

July 7th, 2020



Max Wohlaer, MD Co-Director
Robert Cuff, MD Co-Director
Vascular Surgery COVID-19 Collaborative

Antonio Maria Jannello
Director U.O.C. Vascular and Endovascular Surgery
IRCCS "Holy Heart - Don Calabria"
Secretary SICVE
Via don A. Alwaysboni 5 - 37024 - Negrar by Valpolicella VR

Dear Dr. Antonio Maria Jannello,

The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically altered the medical landscape. In order to preserve hospital beds, personal protective equipment, and other resources to be able to accommodate the surge of COVID-19 positive patients, most vascular surgeons have cancelled elective and semi-elective vascular cases in accordance with international societies' guidelines. Not in our lifetime have we seen such a rapid and widespread cancellation of scheduled vascular surgical operations. Born amidst the challenges imposed by the current pandemic, the Vascular Surgery COVID-19 Collaborative (VASCC) aims to evaluate the effect of the systematic, widespread, and immediate postponement of vascular surgery on patient outcomes as well as vascular related complications in COVID-19 patients. By building a diverse international collaborative database, we hope to provide data to better guide health care policy planning during a future crisis.

The key feature of the VASCC is a robust, international REDCap registry of deidentified patient information housed at the University of Colorado, USA. Our goal is to engage vascular surgeons from all practice types, sizes and geographic locations to provide a broad cross section of patients and results that are widely applicable. We are recruiting vascular practitioners who represent our specialty, ranging from large academic group practices to smaller, private practices. We invite and encourage every vascular surgeon to participate. Trainees and medical students are actively involved. As a member of the collaborative, you will be invited to submit patient data and participate in project development, presentations and writing of manuscripts. Primary authorship will be based on level of participation in the development of the specific publication, and all works will be presented on behalf of the VASCC.

The VASCC brings vascular surgeons from around the world together, to study fundamental issues facing our specialty, through two distinct research projects:

- Project 1, “Impact of COVID-19 on Scheduled Vascular Operations,” provides a mechanism to formally assess the impact of surgical delay on patients with vascular disease, and will investigate the natural history of those whose operations were postponed due to the pandemic. The project will evaluate alterations in surgical care provided in response to the global pandemic, including identification of the stakeholder responsible for surgery cancellation or postponement, and changes in type and location of surgery performed, all of which impact the healthcare system. The data collection tool focuses on the surgical management of five conditions (Carotid, Aortic, Peripheral, Venous, and Hemodialysis Access).
- Project 2, “Thrombotic complications of COVID-19,” investigates the thrombotic manifestations of COVID-19 and explores management practices. The project will have four specific modules encompassing a wide range of thrombotic conditions of the arterial and venous systems in patients with COVID-19 infection (Acute Limb Ischemia, Acute Mesenteric Ischemia, Symptomatic Venous Thromboembolism, and Stroke).

On behalf of the VASCC Collaborative Team, we would like to formally invite the Italian Society for Vascular and Endovascular Surgery (SICVE) to promote the VASCC amongst SICVE members. We already have participants in Italy including the following sites: Ca' Foncello's Hospital, University of Ferrara, Fondazione Policlinico Universitario A. Gemelli IRCCS - Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, University Hospital of Trieste, Integrated University Hospital of Verona, Poliambulanza Foundation Hospital, University of Bologna, University of Parma, A.S.S.T Lecco, Ospedale A. Manzoni.

Please contact Dr Mario Giovanni Gerardo D'Oria, MD (mario.doria88@outlook.com), who has been actively involved in the organization, for more information.

Email vascc@cuanschutz.edu with questions or queries. Or, visit the Vascular Surgery COVID-19 Collaborative (VASCC) website for more information on how to join: <https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/surgery/specialties/vascular/research/vascular-surgery-covid-19-collaborative/projects>

Respectfully,

Sincerely,



Max Wohlauer, MD

On behalf of the *Vascular Surgery COVID-19 Collaborative*