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Kansas City Researcher Earns National PCORI Engagement Award

Funds will support an easy-step program to encourage at-risk communities to take charge of vascular health, starting with a first public event on Nov. 13

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (Nov. 8, 2019) — Local researcher Kim Smolderen, Ph.D., was recently approved for a funding award of nearly \$300,000 through the Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Awards program, an initiative of the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) based in Washington, D.C. The funds will support a two-year program to encourage at-risk members of the Kansas City community to take charge of their vascular health.

Dr. Smolderen, Associate Professor in Implementation Science at the University of Missouri–Kansas City (UMKC) School of Medicine and Saint Luke’s Mid America Heart Institute Outcomes Research Scientist, will lead the engagement project. This latest phase builds on an earlier project, also funded by PCORI*, that studied a group of patients’ quality of life as they navigated care for a new diagnosis of peripheral artery disease (commonly known as PAD). Patients from the Kansas City area and across the U.S. were enrolled.

As part of this first project, Dr. Smolderen and her research team developed patient education tools, including an online decision aid called [Show Me PAD](#). The new engagement project will take their messaging about PAD a step further and will focus directly on community involvement and reaching members of the community most at risk for peripheral artery disease.

To this end, the team has worked to develop key partnerships with local community organizations and the City of Kansas City, Mo. This engagement project will engage residents of Kansas City’s [Paseo Gateway](#) neighborhood, which is also the recipient of a Choice Neighborhood grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to revitalize the area and improve quality of life.

“PAD affects 8.5 million Americans. It narrows the arteries of the legs, can cause pain while walking, and is associated with a higher risk of cardiovascular disease. Data from the American Heart Association shows that inner-city neighborhoods are especially at risk of late diagnosis, and if PAD goes untreated, it can lead to amputation,” Dr. Smolderen explains. “We want to reach people where they live and get their input on ways to make a meaningful impact on their health.”

Kansas City Community Invited to Town Hall

The program will kick off Thursday, **Dec. 5, 5-7 p.m.**, with a community town hall meeting at the Mattie Rhodes Center – Northeast Office, 148 N. Topping Ave., Kansas City, MO 64123.

“We invite all members of the community to participate and provide input,” Dr. Smolderen said.

“Among several engagement activities as part of this effort, we will discuss a community art project that will serve as a visual expression of the importance of vascular health, as well as provide ways for people to learn about PAD, testing and different treatments available.”

To learn more about the project and the kickoff event, visit <https://showme-pad.org/blog/>.

Background on the PCORI Award

According to Jean Slutsky, PCORI’s Chief Engagement and Dissemination Officer, “This project was selected for Engagement Award funding because it will involve stakeholders in actively disseminating PCORI-funded research results to those who can use this information to inform healthcare decisions. We look forward to working with Dr. Smolderen, UMKC and Saint Luke’s Hospital throughout the course of this two-year project.”

Dr. Smolderen’s work 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 <https://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.

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For more info on Dr. Smolderen’s program:

<https://www.pcori.org/research-results/2019/promoting-easy-step-program-take-charge-vascular-health-greater-kansas-city>

This program is funded through a Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Award (EA #14505).

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