

May. 31, 2016

## Patient-oriented event delivers on theme of *connecting, engaging & capacity-building*

The Patient-Oriented Research Summer Institute which took place May 2-4 in Calgary delivered on its theme of Connecting, Engaging and Capacity-Building. Researchers, students, clinicians, patients, clinicians, policy-makers and more gathered to hear a variety of speakers share their insights on patient-oriented research from their own unique perspectives. For Brenda Sahlin, a representative of the Patient-Oriented Research Advisory Group, the conference highlighted the positive changes in research where clinicians and researchers are more actively engaging with patients. “Patient-focused research is really starting to sink in which is great to see” said Brenda. For University of Calgary PhD student Tamara McCarron – a presenter at the conference – the event was timely as it reaffirmed the importance of involving patients in her research. “It was fascinating to see at this event how patients and clinicians were learning from each other” says Tamara. The three-day event allowed for many opportunities to engage and connect. This included a Connections Café, poster presentations by SPOR Studentship recipients and evening social events.

This was the first Patient-Oriented Research Summer Institute hosted by the Alberta SPOR SUPPORT Unit. Next year’s Summer Institute is already in the early planning stages and announcements will be made in fall 2016.

## Summer Studentships 2016 announced

Alberta SPOR SUPPORT Unit [Career Development](#) Joint-Lead [Dr. Dean Eurich](#) announced the 2016 Alberta SPOR Graduate Studentships in Patient-Oriented Research. Applications will be open this summer with a deadline of October 3, 2016. Recipients receive a financial award, participate in a year-long patient-oriented training program and attend the 2017 Patient-Oriented Research Summer Institute. Last year, ten studentships were awarded and the recipients showcased their work through poster presentations at the Summer Institute. University of Calgary student [Chelsia Gillis](#) noted that the studentship and training program inspired her to change her PhD thesis to be more patient-oriented. Learn more about studentships and the training program at [absporu.ca/career-development](http://absporu.ca/career-development).

## Dr. Sara Davison inspires with personal insights of patient-oriented research

A highlight of the Patient-Oriented Research Summer Institute took place during the opening plenary presentation from University of Alberta nephrologist [Dr. Sara Davison](#). Speaking from the heart, Dr. Davison shared her stories of the importance of bringing the patients voice into research. “My primary goal of patient care is to end suffering. How can you do that if you don’t know what’s contributing to it?” says Davison. “Early on in my work with patients, I learned that that patients’ voice must be heard.” Dr. Davison notes that if the patient is not involved in goals of care the outcome is ICU admissions, aggressive procedures and overall poorer outcomes. She is dedicated to training future leaders in palliative care and helping them to become sensitized to the patient’s story. A leader in kidney research, Dr. Davison was the lead author of a report that provides the framework for developing new international guidelines on kidney palliative care. [Learn more](#) about Dr. Davison.