their goal was to build a road map for the development of affordable technology that will play a critical role in reducing child mortality and improving maternal health. The 30 participants, many of whom are affiliated with BC Children’s, discussed the multitude of ways in which technology is creating new opportunities to improve pregnancy, perinatal, neonatal and pediatric care. MNCH Tech was hosted by the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study with funding from the Peter Wall Institute of Advanced Studies at UBC.

Passionate about global health technologies? Explore 30 high-impact innovations to save lives at Innovation Countdown 2030.

Tackling pediatric and maternal sepsis on a global scale
Every hour, about 50 people die from sepsis. In low- and middle-income countries, sepsis accounts for 60-80% of lives lost per year in childhood, killing more than 6 million neonates and children yearly. CICH Chair Dr. Tex Kissoon is involved in two exciting new initiatives to help combat this most common, but least recognized, disease.

First, the Surviving Sepsis Campaign will be expanded with a specific focus on pediatric sepsis. This is a joint project between the Society of Critical Care Medicine and the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine. Dr. Kissoon will co-chair the campaign, which will review evidence and provide robust guidelines for the management of pediatric sepsis even in resource-limited settings.

Second, Dr. Kissoon is involved with the Global Maternal and Neonatal Sepsis Initiative, a broad program of work, launched and led by the WHO, that will be delivered through a collaborative approach combining research, innovation, service delivery programming, and advocacy. The goal is to accelerate the reduction of preventable maternal and neonatal deaths related to sepsis. This project involves a World Sepsis Day Spotlight conference and the launch of a global point prevalence study of maternal and newborn sepsis.

Want to learn more about sepsis? Read the WHO statement on maternal sepsis. Or, get the facts on sepsis and take action.

Project Updates
Did you know that BC Children’s and BC Women’s staff are involved in global health work in over 30 countries? CICH invites you to explore and celebrate the many exciting ways that people at BC Children’s and BC Women’s are contributing to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goal of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages. Check out our updated list of ongoing global health projects at BC Children’s and BC Women’s to learn more.

Did we miss your project? We’d love to hear from you!

Stay tuned for the results of the 2017-2018 CICH Global Health Trainee Grant competition

Stay tuned for the results of the 2017-2018 Global Health Trainee Grant competition! This year, 13 trainees submitted applications to receive support for their child-focused global health electives. Their passion and enthusiasm to learn what it means to practice medicine in resource-limited settings is inspiring. CICH is proud to be able to support trainees on their global health journeys.

Curious about what past grant recipients have done? Read stories of trainees who worked in Nepal, Ghana, and Uganda this past year.

Addressing early childhood diarrhoeal disease globally and locally
Diarrhoeal disease is the second leading cause of death in children under five years old, causing 760,000 deaths annually. Globally, there are nearly 1.7 billion cases of diarrhoeal disease every year. Yet diarrhoea is both preventable and treatable. Dr. David Goldfarb's current work in Botswana and in Nunavut is pointing to new prevention and treatment options with significant potential benefits.

In Botswana, this work has revolved around the development of viable point-of-care diagnostics for diarrhoeal disease that can be used even in resource-limited settings. Using an inexpensive, specially designed “flocked swab” to collect specimens from sick children, Dr. Goldfarb's team diagnosed previously unrecognized treatable pathogens that had caused the severe diarrhoea of more than one-third of children in a group of hospitals in Botswana. These treatable infections had previously gone unrecognized, and therefore untreated. Dr. Goldfarb’s research preliminary demonstrated that when children are tested using the flocked swab and are treated appropriately, they are 55% less likely to have diarrhoea recur.

The research also pointed to a major opportunity to fast-track the national Rotavirus immunization program in Botswana. Botswana’s anti-Rotavirus program is credited with reducing all-cause infant diarrhoea mortality by one third, as well as decreasing all-cause infant diarrhoea hospitalizations by one quarter. Recently, Peter Singer, the CEO of Grand Challenges Canada, visited the research team and other stakeholders in Botswana to celebrate these successes and see what lessons can be learned moving forward.

The flocked swab is now being used by Dr. Goldfarb’s research team in Canada for the first time in the Gastroenteritis Surveillance Project in Nunavut, where acute gastrointestinal infections are at least two to four times higher than in other Canadian regions. Dr. Goldfarb and colleagues have recently found an unusually high infection rate with the intestinal parasite, cryptosporidium, in Arctic communities in Canada. When coupled with poor nutrition in children, this parasite could adversely affect early brain development.

Interested in learning more? Watch a short video about the use of flocked swabs to optimize detection of enteric pathogens. Or read some of the team’s recent publications about flocked swabs and rapid diagnostics, Rotavirus vaccinations, and their work in Nunavut.

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**News and Upcoming Events**

**Global Health & Innovation Research Series:**

TBA May 2017

**Publication spotlight:**

January 2017 - March 2017

Looking for some bedtime reading? In each e-Update, CICH is highlighting a recent publication by someone in the BC Children’s and BC Women’s global health community. Today’s article deals with managing neonatal and early childhood syndromic sepsis in sub-district hospitals in resource-poor settings. Published in PLOS One in January 2017, the article outlines results of research undertaken by CICH in Bangladesh from 2013-2015.

Want to share something you’ve recently published? We'd love to hear from you.
Gates Foundation
Grand Challenges Explorations:
May 3, 2017

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is inviting proposals for the latest round of Grand Challenges Explorations. Grand Challenges Explorations fosters early-stage discovery research to expand the pipeline of ideas for solving our greatest global health and development challenges. Applicants can be at any experience level; in any discipline; and from any organization, including colleges and universities, government laboratories, research institutions, non-profit organizations, and for-profit companies. Initial grants will be US $100,000 each.

Applications will be accepted on the following four topics:

- Health Systems Strengthening: Ensuring Effective Health Supply Chains
- New Approaches for Improving Timeliness of Routine Immunizations in Low-Resource Settings
- Wearables and Technology for Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health Behavior Change
- Innovations for Integrated Diagnostics Systems

For details and application instructions, visit the Grand Challenges Grant Opportunities website.

Help us spread the word about funding opportunities!

We like sharing information! If you know of funding opportunities that should be shared with others involved in global health at BC Children's and BC Women's, please let us know.

Have questions, suggestions or information to share?
Email us at cichinfo@cw.bc.ca so we can include it in our next quarterly e-update.