

January 2017

Dear UW/Fred Hutch CFAR Members,

It is with tremendous enthusiasm, and deep humility, that I'm writing to introduce myself to you as the new UW/Fred Hutch Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) Director. About a month ago, just before World AIDS Day, the CFAR Leadership announced the transition as of January 1 of the director position from King Holmes, MD, PhD, who has boldly led our CFAR since its inception. I'd like to take a few moments from your day now to communicate a few thoughts about how I've gotten here, the incredible resource that we have in this CFAR, and what we can look forward to together in the months and years ahead.

I have been fortunate to collaborate with many of you, and to know many more of you, over the last twenty years since I first came to Seattle. My work has focused on HIV prevention and treatment, principally in Africa, on areas including PrEP, microbicides, treatment as prevention, the interface of sexual and reproductive health, and multidisciplinary work in implementation science, translational work, and social and behavioral science. I have been fortunate to be able to work on large-scale projects across a number of settings, and I enjoy greatly the organizational and coordination oversight that comes along with large, complicated work. Needless to say, multinational, cross-cultural, and multidisciplinary projects, particularly when ones of high international profile, demand the highest demonstration of integrity, respect, and trust. I have been extraordinarily lucky to be able to work with a global network of collaborators, involving individuals from multiple institutions within the US (including across our CFAR), Africa, and elsewhere, who have helped me learn about those important values. I am also a product of this CFAR – a graduate of UW (with some rotations at Fred Hutch and Seattle Children's along the way), a former CFAR New Investigator Award recipient, and one of the more than 750 UW/Fred Hutch CFAR members. Finally, I am proud to be an active participant in ongoing engagement of HIV stakeholders worldwide, including policymakers, researchers, clinicians, and advocates, in order to translate the science we all do into public health impact.

The UW/Fred Hutch CFAR is a model for facilitating multidisciplinary and cross-institutional HIV research. We have tremendous strengths across the entire spectrum of HIV research: clinical epidemiology and clinical trials for HIV and related diseases, behavioral and social science, public health delivery and implementation science, community engagement, and cutting-edge laboratory work in virology, immunology, -omics, and cure. Our work crosses disciplines, research groups, institutions, and continents. Indeed, arguably our greatest strength is the open and truly collaborative nature of the work here in Seattle. What the CFAR does best is innovation, service, and growth of investigators, giving emerging researchers and established researchers with emerging ideas the time, space, guidance, and connections to flourish.

Looking forward, there is still much to do in HIV. More than thirty years into the epidemic – and approaching 30 years for this CFAR – we know more than ever before about how treat, prevent, and potentially cure HIV and we have better tools each year for doing so. There aren't many other fields that are so focused on putting ourselves out of business, but that is the endpoint in HIV for which we are all striving. Our CFAR will remain deeply committed to facilitating cross-disciplinary research, doing work that achieves impact in HIV prevention, care and beyond, and supporting the growth of leaders for the future. As we look forward to CFAR's recompetition for another five-year cycle, we have much to be proud of in all the work done and all the ideas and enthusiasm we have going forward.

Please join me in thanking King for his unwavering dedication to this CFAR and every one of its 750+ members and for his skilled leadership for the last 29 years. He established the CFAR in 1988 and has not only ensured continuous funding of the CFAR but has also been incredibly instrumental in growing the HIV/AIDS research, training, and care at our institutions and worldwide. We are incredibly fortunate that King will continue as an active leader within the CFAR as a Co-Director, along with Ann Collier and Corey Casper.

I very much look forward to working with all of you in this CFAR. Please feel free to contact me or stop by to chat.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "BAETEN". The signature is stylized and appears to be written with a pen or marker.

Jared Baeten, MD, PhD
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See the profile of Jared ("Aiming to see off HIV") in this month's Lancet Infectious Diseases:
[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(16\)30565-5/fulltext?rss=yes](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(16)30565-5/fulltext?rss=yes)