

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The Quality of Care and Outcomes Research (QCOR) Council is rapidly growing. This should come as no surprise. One need only look at the current healthcare environment — meaningful use, public reporting, value-based purchasing, accountable care and so on — to see the critical role of the QCOR Council.

Indeed, the current healthcare environment yields more questions than answers about care delivery, patient outcomes and value in health care. As these just happen to be core topics of cardiovascular outcomes research, the QCOR Council assumes an important role in guiding the *science* to answer the key questions. In fact, members of the QCOR Council and Council-backed initiatives should be centric to the AHA achieving its' 2020 goals for cardiovascular health. No pressure!

The AHA QCOR Conference, held May 12–14, 2011 in Washington D.C., provided insight on the relevance and exciting state of cardiovascular outcomes research:



Robert Califf
MD, FAHA

Robert Califf, MD, FAHA, (Duke University) received the Council's Award for Outstanding Achievement, based on his remarkable record of scientific contributions and leadership. Notably, Dr. Califf focused

much of his acceptance speech on leveraging health information technology to improve community health, reinforcing that care delivery is an essential part of the science of medicine.



Harlan Krumholz
MD, FAHA

Harlan Krumholz, MD, FAHA, (Yale University) received the Distinguished Achievement Award for his contributions to the QCOR Council and his substantial professional contributions to the

field. In his remarks, Dr. Krumholz effectively argued for the potential of QCOR to guide healthcare reform and meaningfully improve patient outcomes,

as well as the high value of the investment of the AHA in outcomes research.

- The conference included plenary sessions on:
 - *The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)*, which will have a major role in health care in the United States in the coming years;
 - *Debating Performance Measures: The Case of Percutaneous Coronary Intervention*, exploring the pros and cons of public reporting of quality measures, and reinforcing the key message of engagement of the QCOR community in this process to help ensure the validity of measures being reported; and
 - *Assessing Drug Safety Post Approval: Lessons from Vioxx, Avandia and Meridia*, exploring the often complex and politically charged, yet critically important, world of safety surveillance and how lessons of the past should translate into more effective surveillance in the future.
- The conference also featured a robust stroke outcomes track and workshops on cardiovascular nursing, transitions in care to prevent rehospitalization, advanced statistical methods in outcomes research, “everything you wanted to know but were afraid to ask” about grant funding, and championing quality improvement.
- The faculty and conference participants spanned the many disciplines relevant to cardiovascular outcomes research, and there was strong international participation.

The conference topics and participation speak volumes about the breadth and importance of QCOR, ranging from health services research to quality improvement to patient safety to health policy — all key to the state and future of cardiovascular care in the U.S. and abroad, and all under the scientific umbrella of the QCOR Council. Check out the QCOR 2011 Science News site for more information on the conference by visiting my.americanheart.org/qcorsessions and clicking on Science News (further down the page on the right).



John Rumsfeld
MD, PhD, FAHA

Yet, what may be most important to emphasize about the QCOR Conference and Council is the commitment to junior investigators. The QCOR Council sponsored 12 Early Career Investigator Travel Stipends; there were five Young Investigator Abstract Award finalists (congratulations to Robin Matthews, Erik Hess, Robb Kociol, Sachin Shah and Norrina Allen) who presented in a featured oral abstract session; and of the approximately 300 conference abstracts, a high proportion were presented by junior investigators. The QCOR Council also has a Young Clinicians & Investigators Committee (YCIC), chaired by Eric Peterson and Tracy Wang, with 10 extremely talented and engaged MD, PhD, and RN junior investigators. It is safe to say that the future leaders of health care and science are QCOR members.

Certainly, the QCOR Conference was a great success. Sincere thanks are due to Planning Committee Chair Ed Havranek, Vice Chair Henry Ting, the other planning committee members, the faculty, the AHA staff and the meeting participants for ensuring such a great program. We already look forward to next year's conference, which will be held in May in Atlanta ... details to follow in a future edition of *Connections*.

In the meantime, AHA Scientific Sessions 2011 will be held this fall in Orlando, Fla. It will feature an Early Career program on Saturday, Nov. 12 (the QCOR Breakout Session is 3–5 PM), and QCOR will be involved in more than 30 sessions starting Nov. 13. Sample

sessions include transforming health care through comparative effectiveness research, post-market surveillance of drugs and devices, the quandary of hospital readmission, and how to improve quality in the interventional laboratory. Of course, there will also be numerous abstracts presented in the quality of care and outcomes research category. Thanks to Mikhail Kosiborod, Fred Masoudi and Ed Havranek for so effectively representing the QCOR Council in

Sessions planning. Please visit the link to the QCOR Sessions track for more information at scientificsessions.org/quality&outcometrack.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my good friend, colleague and mentor, John Spertus, for his excellent leadership as Chair of the QCOR Council the past two years. John is one of the most dedicated, passionate and innovative people I have ever met. Fortunately, he will stay intimately involved with the QCOR Council as Chair

of both the Nominating Committee and the Young Clinicians and Investigators Committee (YCIC) and most certainly will continue to help lead the field of cardiovascular outcomes research.

I am excited and honored to have the opportunity to chair the QCOR Council, and I look forward to the continued growth of, and interaction among, our community. Please visit my.americanheart.org/qcorcouncil to participate in the QCOR Council.

The graphic features a background image of a fountain in front of a building with a CNN sign. Overlaid on the right side is a white and orange geometric shape containing text and logos. At the top right is the American Heart Association logo (a red heart with a white torch) and the text "American Heart Association". To its right is the text "QCOR 2012" in large, bold, black letters. Below this, the main title "Quality of Care & Outcomes Research in CV Disease & Stroke" is written in large, bold, orange letters. Underneath the title is "2012 Scientific Sessions" in orange, followed by "May 9-11 | Omni Hotel at CNN Center Atlanta, Ga." in orange. At the bottom right, the text "AHA members save up to \$300 off registration!" is written in bold, dark blue/black letters, with "to \$300 off registration!" in a larger font. Below that is the URL "my.americanheart.org/qcorsessions" in a smaller, dark blue/black font.

 American Heart Association

QCOR 2012

Quality of Care & Outcomes Research in CV Disease & Stroke

2012 Scientific Sessions

May 9-11 | Omni Hotel at CNN Center
Atlanta, Ga.

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my.americanheart.org/qcorsessions

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