

## QCOR Supports Networking, Junior Investigators

The QCOR Council has had an excellent year. Membership has grown to more than 650, including more than 50 Fellows of the American Heart Association. We are fortunate to have outstanding venues to disseminate our research in our journal *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes* at the annual Quality of Care and Outcomes Research Conference. The journal received almost 550 submissions in 2012-2013 — a 65 percent increase over four years — and has received an impact factor of 5.658. The conference continues to attract prominent speakers in policy, healthcare quality and outcomes research.

With this in mind, I hope to see you at the QCOR Conference June 2-4 in Baltimore. The planning committee has created a program you will not want to miss. Having attended all but one of these meetings over the last 14 years, I always look forward to opportunities to hear from key policymakers, investigators and quality leaders. The conference is an unparalleled opportunity to network and see the best science in the field.

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Fred Masoudi, MD, MPH, FAHA

A central role of the conference is supporting junior investigators in quality of care and outcomes research. The program includes educational workshops on the first day, an early career breakfast and a career development luncheon. Further, early career investigators have the unique opportunity to submit their science to the Young Investigators' Award competition. Taken together, these activities represent a substantial commitment to the development of the next generation of investigators in quality of care and outcomes research.

In this issue of *Connections*, we focus specifically on the early career activities of the Council. We have asked Colleen McIlvannan, DNP, ANP, from the University of Colorado, to share her perspectives on the QCOR conference as the winner of the 2013 Young Investigator Award. Tracy Wang, MD, MHS, FAHA, who serves with great energy as the Chair of the Young Clinicians and Investigators Committee, provides us with profiles of the finalists for the 2014 Young Investigator Award.

I look forward to seeing you in Baltimore. ■

American Heart Association | American Stroke Association  
**QCOR 2014**  
**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Quality of Care and Outcomes Research**  
June 2-4, 2014 | Hilton Baltimore | Baltimore, MD  
AHA MEMBERS SAVE UP TO \$300 OFF REGISTRATION!  
[MY.AMERICANHEART.ORG/QCORSESSIONS](http://MY.AMERICANHEART.ORG/QCORSESSIONS)

## Young Investigators Report

The Young Clinicians and Investigators Committee has traditionally played a central role in the Council's flagship QCOR conference. Early career investigators are placed front and center in the Young Investigator Award competition and are highlighted in the abstract presentations throughout the conference. Sessions are dedicated to networking within the early career community as well as with Council leadership and other more senior investiga-

tors. In the past two years, our early career investigators have even stepped beyond the conference to volunteer as a group in local shelters. This was an opportunity to not only build our early career outcomes community, but to also give back to the community that hosted our conference.

This year, young investigators remain a prime focus of our QCOR conference. Five finalists have been selected to present at the Young Investigator Award competition ses-

## Automatic Versus Reflective Decision-making

*"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn."*

—Benjamin Franklin

As a young investigator, I had the opportunity to attend my first AHA Council of Quality of Care and Outcomes Research conference last year in Baltimore. I was encouraged to submit my research to this meeting in particular, due to its focus on mentorship and acknowledgement of early career members. The meeting provided me an unparalleled opportunity to meet senior investigators as well as other early career members through various events.

The annual scientific session offers an early career roundtable breakfast, career development luncheon, all-Council dinner as well as poster and oral presentations — each promoting networking and collaboration between young investigators and established leaders



Colleen K. McIlvannan, DNP, ANP

in the field of cardiovascular outcomes research. The Council acknowledges the multidisciplinary nature of quality care, including nursing. I was able to attend the interactive nursing workshop that is offered at the beginning of each annual meeting, which allowed me to connect with nursing leaders and other early career nurses interested in outcomes research.

In addition to these diverse events, I was selected as one of the five finalists for the annual Young Investigator Award. Leveraging my clinical inpatient work in assisting patients with severe heart failure to consider advanced therapies, my research focuses on the decision-making processes of patients considering destination therapy left ventricular assist devices (DT LVAD).

Along with the study team, I interviewed 22 patients who had either accepted or declined DT LVAD therapy. We found a strong dichotomy between decision processes with some patients being "automatic" and others being "reflective" in their approach to decision-making. An automatic patient is characterized by a fear of dying and an overriding desire to live as long as possible. In contrast, a reflective patient goes through a reasoned process of weighing risks, benefits and burdens. Irrespective of approach, most patients

experience the DT LVAD decision as a highly emotional process. Acknowledging a difference in decision-making is important when considering how to support patients who are faced with this complex decision.

I was judged on importance and impact of the project in the field of outcomes research, methodological rigor, quality of the manuscript and quality of the oral presentation, and was selected as the first nurse to win this award. These findings are now under revision for publication in the QCOR journal *Circ Cardiovasc Outcomes* (McIlvannan CK, Allen LA, Nowels C, Cleveland JC, Brieke A, Matlock DD. Decision-Making for Destination Therapy Left Ventricular Assist Devices: "There was no choice" versus "I thought about it an awful lot"). We have expanded upon this work to include interviews with caregivers and coordinators, which have ultimately informed a DT LVAD decision aid.

Becoming involved as a young investigator with the QCOR Council has been an overwhelmingly positive experience. Not only have I been able to meet established leaders in the field of cardiovascular outcomes research, I also have been encouraged to continue my development as a young investigator. I look forward to many more QCOR conferences and collaborations. ■

sion. Their research spans the broad domain of quality of care and outcomes research, and underscores many of the current issues facing the practice of contemporary cardiovascular care.

- Megan Coylewright, MD, MPH, Mayo Clinic: "The PCI Choice Decision Aid for Stable Angina: a Randomized Trial"
- Gabriel Fabreau, MD, FRCPC, Brigham and Women's Hospital: "Sex, Gender, Socioeconomic Status and Access to Cardiac Catheterization in the Context of Universal Healthcare Coverage"
- Ravi Hira, MD, Baylor College of

Medicine: "Frequency and Predictors of Inappropriate Aspirin Prescribing for Primary Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease"

- Sean Pokorney, MD, MBA, Duke University: "Low Rates of Implantable Cardioverter-Defibrillator Use Among Medicare Patients With Low Ejection Fraction After Myocardial Infarction"
- Kori Sauser, MD, University of Michigan: "Hospital Variation in Thrombolysis Times in Acute Ischemic Stroke: the Contribution of Door-to-Imaging Time and Imaging-to-Needle Time"

This conference will showcase many of the talents and early achievements among our next generation of outcomes researchers. Many of these early career investigators will be offered the opportunity to fast-track the review of their manuscript by the Council journal, *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes*. Also, our finalists and five other young investigators will be offered travel stipends to attend the conference. We look forward to another great year for early career investigators at this conference. ■

By Tracy Wang, MD, MHS, FAHA, Chair YCIC