Inspiring to play: Co-Creating Games for Respiratory Health in Montreal, Paris and Geneva

Contributed by Fabio Balli, Co-founder and Lead Coordinator of Breathing Games

Breathing Games invites people and communities from all countries and backgrounds to create freely adaptable and enjoyable respiratory health knowledge. With three events held in March 2019, they illustrated how people and institutions can join forces across traditional boundaries.

In Montreal: children and parents test games to learn how to prevent and manage asthma crises

In Paris: young adults create games to share their experience of cystic fibrosis

In Geneva: designers and developers enrich the free games and the open source controller

Moving forward, Breathing Games plans to validate the controller against standard spirometry, and aims to improve and test the games iteratively, to increase their value for the community. Their ultimate goal is to create a fun, reliable controller that can be reproduced at minimal cost, including regions with limited resources (open source hardware). Combined with games (free software), the controller may encourage individuals to improve their breathing (stress relief, physiotherapy, medication, etc.) and communities to map the lung capacity and air quality of their neighborhoods, and adapt this approach to address other challenges in society.
• **25 Years of Respiratory Health in Finland**

This letter authored by **Drs Erhola and Haahtela** highlighted the Finnish Program as an example of what can be achieved by a systematic approach. The Finnish program work was based on science, and along the road there were 2 important paradigm shifts: 1) for asthma program (1994-2004), changing the first line medication from β-agonist to inhaled corticosteroids (from a reliever to a preventer), the effect of which was first shown in a long-term clinical intervention of newly detected asthma (*Haaghtela T et al. NEJM 1991 and 1994, JACI 2009*), 2) for allergy programme (2008-2018), turning the avoidance strategy to tolerance strategy, the incentive was derived from the Karelia Allergy Study (review: *Haaghtela T et al. Clin Exp Allergy 2015*). The collaboration with ecologists and microbiologists led to the so called biodiversity hypothesis (latest review: *Haaghtela T. Allergy 2019*). With that, they also came across the new concept of Planetary Health, which goes together with Human Health, a subject that was discussed at The GARD Helsinki Meeting 2018.


• **Youth Tobacco Use in Latin America: What is the Real Extent of the Problem?**

This study authored by **Dr. Urrutia-Pereira et al** found that nearly 40% of youths started smoking before age 12 years and nearly 30% of them are smoking e-cigarettes. Results suggested that youth tobacco use in Latin America is a major public health concern, and tobacco control measures are urgently needed.


• **Male smoking reduction behaviour in response to China’s 2015 cigarette tax increase**

This study authored by **Prof. Tingzhong Yang** and colleagues is the first empirical study to examine self-reported responses following China’s 2015 cigarette tax increase among male smokers and found that about one in five male Chinese smokers reported reduction in smoking. This is a relatively large impact given the very modest tax increase.


• **Improving the quality of hospital care provided for asthma out-patients in a country in turmoil: a report from Syria**

The team led by **Dr. Yousser Mohammad** used the GARD-WHO survey on asthma prevalence and risk factors in Syria and revealed gaps in asthma management. Using audit, onsite supervision and mobile communication with patients, this study demonstrated improvement in asthma care despite coping with turmoil, poverty, shortage of medical work force and difficulty of transportation.


• **Helping Patients Quit Tobacco 3rd Edition**

**International Primary Care Respiratory Group (IPCRG)** has published its latest desktop helper – a four page practical guide to Helping Patients Quit Tobacco 3rd edition. It includes a guide to VBA, based on our FRESH AIR and Global Bridges implementation research, as well as VBA Plus, where there are no specialist tobacco dependence treatment services or specialists available. It also provides an up-to-date guide to medications and information for tobacco users. It has a Creative Commons licence to enable it to be widely shared. IPCRG member countries are encouraged to transpose it to their setting by translating and localizing. Resources in other languages may be offered in the coming year. [https://www.theipcrg.org/x/aIJZ](https://www.theipcrg.org/x/aIJZ)
The GARD-CPLP meeting at the Congress on Tropical medicine of the Institute of Tropical Medicine (IHMT/NOVA) Lisbon, Portugal

On April 9th, the focal points/initiators from countries belonging to GARD CPLP (Community of Portuguese Language Countries, Portugal, Mozambique, Cape Verde, Angola and Brazil) gathered in Lisbon, at the Tropical Medicine and Hygiene Institute facilities, to discuss the current situation, the next steps, plan strategic actions related, funding, epidemiological studies, mutual cooperation, maintenance and constant updating of the site (http://gard-cplp.ihmt.unl.pt). And, on April 10th a Symposium satellite took place on PAL approach (Dr. Paulo Camargos, Brazil) and the importance of chronic respiratory diseases in CPLP countries (Dr. Elizabete Nunes, Mozambique).

Drs Cláudia Conceição, Paulo Camargos and Elizabete Nunes presented at the EAACI meeting in June 2019, Lisbon, Portugal - Establishing collaboration: the GARD-CPLP working group

The “GARD Joint Symposium: Improving health care in respiratory diseases”, integrating the EAACI Congress 2019 (European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology), took place on the June 3rd with the following programme: Moderators: Drs. José Rosado-Pinto and Nikolai Khaltaev; Speakers: Dr. Jaime Correia de Sousa (Integration of Respiratory Health into Primary Health Care), Dr. Wienia Czarlewski (Air pollution and self-management in allergies and asthma POLLAR) and Dr. Claudia Conceição (Establishing collaboration: the GARD-CPLP working group). With the recognition of pollution as a major risk factor for chronic diseases (UN High-level Meeting on Non-communicable Diseases September 2018), a major role is required from umbrella organizations as GARD, as more partners have to be involved in all process of addressing air pollution.

The Portuguese Primary Care Respiratory Group, GRESP Annual Conference

GRESP, a member of the IPCRG, held its annual conference in Lisbon, the 7-8, June with 590 participants. Professor Eric Bateman and Dr. Jaime Correia de Sousa were speakers at the conference. This year, the conference had new topics such as outdoor air pollution, OSA and cardiovascular risk, palliative and end-of life care in COPD and occupational respiratory diseases. One of the highlights of the conference was the session that presented the progress of the activities of CAPA, the Portuguese group of the international Asthma Right Care movement.
• **World Asthma Day Press Conference, “Stop for Asthma”**

Prof. Florin Mihălţan and Dr. Ruxandra Ulmeanu of the Romania Society of Pneumology, spoke at the press conference.

• **No Tobacco Day - Chose health! Not tobacco!**

The Romanian Society of Pulmonology organized a press conference inviting health journalists to an open talk about smoking and its harmful effects on the lungs health.

• **Czech Alliance against Chronic Respiratory Diseases (ČARO) Press Conference**

Prof. Vítězslav Kolek, President of ČARO and colleagues held a press conference on No Tobacco Day on 29 May, 2019 promoting anti-smoking campaign and highlighting the importance of prevention of respiratory diseases and smoking.

• **World Earth Day Press Release:**

**Air quality and its effects on respiratory health** - Partnership announced ahead of World Earth Day – 22 April 2019

A newly formed partnership between Asthma and Respiratory Foundation NZ (ARFNZ) and NIWA (National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research) aims to provide the latest air quality research to over 700,000 people living with respiratory conditions in New Zealand. Letitia O’Dwyer, Chief Executive of ARFNZ reports, “Air pollution in the environment can cause and aggravate respiratory diseases such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and lung cancer”. The newly formed partnership with NIWA aims to provide their community with information about their local and regional air quality, to assist in making informed decisions about their respiratory health.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENT

- Dr. Arzu Yorgancioglu, GARD Vice-Chair, was awarded an American Thoracic Society Fellow in 2019, a very well deserved title! Congratulations!


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Nikolai Khaltaliev (Chair), Arzu Yorgancioglu (Vice-Chair), Jean Bousquet, Alvaro Cruz, Teresa To, Cherian Varghese

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HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!