Message from the Directors

According to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus, "the only thing that is constant is change." We engaged in a flurry of activity over the past 3 years, and it seemed like we were settling into a more predictable course. Instead, the old adage is coming to mind as there are changes in store for CanVECTOR over the next few months and beyond.

First, our 3rd Annual Conference this year has changed in 2 ways: we will be welcoming attendees to a beautiful new location of Montreal, Quebec, and we also held our first Scientific Abstract competition. This "officially" qualifies our conference as Canada’s first and only thrombosis research conference—we’re very proud of this title and hope to only improve and grow every year. We’ve also improved efficiency for you by becoming more high-tech, with a modern and clean conference website, complete with registration process, schedule builder, and more! You can read all about these fun new conference features on page 2.

Second, this Fall, we’ll be saying ‘see you later’ to a couple of longstanding members of our administrative team, but we also get to welcome new ones. We invite you to read personal messages from our outgoing and incoming staff on page 4.

Lastly and most importantly, we are working to ensure sustainability of the CanVECTOR Network in the long-term. Our continuous aim is to make CanVECTOR bigger and better! The Scientific Steering Committee has already begun to discuss long-term network priorities as well as operational processes and financial matters. We’ve also decided it’s best to delve early into succession planning. Your input on these matters is very important to us, and will be solicited during the focus group session named “CanVECTOR Future Planning” at the Annual Conference (please register for this!). The result of these discussions will influence and bring about changes to the network as a whole, so we encourage you to voice your opinions.

In the end, we believe that change is good and we’re embracing it with open arms. Some changes are exciting in nature, while others may bring about some uncertainty. Nonetheless, we’re confident that we’ll face any and all changes with the fortitude and resilience that characterizes the CanVECTOR community.

We hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter and are ready to embrace change right alongside us.

Susan and Marc
What’s New for the 3rd Annual Conference:
Translating Science Together

New Conference Co-Chairs!
Rather than have Susan and Marc chair the conference for a 3rd year in a row we wanted to benefit from the organizational skills and brilliant ideas of more members. This led to the appointment of 2 new conference co-Chairs to head program planning: Dr. Shannon Bates (McMaster) and Dr. Vicky Tagalakis (McGill). They’ve been working hard to create an educational and enjoyable program for all. They will be thrilled to host you in Montreal this year!

New Keynote Speaker: Dr. Lisa Baumann Kreuziger
Hailing from the BloodCenter of Wisconsin and the Medical College of Wisconsin, we are welcoming Dr. Lisa Baumann Kreuziger as this year’s keynote speaker. She specializes in the treatment of clotting disorders and other benign hematology diseases. Her research interests involve optimal anticoagulation therapy for cancer patients with catheter-related thrombosis and understanding the mechanisms of thrombosis in heart failure patients with left ventricular assist devices (LVAD). Dr. Baumann Kreuziger will present her research while relating this to career progression as a successful woman in science.

More breakouts and small group working sessions!
We always mention how important your feedback and suggestions are to influencing our programming and we mean it! The Planning Committee made sure to include more sessions that will allow you to get up and stretch your legs, meet a greater diversity of members, and work and learn in small groups. If you haven’t already, please register for the working session on lay summary writing and the focus group discussion on CanVECTOR future planning. We’re convinced these will be incredibly valuable and thought-provoking!
The Patient Perspective:
Evaluation Surveys Coming to an Inbox Near You

We have good news: The Patient Partners Platform evaluation program recently received full research ethics approval and now has the green light to move forward!

This means that very soon (the next few weeks), consent forms and questionnaires will be sent out electronically, via REDCap (a secure web application used for building and managing online surveys and databases [visit https://www.project-redcap.org for more info on the platform]). A signed PDF version of the consent form will be automatically sent to all who complete it, and the questionnaires selected have been carefully reviewed and revised to ensure they are as relevant and brief as possible.

While participation is entirely voluntary, we sincerely hope for the generous participation of all stakeholders involved. Without you, completing the evaluation will not be possible so we thank you in advance for your time and contribution to this project.

The Patient Perspective Continues
Summer Socials: Patient Partners Engage on CanVECTOR’s Instagram

Posting pictures with fancy filters, receiving ‘likes’, and writing #hashtags – these are all key elements of using Instagram. What does that have to do with our network? Over the summer, along with 2 of our dedicated and social media savvy patient partners, we’ve committed to actively using the platform as a means of outreach and communication with those affected by VTE and its complications. Our posts are mostly created by patients, on subjects that are affecting them directly and in the moment. Our goal is to generate discussion, serve as a resource for patients searching for a community they can relate and belong to, and of course, share more about our projects and initiatives that could be of interest to potential patient partners. If you meet a patient who wants to engage in dialogue or is looking for some support, tell them to get online and find us on Instagram! Here’s a preview of some of our more recent posts:
The Training, Mentoring & Early Career Development Platform recently launched another edition of the Emerging Research Leader Initiative (ERLI) funding opportunity. A total of $150,000 is available over a 3-year tenure. The deadline to complete the notice of intent is September 15, 2018. More information is available on our website. Interested applicants can inquire for additional information through info@canvector.ca.

Congratulations to Ms. Jessica Emed, CanVECTOR Co-Lead of the Patient Partners Platform, who was recently appointed as Associate Dean, Health Professions Education for the Faculty of Medicine at McGill University.

We are excited to welcome Alexion Pharma on board as a new partner. Alexion has long been involved in discovery and commercialization of therapeutic agents for disorders linked to thrombosis, such as paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH). We know their partnership will be an asset and hope that it will help our network with its sustainability for years to come.

Say hello to:
Maryam Ebrahimi
“I am extremely happy to join the CanVECTOR team. Coming from a genetic research background, the opportunity to be the Montreal Network Manager presents a new set of challenges to me. Yet, I am confident that I can utilize my recently acquired skills, as the organizer of CIHR-IG’s outreach programs, to help the community affected by thrombosis.”

Saying see you later:
Faizan Khan
“It has been a great pleasure to work with an exceptionally hard-working, organized, supportive, and fun CanVECTOR executive and the Training, Mentoring and Early Career Development platform team this past year. I am grateful for the invaluable skills and experiences I have acquired as these will undoubtedly benefit me as I move forward in my career. I wish CanVECTOR all the best in the coming years and hope to continue my involvement within the network.”

Saying bye for now:
Charlotte Guzman
“I’ve been part of the Canadian thrombosis research world since 2009, then a 4th year undergraduate student. It’s remarkable to see how much things have changed in a relatively short time, due to the calibre and productivity of this community. While I’m excited to embark on a new life chapter, I’ll miss being your official CanVECTOR Tweeter! Truly, it has been an utmost pleasure to help build the CanVECTOR Network alongside you all. Since I just can’t get enough, I’ll be seeing you at the 3rd Annual Conference (don’t forget to register)... maybe accompanied by a special little guest 😊.”

Say hello to:
Maryam Ebrahimi
“...”

Do you have news, accomplishments, or pictures you’d like to share with the CanVECTOR community? Send them to us at info@canvector.ca for the chance to be featured!