

Celebrating 50 Years of NAPCRG: The Successful Partnership Between STFM and NAPCRG

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Important milestones provide an opportunity to reflect on the past and the impact certain relationships have had on our lives. This year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of NAPCRG (the North American Primary Care Research Group), an organization that excels at bringing together primary care researchers to share ideas, develop junior investigators, and promote international collaboration. NAPCRG has been impactful in many people's lives and has enriched their professional careers and facilitated long-standing personal connections and friendships.

As we celebrate this anniversary, it's an opportune time to highlight the important partnership between NAPCRG and the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM). We have a unique perspective on this partnership, having served as the executive director of NAPCRG and STFM (S.H.B.), and a member of the board of directors of both NAPCRG and STFM (A.G.M.).

Many members of these organizations may not be aware that in the mid-90s STFM was approached by NAPCRG founders Maurice Wood, MD, William Phillips, MD, and Walter Rosser, MD, to explore the possibility of STFM providing management services to NAPCRG. At the time, NAPCRG was primarily a volunteer-run organization, with only

a part-time administrative employee providing support out of Virginia. All the logistics of NAPCRG's annual meeting were led by the local institution serving as host of the meeting. With the rotation in leadership, this led to significant variability in the execution of the meeting, and NAPCRG leadership were searching for a new model to provide stability to grow the organization. In 1996, NAPCRG and STFM signed an agreement for STFM to provide the staffing and infrastructure to run the organization, and this partnership continues today.

For more than 25 years, both organizations have benefited from this unique collaboration, and a few specific successes are worth noting that are the result of the organizational support and the cross-pollination of members and ideas.

Several years ago, the leadership of NAPCRG and STFM created this list of shared beliefs to acknowledge the special relationship and the management agreement between the two organizations:

- This collaboration is mutually beneficial for advancing the priorities of both organizations.
- The relationship is more than a business relationship. There is a shared understanding of the unique contributions and value each organization brings to the generation of new knowledge.

- There is a sincere desire for each organization to support one another's advancement and success to deliver on the quadruple aim of better health, better quality, and reduced cost.
- Being intentional and following through on areas of collaboration holds us accountable for taking advantage of opportunities to advance primary care research in ways each organization could not do as well on its own.

Some significant infrastructure accomplishments that have helped to develop research and researchers include:

- **Grant Generating Project (GGP).** While the GGP is a NAPCRG program, STFM provides support for an STFM GGP fellow with an interest in educational research. NAPCRG and STFM leadership have agreed that having an STFM GGP fellow recognizes STFM support of GGP and communicates the value of our family medicine organizations working together to build research capacity in family medicine and primary care.

From the Department of Health Services Research, Management and Policy, University of Florida Health Sciences Center (Dr Mainous); and the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (Ms Brungardt).

- The STFM GGP fellow is included in the STFM Research Committee's winter committee meeting and has helped review the fellow, resident, and student works in progress submissions for the STFM Annual Spring Conference.
- **Shared Governance.** At various times throughout their history of working together, STFM and NAPCRG have established liaisons within their governance structure and programs, including the NAPCRG liaison to the STFM Conference on Practice and Quality Improvement and the STFM liaison to the NAPCRG Committee on Advancing the Science of Family Medicine and the NAPCRG Board of Directors. While these leadership liaison roles have changed over time, there remains a desire to look for opportunities to collaborate where it benefits both organizations and the discipline.
- **Support of CERA.** NAPCRG and STFM support the CAFM Council of Academic Family Medicine (CAFM) Educational Research Alliance (CERA), along with other members of the academic family medicine community. CERA was created in 2010 as an initiative to build an infrastructure for educational research for academic family medicine. The members of CAFM, including the Association

of Departments of Family Medicine (ADFM), the Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors (AFMRD), and NAPCRG have worked with STFM to advance and grow CERA.^{1,2} Just last year, the American Board of Family Medicine joined as a partner to CERA. More than 140 peer reviewed papers have been published from the data (see <https://www.stfm.org/Research/CERA> for details). NAPCRG members are key to the success of CERA as a participating organization, mentors, and investigators.

- **Connection to the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC).** Building relationships with researchers and the CFPC specifically has contributed in tangible ways to STFM's work, particularly in the area of competency-based assessment and education. STFM's efforts to develop relationships with educators within the CFPC Section of Teachers was inspired by Ms Brungardt's work as NAPCRG executive director from 2000-2007 and the relationships she developed within the CFPC Section of Researchers. The STFM Annual Spring Conference in Toronto would not have been as rich and robust without the significant insight and contributions of our Canadian colleagues.

- **Silent Partnership.** While generally unseen by members, NAPCRG has benefited from the reliable infrastructure provided by STFM and the many behind-the-scenes services that allow staff to do the work of NAPCRG, including a conference submission and review system, IT database and support, financial support, human resources assistance, office space, mailing services, and more. This infrastructure has been key to NAPCRG's growth in programming and services.

Our organizations share a history. We have learned from each other and grown together. Cheers to NAPCRG and the researchers, learners, and organizations who have enhanced our work together. We celebrate this impressive accomplishment.

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