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Vascular Cures Launches Collaborative Patient-Centered Research Grants

Redwood City, CA, March 2017 – As part of its mission to advance collaborative relationships across vascular healthcare, [Vascular Cures](http://www.vascularcures.org) announced the initiation of its Collaborative Patient-Centered Research (CPCR) Grants Program. The awardees are two multi-institutional teams led by Dr. Karen Ho of Northwestern University and Dr. Larry Kraiss at the University of Utah. Each team will receive \$100,000 to conduct projects that use shared research resources and will generate results within 1 – 2 years.

Dr. Ho and her team seek to better understand how the presence of different gut flora may contribute to or be an early-warning indicator of atherosclerosis. The study builds on her earlier work which indicated that metabolites produced by certain gut microbes differ between people with and without peripheral artery disease (PAD), and that those microbes may correlate to the severity of the disease. The project may enable Dr. Ho and her collaborators at Brigham & Women's Hospital (Boston), the University of Chicago, and Northwestern University to identify and characterize certain biomarkers of vascular inflammation.

The second CPCR grant was awarded to Dr. Larry Kraiss and his team to create an assessment tool that helps surgeons and patients better understand the risks of vascular surgery. Dr. Kraiss hypothesizes that patients might begin to reconsider surgery if they understood that the likelihood of maintaining independent living after one year was less than 50%. A better assessment tool would improve shared decision-making around the patient's ability to maintain functional independence post-surgery. Collaborators at the University of Utah, Emory University, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Stanford University and the University of Nebraska will combine data to compare the predictive power of existing patient frailty tests with three alternative instruments.

The CPCR Grants are an outgrowth of Vascular Cures' recent national Vascular Research Summit. Fifty-six vascular surgeon scientists from 31 leading North American academic medical centers were invited to jointly discuss and brainstorm projects to address unmet needs in vascular research. Dr. Ron Stoney, Vascular Cures' founder, described the grants as "an exciting opportunity that accelerates discovery to significantly improve vascular health. Their impact will exemplify our vision of 'An Acute Sense of the Possible.'" Attendees were invited to propose multi-center research studies that creatively addressed a common problem and shared resources to perform the project.

Vascular Cures' Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Michael Conte, who is also the Chief of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery at UCSF, said "These summits, together with the Collaborative Patient-Centered Research grants, may lay the groundwork for new structures to yield faster, high impact research results. We believe that overcoming institutional barriers to collaboration will reduce the time from research to improved patient outcomes."



Vascular Cures is the only mission-driven non-profit focused on vascular diseases outside the heart. This disease category affects hundreds of millions around the world and includes stroke, PAD, aneurysms, hypertension and atherosclerosis. PAD alone affects 10 million Americans and costs \$21 billion a year to treat. Vascular Cures advances better vascular health by supporting breakthrough collaborations, innovating patient-centered research and empowering patients on their vascular health journey.