

2nd International Surgery, Translational and Regenerative Medicine Conference

April 15-16, 2019 Valencia, Spain

Research Integrity Initiatives in Canada: Enhancing Transparency and Accountability to Promote Trust

Ronald James Heslegrave

William Osler Health System, University of Toronto, Canada

Research is vital for the advancement of social, medical, public policy and economic agendas for all nations. Innovation and overall progress based on evidence is dependent on the results of valid research. For research to be utilized and effectively implemented, Trust in Science is critical for the public, government decision-makers, researchers and others in order to value the outcomes of research and support the implementation of change to improve standards of living for all citizens of nations. Failure of an ethical oversight system to support the integrity of the research enterprise threatens progress at all levels of societal development. It has been argued that research misconduct is a rare occurrence, misconduct will become apparent through the peer-review process and publication standards and when it does occur, the results may not be of great significance. These arguments lack evidence to support these conclusions.

This presentation will explore the need for transparency and accountability in research and the need for a national oversight mechanism to monitor adherence to defined standards of research conduct. Based on a recent report from an Expert Panel on Research Integrity that was duly constituted by the Canadian federal government, this presentation will provide recent examples of breaches in research integrity and the consequences of these actions. The presentation will focus on the work of the Expert Panel that was sponsored by the Minister of Industry in Canada. The Panel reviewed the current state of the oversight of research integrity in Canada as a model for research integrity that could be applied in other jurisdictions. The Panel proposed the construction of a positive environment for research integrity focussing on the promotion of the principles and values associated with research integrity to aid in the prevention of purposeful breaches in research integrity. The Panel proposed the implementation of a Council of Research Integrity that would have oversight for research integrity nationally and would develop the necessary expertise to offer expert opinion in cases of possible breaches in research integrity and options for sanctions in such cases.

Biography:

Ronald J Heslegrave is currently the Corporate Chief of Research at William Osler Health System in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He has built a vibrant research and innovation program for one of the largest Community Hospital Systems in Canada focusing on the evaluation and implementation of innovative healthcare delivery both in hospitals and the community. In 3-4 years he has grown the research studies conducted from a few interested investigators conducting a very limited number of studies to over 200 studies with budgets totaling more than \$5+M. This innovation is designed to provide transformational and integrated health care delivery systems of care through technology in an evidenced-based, system-based approach to care. Previously, he was a Senior Scientist in Research Ethics at the University Health Network, University of Toronto where his interest is in new models of ethics review oversight and developing new processes for protecting and informing participants of research. Previously he was appointed as the Inaugural Executive Director of the newly formed non-profit corporation in Canada called Clinical Trials Ontario supported by the Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation. This government-supported initiative which had the mandate to make the Province of Ontario a preferred location for global clinical trials. He also established a single Research Ethics Board for Cancer Research in 2004 which continues to thrive in Ontario. He also served on the Canadian Expert Panel on Research Integrity to establish the way forward for improving research integrity for the oversight of scientists in Canada.