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GACD Tackles the Global Burden of Lung Diseases

Members of the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases are funding more than thirteen international research projects into the prevention and management of chronic lung diseases.

The research is to take place in more than 30 countries across the globe and represents over USD 55 million in research funding over 3-5 years. The focus of the projects is on implementation research in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), vulnerable populations in high-income countries (HICs), and aboriginal communities.

“Lung diseases cause a tremendous amount of ill health and premature death globally, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where 90% of deaths due to chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases occur each year. This is why the GACD, as a collective of research funders dedicated to addressing chronic diseases, knew it was an issue that must be tackled. The GACD is extremely proud to be announcing such a ground breaking programme of research focused on finding real solutions to the growing burden of these diseases.”

Alain Beaudet, Chair of the GACD and President of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Many research projects are conducted through a partnership between investigators in a developed country institution and investigators and institutions in low- and middle-income countries.

The research focuses on implementation science to address chronic lung diseases as related to environmental exposures, including indoor and outdoor air pollution and/or smoking, as a major risk factor.

“Through our implementation science approach, we aim to manage chronic lung diseases in low- and middle-income countries, by examining which interventions will directly affect LMIC populations in affordable and scalable ways. NCDs are largely preventable through effective interventions tackling shared risk factors, namely tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and harmful use of alcohol. The GACD Lung Diseases Programme aims to address

these factors directly.”

Glenda Gray, Chair Elect of the GACD and President of the SAMRC

NCDs cause 63% of deaths globally, according to the [WHO](#). NCDs continue to be the leading cause of death and disability in the world and the burden of these diseases is rising rapidly amongst low- and middle-income countries. More than 3 million people die each year from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) alone, with 90% of these deaths occurring in low- and middle-income countries.¹

Funded Projects (All amounts are in US\$)

Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Canada

- 1. Project title:** Research on Commercial Tobacco Reduction in Aboriginal Communities (RETRAC2)
Project location: Canada
Principal Investigator: Robert M. Schwartz, University of Toronto, Canada
Funding amount: \$1.3million
- 2. Project title:** Examining the impact of tobacco pricing and packaging strategies on tobacco use and equity in middle-income countries
Project locations: South Africa, Chile, Columbia, Ecuador, and Vietnam
Principal Investigator: Emmanuel Guindon, McMaster University, Canada
Funding amount: \$1.5 million (co-funded with the International Development Research Centre and the South African Medical Research Council)

European Commission

- 3. Project title:** Tackling second-hand tobacco smoke and e-cigarette emissions: exposure assessment, novel interventions, impact on lung diseases and economic burden in diverse European populations (The TackSHS Project)
Project location: Spain, Ireland, Italy, United Kingdom
Principal Investigator: Esteve Fernandez, Catalan Institute of Oncology, Spain
Funding amount: \$3.3million
- 4. Project title:** Tobacco cessation within TB programmes: A ‘real world’ solution for countries with dual burden of disease (TB and Tobacco project)
Project location: United Kingdom, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh

¹ <http://www.who.int/respiratory/en/>

Principal Investigator: Kamran Siddiqi, York University, United Kingdom

Funding amount: \$3.3million

5. **Project title:** Multidisciplinary tools for improving the efficacy of public prevention measures against smoking (SmokeFreeBrain)
Project location: Greece, Bulgaria, Italy, Serbia, Spain
Principal Investigator: Panagiotis Bamidis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
Funding amount: \$3.3million

6. **Project title:** Free Respiratory Evaluation and Smoke-exposure reduction by primary Health cAre Integrated gRoups (Fresh Air)
Project location: Uganda, Kyrgyz Republic, Vietnam, Greece
Principal Investigator: Rianne van der Kleij, Leiden University, The Netherlands
Funding amount: \$3.3million

7. **Project title:** EUREST-PLUS: Policy Implementation to Reduce Lung Diseases
Project location: Germany, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Spain
Principal Investigator: Constantine Vardavas, European Network on Smoking and Tobacco Prevention, Belgium
Funding amount: \$2.6million

Medical Research Council, United Kingdom

8. **Project title:** Case Finding and Effectiveness of a COPD Action Plan in Low and Middle Income Countries
Project location: Peru, Nepal and Uganda
Principal Investigator: John Hurst, University College London, United Kingdom
Funding amount: \$ 1.4million

9. **Project title:** Muslim Communities Learning About Second-hand Smoke (MCLASS II): An effectiveness-Implementation hybrid study
Project location: Bangladesh
Principal Investigator: Kamran Siddiqi, York University, United Kingdom
Funding amount: \$970,000

10. **Project title:** Preventing smoking uptake among adolescents: A primary prevention initiative for chronic lung disease in India
Project location: India
Principal Investigator: John Britton, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom

Funding amount: \$680,000

National Institutes of Health, United States

11. Project title: Household Air Pollution and Health: A Multi-Country Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) Cook stove Intervention Trial

Project location: India, Guatemala, Peru, Rwanda

Principal Investigator: Thomas Clasen, Emory University, United States

Funding amount: \$32million (**Funded by:** the NIH Common Fund, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and the National Cancer Institute, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation)

Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, China

12. Project title: Lung function of Chinese adults and the predictive value of peak flow rate to long-term incidence and prognosis of lung diseases

Project location: China

Principal Investigator: Jiapeng Lu, National Center for Cardiovascular Diseases, China

Funding amount \$2.5million

National Council of Science and Technology, Mexico

13. Project title: Genomic analysis of drug-resistant tuberculosis in sputum sample

Project location: Mexico

Principal Investigator: Francisco Xavier Soberon, National Institute of Genomic Medicine, Mexico

Funding amount: \$105,000

14. Project title: Search and validation of biomarkers for tuberculosis in Mexican patients with diabetes mellitus

Project location: Mexico

Principal Investigator: Mario Alberto Flores, Center for Research and Assistance in Technology and Design of the State of Jalisco, Mexico

Funding amount: \$233,000

National Health and Medical Research Council, Australia

15. Project title: 'Indigenous Counselling and Nicotine (ICAN) QUIT in Pregnancy' - a cluster randomised trial to implement culturally competent evidence-based smoking cessation for pregnant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander smokers

Project location: Australia

Principal Investigator: Billie Bonevski, University of Newcastle, Australia

Funding amount: \$1.8million

16. Project title: An integrated health-sector strategy to combat COPD and asthma in Vietnam: A pragmatic stepped intervention cluster randomized trial

Project location: Vietnam

Principal Investigator: Gregory Fox, University of Sydney, Australia

Funding amount: \$1.4million

17. Project title: Implementing evidence into practice to improve chronic lung disease management in Indigenous Australians: the "Breathe Easy, Walk Easy-Lungs for Life" (BE WELL) project

Project location: Australia

Principal Investigator: Jennifer Alison, University of Sydney, Australia

Funding amount: \$600,000

South African Medical Research Council

The South African Medical Research Council co-funds the project entitled 'Examining the impact of tobacco pricing and packaging strategies on tobacco use and equity in middle-income countries' with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (see no. 2).

Background

The GACD is the first collaboration of major international public research funding agencies to specifically address chronic non-communicable diseases. The Lung Diseases Programme is the GACD's 3rd joint activity. Together with the Hypertension and Diabetes Programmes, the GACD Research Network now comprises more than 43 research projects on non-communicable diseases in low- and middle-income countries or involving vulnerable populations in high-income countries. The GACD has also announced its intention to fund implementation research into the prevention and management of mental health in its next call for proposals. More details [here](#).

Together, the members of the alliance represent over 80% of public health research funding worldwide. Members of the alliance are:

- Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences
- The U.K.'s Medical Research Council
- The U.S.'s National Institutes of Health
- Indian Council of Medical Research
- South African Medical Research Council
- European Commission's Health Directorate in the Research & Innovation DG
- Mexico's National Institute of Medical Sciences and Nutrition Salvador Zubirán
- Thailand's Health Systems Research Institute
- Argentina's Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation
- The Japanese Agency for Medical Research and Development
- Brazil's São Paulo Research Foundation

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