



# **The 5th Annual Besroul Global Health Conference**

## **Harnessing Family Medicine for SDG3**

### **Executive Report**

November 1–4, 2016

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

## Executive summary

The Fifth Annual Besroul Global Health Conference, held last November in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, brought together 75 family doctors, academic leaders, and family medicine professionals from over 20 different countries. The conference goal was to leverage global family medicine toward achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3 to “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.” The conference dovetailed with the 2016 WONCA World Conference of Family Doctors, where the Besroul Centre was able to lead a conversation about equity, social accountability, inclusion, and strategy. It also explored how a family medicine approach can provide the needed practical, intellectual, and moral backbone for a robust primary health care system.

The Besroul Conference focused on four objectives: measurement, knowledge generation, partnerships, and medical education.

Delegates explored frameworks for measuring primary health care and family medicine systems at the macro level by looking at the Primary Health Care Performance Initiative’s Vital Signs indicators, and seeded a Besroul network comparative study focused on identifying relevant measures from the ground level perspective of family doctors. As well, clinic level measurement tools and frameworks were explored, such as the cumulative patient profile.

During workshops about knowledge generation, participants grappled with how the Besroul Centre can assess local research capacity and facilitate research and quality improvement activities within the Besroul community. Proposed solutions prioritized the development needs of the Besroul Centre’s international partners. They included continuing to leverage the Besroul network, adopting online social networking tools, and developing tool kits, supports, and training opportunities to enable research and constructive enquiry among family and resident doctors in a way that fully engages those in low-resource settings.

Participants explored the work in medical education, focusing on identifying local education needs and designing country-specific strategies to address them. Strides were made in developing further supports in faculty and curriculum development as well as continuing medical education for practising doctors. This year’s conference introduced a discussion about certifying family doctors and accrediting family medicine residency programs.

Throughout the conference, the Besroul Centre’s holistic approach to understanding and developing primary health care systems—by focusing on the relationships between the system’s constituents—provided valuable insights for delegates from diverse backgrounds and contexts. The conference made space for a deeper discussion about developing a code of ethics for socially responsible partnerships. In addition, at the Besroul and WONCA conferences, the Besroul Storybooth Project captured personal narrative interviews of 130 family doctors from 50 different countries, for advocacy purposes as well as for systematic analysis.

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Conference delegates articulated a clear need for a dynamic online social platform and necessary infrastructure to facilitate year-round collaboration and exchange in all aspects of Besrou community initiatives.

The Brazilian delegation played a central role in the conference, graciously hosting the proceedings, taking the opportunity to showcase Rio de Janeiro's innovative and robust expansion of family medicine and rolling up of sleeves to push ahead.

The conference welcomed participation by Dr Hernan Montenegro (WHO) and outgoing WONCA president Dr Michael Kidd (Australia). It also hosted the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC), the Brazilian Society of Family and Community Medicine, and the University of Toronto Department of Family and Community Medicine. This support from and synergy with the greater international community grew from a shared understanding that family medicine offers a much needed path toward our global ambitions and is a necessary ingredient for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3.