



CNIS Successfully Pilots Digital Training App



Field testing CNIS's digital training in Kibaha, Tanzania.

Building on its long history of transformative work in international surgical training, CNIS took another step forward this past year by developing and testing the pilot version of its first digital course. The digitization of the Traumatic Brain and Spine Injury (TBSI) course marks the beginning of a program called MOST (Mobile Optimized Skills Training), which will ultimately deliver all 12 of CNIS's Essential Surgical Skills (ESS) courses in app form on a digital platform. Both the Bondi Foundation and the Harbinger Foundation have supported the digitization work completed to date.

For TBSI, we completed the discovery phase of the application, built an avatar-based case study, and developed gamified quiz questions and tutorials designed to enhance learner engagement. We also finalized

set-up instructions, and a toolbox. We were able to demonstrate that an entire CNIS course can be presented on a tablet.

CNIS continued to teach TBSI in the standard format while field testing the digitized material. We received expert opinion in the form of qualitative studies of the app by neurosurgeons in Mombasa, Kenya; Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. We also gathered user experience feedback from surgeons in Kibaha, Tanzania, where we conducted paired evaluations of standard course delivery and the digital format, finding that they were equally effective. Testing generated considerable interest and many requests for the app.

Immediate future plans for digitization include the completion of the TBSI app as well as digitization of CNIS's obstetrical curriculum. Our popular Trauma Team Training (TTT) course, which shares components with TBSI, is another early candidate for digitization.

With mobile training, CNIS will be able to reach ten times the number of trainees, including learners in locations where standard course delivery is not possible. A toolbox from each course will be downloadable to phones, enabling skill sharing in the community long after visiting instructors have left.



Home page for the TBSI app.

CNIS Welcomes New Staff



Dr. Jan Christilaw

CNIS's Obstetrical Associate, Dr. Jan Christilaw, has taken on a new role within the organization as Director of Women's Health. Dr. Christilaw is a powerhouse for advancing women's health in British Columbia and a global leader in maternal care. Her 25+ years of accomplishments include: President of BC Women's Hospital; Expert Advisor, Canadian Institute for Health Information for Maternity; UBC Clinical Professor; Founding Chair, Aboriginal Maternity Committee; and Chair, BC Consensus Panel on Cesarean Birth – all while delivering thousands of babies in British Columbia.



Maia Joseph, PhD

Maia Joseph brings a background in healthcare communications as well as extensive experience as a researcher, writer, editor, and teacher to her work for CNIS. She earned her doctorate in English from UBC, where she also taught for several years before shifting her focus to the health sector. At CNIS, she has taken on the role of Administrator, and will be involved in proposal development, project coordination, and volunteer recruitment as well as managing the office.



Sung Yang, MBA

Sung Yang is responsible for all accounting matters at CNIS. He completed his Masters of Business Administration at the University of Victoria in 2000. With over ten years of accounting experience, he is devoted to providing outstanding accounting services to both internal and external customers by maintaining accurate accounting records and assuring the financial health of the organization.

Trauma Team Training in Tanzania

Over the past year, with support from the Harbinger Foundation, CNIS ran two instalments of its Trauma Team Training (TTT) course in Kibaha, Tanzania, assuring full coverage of all emergency department personnel at Tumbi Regional Hospital. The training allowed Injury Control Centre Tanzania (ICCT), established in 2005 by CNIS and local partners, to extend its trauma training reach to another regional centre, increasing the ability of responders to manage injured patients, reduce disability, and save lives. In total, 62 practicing nurses, doctors, clinical officers, assistant medical officers, and anesthesiologists (more than half women) were trained.



Abdominal trauma role-playing during Trauma Team Training in Kibaha, Tanzania, July 2017.

Since 1997, CNIS has been teaching TTT in low-income countries where injury accounts for a significant proportion of the burden of disease. In addition to CNIS's work in Tanzania, TTT has been conducted as part of injury prevention programs in Ethiopia and Uganda. McGill University has also introduced TTT in Rwanda and Palestine under license from CNIS, and CNIS is currently renewing its TTT work in Guyana.



TTT participants in Kibaha, December 2016.

Addressing Head Injury in Eastern Africa



A dry lab station for TBSI training featuring craniotomy instruments and a sawbones polyresin skull – another CNIS innovation in surgical teaching.

With support from the Bondi Foundation, CNIS brought its Traumatic Brain and Spine Injury (TBSI) course for surgical residents to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and also certified 10 neurosurgeons as new TBSI instructors in Mombasa, Kenya, ensuring that training will be sustained and expanded in the region. Traumatic head injury is a prominent health burden in low- and middle-income countries, where associated risk factors are typically higher and healthcare systems less adequately prepared to address the challenges involved in treatment. Many TBSI-related deaths and disabilities are preventable with the training provided through the CNIS course.

TBSI is now a recommended training course for COSECSA (College of Surgeons of East, Central, and Southern Africa) membership candidates. In support of the CAGS (Canadian Association of General Surgeons) project in Mombasa, CNIS and the Kenya Neurological Society (Neurosurgical Division) plan to run a TBSI providers course in Mombasa in early 2018.

CAGS Training Partnership in Uganda

CNIS's longstanding partnership with the Canadian Association of General Surgeons (CAGS) in Gulu, Uganda, has been a productive one: every graduated medical student from Gulu University School of Medicine has taken CNIS's Essential Surgical Skills (ESS) course since the founding of the medical program in 2004. CNIS's Structured Hernia Repair course has also continued on a biannual basis for medical interns.

Both courses ran again in 2017 under the leadership of Dr. Tom Okello and Dr. Michelle Sutter, and planning for 2018 delivery is currently underway. A five-year study recently completed by Dr. Okello, Dr. Patrick Mugabi, Dr. Ghee Hwang, Dr. Sutter, and Dr. Ronald Lett found that the ESS course significantly improved learners' proficiency and level of comfort in all skills taught.



Dr. Michelle Sutter (bottom) has taken over from Dr. Ghee Hwang (third from left) as coordinator of the CNIS/CAGS ESS and hernia training in Gulu, Uganda.

Cuso Training Partnership in Western Tanzania



In April 2017, CNIS volunteers Dr. Jan Christilaw and Dr. Hassan Shenassa travelled to Tanzania to deliver our Structured Operative Obstetrics (SOO) course to care providers in both Kigoma and Kasulu. These cities are the two largest in Kigoma region, an area with one of the highest maternal mortality rates in Tanzania. Our work in this region is done in partnership with Cuso, who have been working actively in the area on several different aspects of maternal child health. This was the second time the courses were delivered in these two centres. We ran a refresher, which allowed us to assess retention from the last course, as well as courses for new learners and instructors.

We were very impressed at the focus and commitment of all the learners, most of whom are in active surgical practice. They were thrilled to see us back, and reported that they are using the techniques and principles taught in the course every day. All participants expressed a sincere wish to have us return next year, to allow more trainees to benefit from the course, and to refresh the skills of the alumni.

by Dr. Jan Christilaw

A surgical refresher for our previous graduates in Kasulu, Tanzania.

Surgical and Obstetrical Training in Tanga, Tanzania

Thanks to the generosity of the Donner Canadian Foundation, CNIS was able to run five courses in Tanga, Tanzania, this past year. Dr Wylam Faught taught Essential Surgical Skills (ESS), Dr. Christine Bloch taught two sessions of FIRST (Fundamental Interventions, Referral, and Safe Transfer) for Midwives, and Dr. Jan Christilaw taught Structured Operative Obstetrics (SOO) and a FIRST for Midwives instructor course. CNIS is also in the early stages of establishing a skills lab in Tanga, which will be the product of a collaboration between Rotary clubs in Tanga and in Camrose, Alberta.

Dr. Christine Bloch (bottom right) with one of her FIRST for Midwives classes in Tanga, Tanzania.



CNIS ANNUAL MEETINGS

Date: November 10, 2017

Location: CESEI Lecture Theatre (JPN Rm 3601), 910 West 10th Avenue (VGH), Vancouver, BC

Schedule:

9:00 – 9:30 am: Arrival and Coffee

9:30 – 10:30 am: 23rd Annual General Meeting

10:45 – 11:45 am: CNIS Board Meeting (Election of Officers

12:00 – 4:00 pm: Strategic Planning Meeting (lunch provided)

Bethune Round Table 2017

In June, under the leadership of Dr. Yvonne Ying, the University of Ottawa's Department of Surgery hosted a lively and well-attended edition of the Bethune Round Table (BRT), Canada's annual meeting of health professionals dedicated to delivering safe surgery in low-resource settings. Turning around the theme of Evidence-Based Global Surgery, the meeting featured a range of presenters and guest speakers, from Dr. Ed Fitzgerald, who explored the role of data crowdsourcing in global health research, to Dr. Nadine Caron, who discussed the challenges of evidence-based research in indigenous healthcare.

CNIS's executive is the national organizing committee for BRT, and CNIS arranges financial support for the meeting, which included – for the first time at BRT 2017 – a substantive donation from the Canadian Association of Surgical Chairs (CASC). The funding enabled the attendance of 16 scholarship recipients. The CASC donation will also be available for next year's BRT, which will be hosted by the University of Toronto.

BCCIC Annual General Meeting

In September 2017, CNIS Administrator Maia Joseph attended the AGM of the BC Council for International Co-operation (BCCIC), and participated in their strategic planning session. BCCIC supports and connects organizations involved in sustainable development overseas and in the province of BC. As a member and current host of the Inter-Council Network of Provincial and Regional Councils for International Co-operation (ICN), BCCIC was involved in the discussions that led to the Canadian Government's announcement of a \$100 million dollar fund for Canadian small- and medium-sized organizations. An official call for proposals is expected in 2018.



BRT 2017 featured a live cartoonist capturing the ideas shared at the meeting.

CANADIAN NETWORK FOR INTERNATIONAL SURGERY

Phone: 604-739-4708

Email: office@cnis.ca

Website: www.cnis.ca

Chair: Dr. Andrew Howard

CEO: Dr. Ronald Lett

Director of Women's Health: Dr. Jan Christilaw

Administrator: Maia Joseph

Accountant: Sung Yang

Web Admin: Adrian Soltani