

NEWS

**COVID-19 Public Educational Sessions Provided Through
SLHS's Research Department**

POTSDAM, NY - St. Lawrence Health System's Clinical and Rural Health Research Department has been awarded an additional \$150,000 in funding support through the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute® (PCORI®). This funding is part of a COVID-19 Enhancement, which supplements the Department's ongoing Eugene Washington Engagement Award with PCORI.

The COVID-19 Enhancement monies will fund community educational sessions about the coronavirus, which are overseen by the Stakeholder Advisory Committee that is comprised of healthcare providers and administrators, patients, and community representatives.

The first public information session will be held from 12:00pm – 1:00pm on Wednesday, October 28, 2020 via Zoom conferencing. Canton-Potsdam Hospital Infectious Diseases Physician Assistant Kylie Broughal will discuss the topic COVID-19: Fact Versus Fiction, which will include information on COVID-19 compared to the flu, the safety of visiting your doctor's office, the effectiveness of masks and social distancing, and COVID-19 testing.

Goals for the newly increased funding include developing virtual forms of education to increase the community's understanding of the importance of COVID-19 as a research topic, and the use of non-pharmaceutical interventions for preventing the spread of disease.

"The public has access to endless amounts of COVID-specific information, both factual and fictitious. Having a community partner furnish researched-based, factual information on COVID-19 will provide our North Country communities with reliable, trusted information," stated Jamie Cruikshank, Stakeholder Advisory Committee member and Superintendent of Norwood-Norfolk Central School. "I am pleased with the work the group has done to enhance patient-centered outcomes in our area, and I'm hopeful for continued progress relating to the COVID-19 pandemic."

Clinical Research Manager Carly Lovelett, MS, CCRP, noted they are excited for the opportunity to provide reliable information to the public, and to give community members the chance to ask questions about pandemic issues they may be concerned about.

"As the North Country is continuing to reopen, and schools and colleges are resuming, there has never been a more crucial time for us to have a united understanding of the importance of non-pharmaceutical interventions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. By leveraging local expertise and national guidelines, we will inform our community on best practices to stay safe both now and in the future," Ms. Lovelett said.

The COVID-19 Enhancement funds will allow the Clinical Research Department's committee to provide access to training and educational materials that meet the community's needs, while protecting everyone's safety and health. To weigh in on the topics offered at these education sessions, or to submit your own questions about COVID-19, visit the Clinical Research Department's webpage at <https://www.stlawrencehealthsystem.org/clinical-research>. The Department's webpage also includes information about COVID-19 trial opportunities, along with other active trials.

"For the past year, the overreaching goal of our team has been to bring patients and families into every element of the research process," noted Stakeholder Advisory Committee member Jennifer Shaver, DNP, MSN, RN. "Those efforts acquired a heightened sense of urgency in the setting of COVID-19. Never before have patients, families, and caregivers been so mutually impacted; seeking realistic solutions to achieve the goals of safe and quality healthcare bring us together as true partners. This validates our team's original goal, lending a foundation for further innovation and growth."

Patient-Centered Research Web Series

The Clinical Research Department was initially awarded \$216,359 from PCORI in 2019 to develop and implement training for St. Lawrence Health System providers, clinical staff, patients and community members in the area of Patient-Centered Outcomes Research. The program will increase patient and stakeholder awareness of, and engagement in, research. This ensures the research is designed, conducted, and shared in a way that helps patients and their caregivers make decisions with their healthcare providers.

A free, three-part web series entitled Learning Together, Leading Together: Shaping Patient-Centered Research in the North Country has been developed, and the public is invited to attend. Part 1 will involve an Introduction To and Examples Of Patient-Centered Outcomes Research, and will be held from 9:00am – 11:00am on Wednesday, October 14, 2020. Part 2 of the series will be held on November 11, and Part 3 will be held on December 9; both from 9:00am – 11:00am

For more information and to register for the Clinical Research Department's COVID-19 public information sessions, and/or the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research series, visit <https://www.stlawrencehealthsystem.org/clinical-research>, under "Patient Centered Outcomes Research."

St. Lawrence Health System's project (#16375-SLHS), and the other projects approved for funding by the PCORI Engagement Award Program, were selected through a highly competitive review process in which applications were assessed for their ability to meet PCORI's engagement goals and objectives, as well as program criteria. For more information about PCORI's funding to support engagement efforts, visit <http://www.pcori.org/content/eugene-washington-pcori-engagement-awards/>.

PCORI is an independent, non-profit organization authorized by Congress in 2010 to fund comparative effectiveness research that will provide patients, their caregivers, and clinicians with the evidence needed to make better-informed health and healthcare decisions. PCORI is committed to seeking input from a broad range of stakeholders to guide its work.