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“Collaboration Through Communication”: The Young Urology Researchers Organisation (YURO)

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In an ideal world, research to investigate the effects of a phenomenon would be measured on a population scale. The benefits of open access and lateral sharing of resources, data and staff across clinical centres are extensive. Unfortunately, logistics often limit study sample sizes to single centre cohorts whose findings may be influenced by confounding factors and are not translatable to the wider community. To combat this, multi-centre trials have been endorsed to upscale the statistical power and significance of scientific research findings to benefit patients and clinicians alike. Large-scale multicentre trials such as STAMPEDE[1] are clear examples of how findings of relationships of causality are strengthened through larger sample sizes. Such studies are often birthed through significant financial support and networks that senior clinicians built through years of practice, or by large well funded trials groups such as the Australian and New Zealand Urogenital and Prostate (ANZUP) Cancer Trials Group.

Certainly, younger and more inexperienced researchers seldom get the chance to contribute to the existing large-scale collaboration projects and few structured avenues are available to advise and support those who are new to healthcare research. Juniors and trainees have found it difficult to acquire the requisite skills to produce high quality work and it is often presumed sometimes incorrectly, that with time and career development, these skills will be cultivated without the aid of a formal body to do so.

With the recent advent of social media and communication technologies, the ability of professionals to network and communicate has never been greater. Further to this, involvement of senior clinicians in these forums and online dialogue allows for teaching and review of junior researchers and trainees. It is this innovative style of interaction and cooperation that has led to the formation of several groups driven by young researchers, guided by senior clinicians, that have the aim of producing high-quality research through collaborative efforts.

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The Young Urology Researchers Organisation (YURO) is one such organization, formed by a select few likeminded people, with the intention of contributing to the wider academic community of Australian urological research. The group was legitimized in 2016 with its first annual assembly at the Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand's annual scientific meeting. Run exclusively by its members, the organization aims to increase the validity of its research efforts by combining data and findings across multiple institutions. Currently, representatives from over 9 clinical sites including rural Victoria and New Zealand are involved, with plans to expand into other states. Members communicate via several avenues including formal committee meetings, a website[2] an online project log available to all members and a centralized email account. This open online forum affords members the ability to bounce project ideas off one another, review fellow colleague's work and gain the input of experienced senior researchers in an attempt to foster professional development and sound research principles. It has also incorporated the development of, and is freely available to, medical students. Providing an avenue for ease of access to contributions in current projects, in addition to a communication nexus where questions are answered and advice is given by senior researchers who have experience within the field of Urology research.

Despite its infancy, early successes can be seen in YURO's involvement in several publications[3-5]. In addition to regular education sessions with medical students and perhaps most importantly, an ongoing dialogue between junior members interested in improving their research methods and experienced members interested in sharing their wisdom. YURO, its members and their research, have also been represented at multiple domestic and international conferences in 2016. Here, in addition to their own research, regular updates for those unable to attend were provided via social media blasts (@AusYURO) to draw attention to the latest scientific developments from world leaders in Urology.

YURO's most recent affiliation with the British Urology Researchers in Surgical Training (BURST)[6] through their new multicenter initiative (MIMIC), represents the next strata of interaction between like-minded urology research groups and their associated academic centres. This connection has the potential to become the earliest resident/trainee-led large-scale collaborative project of its kind. Other similar organisations also exist and with the aid of social media, online forums and the attention generated by large scale collaboration accomplishments, the crosslinking of these organisations will naturally follow. Hopefully this heralds a new age of shared progress for junior doctors and researchers by providing them with a tool to begin their own legacy and positively impact their patient's lives from earlier stage in their careers. Eventually there will be a larger pool of highly skilled researchers developed through more significant research exposure, cooperative learning and guidance from others.

In our current age of evidence-based medicine, the importance of producing and delivering high-quality, robust, translatable research to guide our clinical practice is paramount. This has proven to be of growing significance in the field of Urology, which has seen multiple paradigm shifts in

management algorithms over the last few decades, secondary to technological advances and developments in diagnostic tests. As these models of care continue to evolve, it is our responsibility as clinicians to continually improve the quality of clinical research and evaluate our findings in an effort to define best practice. With doctors now harnessing the power of social media and inter-institution communication, a whole new landscape opens up to shape the future of Urology. Global scale discussions of ideas and data sets are now within our sights which will expand the possibilities of what our work can mean. YURO: Collaboration Through Communication.

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