

**Media Contact**

Andrea Van Hook, [avanhook@clinicalresearchforum.org](mailto:avanhook@clinicalresearchforum.org)  
Cell: 818-606-0962

**March 6, 2019**

**Follow us on Twitter: @CRForumUS, #CRTopTen**

**INNOVATIVE BLOOD PRESSURE INTERVENTION IN BLACK BARBERSHOPS WINS  
NATIONAL CLINICAL EXCELLENCE AWARD**

***Study that placed pharmacists in L.A. barbershops wins award from Clinical Research Forum; other award-winners includes new life-saving stroke protocol now in use at over 1,000 hospitals and the first effective drug therapy for an under-diagnosed and overlooked cause of heart failure.***

**Washington, D.C. – March 6, 2019** – The Clinical Research (CR) Forum, a non-profit membership association of top clinical research experts and thought leaders from the nation’s leading academic health centers, awarded its most prestigious honor to the University of California, Los Angeles and Cedars-Sinai Smidt Heart Institute for an innovative program that placed specially-trained pharmacists directly in barbershops to deliver medication management to patrons with high blood pressure. In just six short months, the barbershop study improved the outcomes and control of high blood pressure by over 60 percent of participants.

The CR Forum presents its annual Top Ten Clinical Research Achievement Awards to highlight outstanding research advances that involve both innovation and impact on human diseases. A complete list of the 2019 Top Ten Award Winners can be found [at this link](#).

“This year’s award winners demonstrate the immense value of our nation’s investment in clinical research, and the direct impact of that work on the health of millions of people in the United States,” said Harry P. Selker, MD, MSPH, CR Forum Board Chair and Dean of the Clinical and Translational Science Institute at Tufts University. “For many, these innovative studies and related clinical trials may represent the only hope for surviving a life-threatening disease. They also pave the way to advance new therapies and treatments that improve public health.”

**The Herbert Pardes Clinical Research Excellence Award**, named in honor of CR Forum Board Vice Chair Dr. Herbert Pardes for his profound impact on clinical research and academic medicine, is awarded to the research study that best shows a high degree of

innovation and creativity, advances science, and has an impact upon human disease. (Dr. Pardes currently serves as Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees at New York-Presbyterian Hospital and was the long-time Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Columbia University.)

Led by Dr. Ron Victor, *A Cluster-Randomized Trial of Blood-Pressure Reduction in Black Barbershops* was published in the New England Journal of Medicine in April 2018. The study findings present a simple yet overwhelmingly effective approach to uncontrolled hypertension in the underrepresented minority population of non-Hispanic black men and ultimately, the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of heart disease. By encouraging hundreds of black male patrons to have their blood pressure checked and treated by pharmacists in their local Los Angeles barbershops, Dr. Victor and his co-investigators are responsible for a vital change in a population with a high risk of cardiovascular disease. **In just six months, 63% of the 319 study participants saw a reduction in blood pressure to healthy levels.**

Sadly, Dr. Victor passed away last fall, but he was represented at the ceremony by his friend and colleague Dr. Ravi Thadhani, Vice President of Research at Cedars-Sinai, who accepted the award on his behalf. Dr. Victor's team of UCLA and Cedars-Sinai collaborators are continuing this work, which NIH Director Francis Collins said in his Director's Blog demonstrates that "...helping people get healthier doesn't always mean technological advances. Sometimes it may involve developing more effective ways of getting proven therapy to at-risk communities."

Two additional studies received Distinguished Clinical Research Achievement Awards for their creativity, innovation, and novel approach that demonstrates immediate impact on the health and well-being of patients:

- *Defuse 3 Study*, nominated by Stanford University and represented by Dr. Gregory Albers, the Coyote Foundation Professor and Professor of Neurosurgery, challenged the concept that brain tissue dies rapidly following the onset of stroke symptoms and that stroke treatment beyond 6 hours after onset was futile. Using an imaging paradigm and novel software program, researchers were able to identify those stroke patients who continue to have salvageable brain tissue many hours after stroke onset. This ability to identify patients who are most likely to benefit from stroke therapies will greatly accelerate the development and testing of new therapeutic options. Approximately 1,000 hospitals have changed their stroke protocols to offer a life-saving stroke therapy to many patients who arrive after the standard six-hour treatment window has elapsed.
- *Transthyretin Cardiac Amyloidosis: Overlooked, Under Appreciated and Treatable*, nominated by Columbia University and represented by Dr. Mathew S. Maurer, Arnold and Arlene Goldstein Professor of Cardiology. Transthyretin amyloid cardiomyopathy is an under-diagnosed and often overlooked cause of heart failure. This randomized, double blind, prospective, and international multicenter study

evaluated the drug tafamidis for patients with the genetic and non-genetic forms of transthyretin amyloidosis. Use of the drug showed a significant reduction in mortality and frequency of cardiovascular-related hospitalizations. Collectively, these findings indicate that tafamidis is the first effective therapy for patients with transthyretin amyloid cardiomyopathy.

Since 1996, the Clinical Research Forum has enabled the sharing of best practices in clinical research, informed meaningful policy dialogues and increasingly played a national advocacy role in support of clinical research.

CR Forum congratulates all of the 2019 Top Ten Clinical Research Achievement Award recipients and finalists for groundbreaking, clinical and translational research advances that benefit the health and welfare of all Americans, and reflect the influential work being done by investigators at nearly 60 research institutions and hospitals across the United States, as well as partner institutions around the world.

###

#### **About the Top Ten Clinical Research Achievement Awards**

Recognizing the need to celebrate our nation's clinical research accomplishments that involve both innovation and impact on human disease, the Clinical Research Forum conducts an annual competition to determine the ten outstanding research accomplishments in the United States. These major research advances represent a portion of the annual return on the nation's investment in the health and future welfare of its citizens.

#### **About the Clinical Research Forum**

The mission of the Clinical Research Forum is to provide leadership to the national and clinical translational research enterprise and promote understanding and support for clinical research and its impact on health and healthcare. For more information, visit [www.clinicalresearchforum.org](http://www.clinicalresearchforum.org).