

Reaching Out with Arthritis Research: A Public Forum Combining Researcher Expertise and the Patient Voice

By Diane Lacaille, MD, FRCPC, MHSc

On October 21st, 2017, the 11th annual Reaching Out with Arthritis Research (ROAR) public forum was held at the Vancouver Public Library. This public forum underscores the importance of the patient voice as it is planned, led, and delivered by the Arthritis Patient Advisory Board (APAB) of Arthritis Research Canada (ARC). This year's event, entitled "Managing Arthritis and You," allowed scientists from Arthritis Research Canada to share the latest arthritis research with a worldwide audience. ROAR is accessible to everyone – participants attended in-person or joined online via a live webcast. This year, participants tuned in from across the country, the United States, Thailand, and Africa.

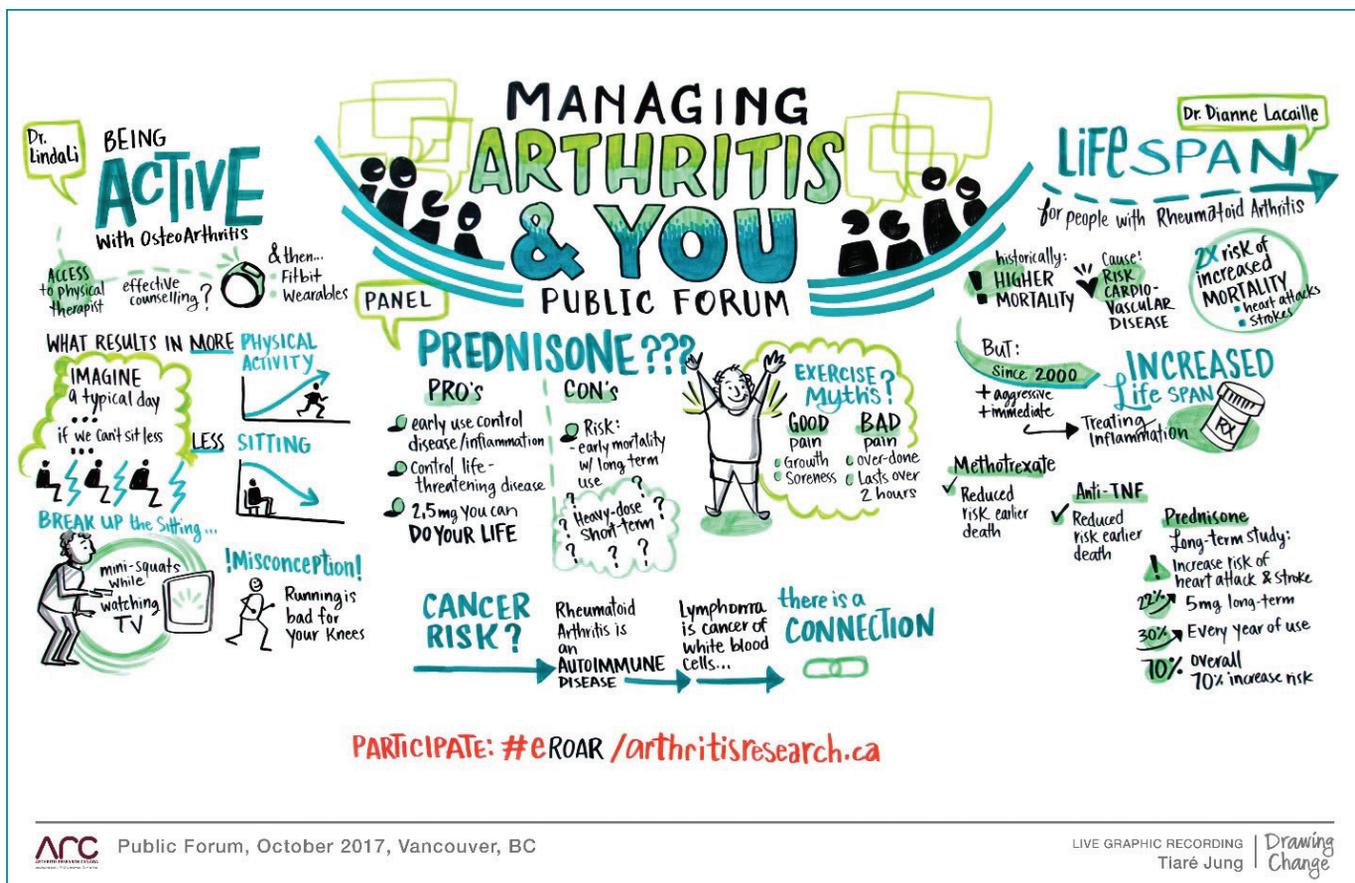
I was honoured to be alongside five other presenters to speak on what the latest research is telling us about arthritis care and self-management. Topics ranged from the importance of exercise to patient-focused mobile applications. Presentations by Dr. Linda Li and Cheryl Koehn stressed the importance of being active with the help of activity trackers and mobile apps. Between presentations, audience members were given plenty of opportunities to be active and learn various stretches from physiotherapist Karen Tsui. Other important topics focused on patient-centered apps that help with arthritis management, such as Dr. Paul Fortin's app designed to help manage lupus. The importance of

the patient voice as partners in the research process was also given prominence in presentations by Dr. Clayton Hamilton and APAB member Kelly English, who were collaborators on a recent project that highlighted meaningful patient engagement in research.

My own presentation focused on recent research looking at mortality for people with rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Essentially, our studies have found that mortality in RA has improved in recent years, such that for people diagnosed after the year 2000, mortality did not differ from the general population over the first five years of their disease. I also discussed the effect of RA medications on mortality. A popular feature of the public forum is the final Speakers Panel, where we take questions from the live audience and online participants. It really makes it an interactive forum,



The ROAR panel (from left to right): Dr. John Esdaile (standing), Dr. Paul Fortin, Dr. Cheryl Koehn, Dr. Diane Lacaille, Dr. Linda Li, Dr. Clayton Hamilton, and Kelly English.



as it allows for the audience to join the dialogue and ask questions. In all, the annual Reaching Out with Arthritis Research forum is always a success – it allows us to share our work with the people it is intended for and gives the audience many real-world applications to take home and help manage arthritis. All presentations can be viewed online at www.arthritisresearch.ca/roar. Stay tuned for the next ROAR public forum in 2018!

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I focused on included benefits of s.c. vs oral MTX (no surprise to Carter Thorne, but apparently news to many US rheumatologists), benefits of HCQ on TNFi drug survival, and the hot topic of possible thromboembolic phenomena in studies of JAK inhibitors.

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Overall, it was another excellent meeting, featuring great food, interesting science and valuable networking opportunities. A direct flight to and from Toronto was a bonus. Of course, as soon as I returned home, the meeting cycle spun another quarter turn and it was time to register for CRA and book flights and hotels for Vancouver. See you there and at ACR 2018 in Chicago next October.