RePORT International Newsletter

July 2025

In This Issue

CONGRATULATIONS

We are very pleased to announce that on July 1, 2025, Dr. Jerrold J. Ellner (Professor of Medicine, Rutgers-New Jersey Medical School (NJMS) Department of Medicine and the Public Health Research Institute) and the Director of the RePORT International Coordinating Center, was promoted to *Distinguished Professor*. Rutgers confers the title of Distinguished Professor to faculty with an international reputation, outstanding achievements, and eminence in their fields.

For five decades, Dr. Ellner has made seminal contributions in the fields of TB and HIV. Among his many achievements was the establishment of a model for collaborative multidisciplinary research on TB and HIV in low- and middle-income countries. Within prospective cohort studies led by Dr. Ellner, cutting-edge immunology, microbiology (and virology) are embedded, which are efficient ways to study host-bacterial interactions, TB transmission, progression, and infrequent treatment. Dr. Ellner and colleagues were the group to apply this model to TB, beginning in Uganda in 1994 with the TB research unit (TBRU) program, which continues to this day. Ground-breaking studies showed, for example, that TB influenced HIV progression by activating its replication. The TBRU also performed a sentinel study that demonstrated that preventive therapy of TB was effective in persons living with HIV. This was published in the New England Journal of Medicine in 1997 and led to a WHO recommendation for its broad implementation.

Dr. Ellner has the masterful ability to pull together a team of leading scientists in the US and abroad to conduct collaborative studies that span the spectrum from basic, through translational, to clinical studies aimed at asking and answering the biggest questions affecting TB and HIV. These collaborations were only possible through his ability to obtain prolific funding for large, multi-million-dollar, multi-year NIH grants. Dr. Ellner's work has resulted in the publication of close to 400 peer-reviewed papers.

Dr. Ellner trained and mentored academic infectious diseases investigators and scientists in the US, Brazil, India, Japan, South Africa, and Uganda. When assembling large collaborative programs, he made a special point to include early-stage and junior investigators. Through these opportunities, he created stepping stones to many highly successful careers. As Chief of Infectious Diseases at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU), NJMS, and Boston University, and as Interim Chair of Medicine at CWRU and Chair of Medicine at NJMS, Dr. Ellner trained generations of infectious disease physicians and an army of international clinicians and scientists who have themselves risen to become leaders in their respective clinical and research fields. Dr. Ellner rejoined the faculty at Rutgers-NJMS in 2018. Not one to rest on his laurels, he is currently a Principal Investigator/Program Director of NIH-funded programs: The

Feasibility of Novel Diagnostics for TB in Endemic Countries (FEND-TB), the TBRU, and RePORT International. We are delighted that Dr. Ellner has received this acknowledgement of his high achievements. Please join me in congratulating Jerry!

Written by David Alland, MD
Professor and Chief, Division of Infectious Diseases
Director, Public Health Research Institute, Center for COVID-19 Response and Pandemic Preparedness, Rutgers Regional Bio-containment Laboratory, and Center for Emerging Pathogens
Rutgers-New Jersey Medical School

CONSORTIUM HIGHLIGHT: NUR LATIFAH HANUM

Advancing TB Research Through Technology and Collaboration

Meet Nur Latifah Hanum, Clinical Research Site Specialist at INA-RESPOND, Indonesia

Since joining INA-RESPOND in 2020, Nur Latifah Hanum has emerged as a vital force in advancing clinical research across Indonesia. With a Bachelor's degree in Community Nutrition and over a decade of experience in clinical and observational research, Hanum brings both expertise and dedication to her role as Clinical Research Site Specialist.

A Comprehensive Approach to Clinical Research

In her current position, Hanum oversees the complete lifecycle of clinical research activities—from study startup to closeout. Her responsibilities span a wide range of critical functions, including training and mentoring hospital staff, coordinating site activation, monitoring quality standards, and ensuring adherence to Good Clinical Practice (GCP) guidelines. She also manages complex regulatory processes, including investigational product importation and Material Transfer Agreements (MTA).

As a key liaison between principal investigators, site personnel, and the INA-RESPOND Operations Center, Hanum has contributed to groundbreaking studies involving HIV, tuberculosis, and COVID-19 research.

Making an Impact: Key Study Contributions

Hanum's work has been instrumental in several significant research initiatives:

TRIPOD Study (2020): As part of the RePORT TB Cohort A in Indonesia, Hanum played a crucial role in coordinating this multi-site study across seven hospitals, utilizing the OpenClinica Clinical Data Management System to facilitate collaboration and data sharing.

Epidemiologic Research: She contributed to the Epi Protocol study examining "Epidemiologic Factors Associated with Tuberculosis Treatment Outcomes Across RePORT International Consortia."

TB Biomarker Study: Hanum provided critical support for cross-site collaboration in analyzing host biomarkers associated with adverse TB treatment outcomes, leading coordination of Material Transfer Agreements across international sites.

Embracing Technological Evolution

Hanum's role has evolved significantly with advancing technologies and research methodologies. She has successfully adapted to digital systems including electronic data capture (EDC) and online platforms, which have enhanced research efficiency and data quality while reducing delays.

"These technologies have allowed us to monitor study progress in real time, improve data quality, and reduce delays," Hanum explains. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she quickly pivoted to virtual training delivery, ensuring continued support for site staff despite challenging circumstances.

Her expanded responsibilities now include quality management, advanced staff training, regulatory processes, and helping sites adopt cutting-edge research practices—a evolution that has enhanced her professional growth and study success.

Vision for the Future

Looking ahead, Hanum envisions a future where TB research becomes increasingly integrated with technological advancements. She believes digital tools will enable faster, more accurate data collection and analysis, while global consortia collaboration will facilitate seamless information exchange.

"I am confident that future research will focus more on developing personalized treatments tailored to the unique needs of each patient," she shares. "With the support of increasingly advanced technology and strong collaboration with global consortia, we can elevate the quality of TB research and discover more effective solutions in the fight against tuberculosis."

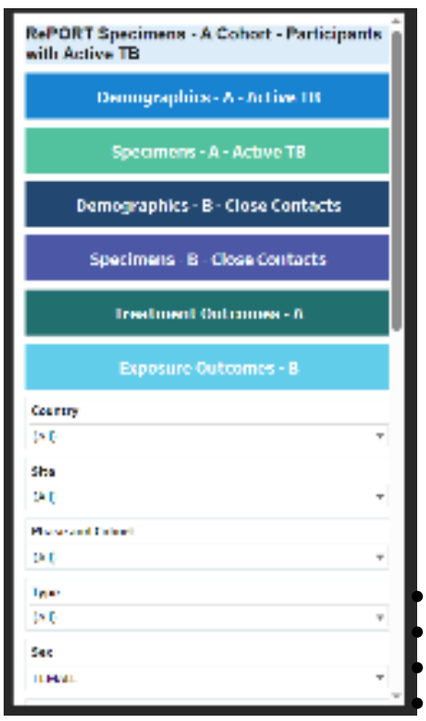
Recognizing Excellence

Hanum's dedication to advancing TB research through technology, collaboration, and mentorship exemplifies the spirit of our consortium. Her ability to bridge traditional research practices with innovative methodologies positions her as a leader in the next generation of clinical research specialists.

Through her work at INA-RESPOND, Hanum continues to contribute to the global fight against tuberculosis, ensuring that research advances translate into better outcomes for patients worldwide.

RADAR: NEW ADAPTIVE DATA INTERFACE

RADAR (RePORT International Data and Specimen Availability Dashboard) allows investigators from both within RePORT and the broader scientific community to generate summaries of participant demographics, treatment and exposure outcomes, and available specimens within the RePORT consortium's repository. This dynamic and interactive data visualization tool showcases the richness of data across participating countries, enabling investigators to perform feasibility assessments for potential concept proposals.

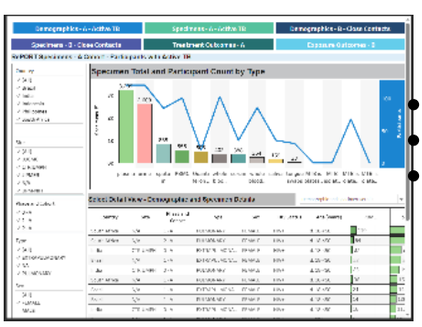


Data displayed on RADAR is refreshed on a routine schedule to ensure the dashboard displays the latest specimen counts and availability from across the participating sites. Recent enhancements also support the inclusion of data from beyond RePORT, giving visitors to RADAR a look into an even broader scope of TB projects from around the world.

RADAR is now tablet and mobile friendly, allowing for more convenient access from any device.

Mobile views offer the ability to quickly check counts of participants and specimens RePORT has to offer, directly from your mobile device:

- Compact navigation
- Compact filter controls
- Mobile friendly key performance indicators
- No clutter

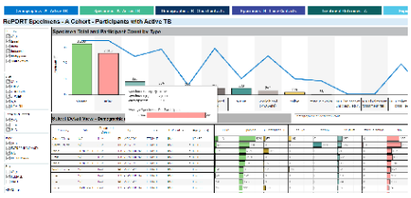


Accessing RADAR from a tablet offers additional functionality for deeper reviews of the dashboards:

- Expanded filter controls
- Additional detail views
- Enhanced interactions such as brush select and multi-select

A desktop browser provides the most robust experience:

- Maximized screen space to work with
- Expanded filter controls
- Additional detail views
- Enhanced interactions such as brush select and multi-select
- Enhanced and insightful tool-tips



RADAR not only provides a real-time snapshot of RePORT's available data but also serves as a gateway to foster collaboration by enabling investigators to explore the dashboard and request data. With its focus on data sharing, RADAR promotes transparency, engages users, and strengthens their understanding of how RePORT's consortium data can support impactful research proposals. RADAR is a result of extensive collaborations among multiple working groups and individuals, including RICC, the Data Harmonization Working Group, RePORT leadership, clinical sites, country data center teams, and biorepository teams.

RADAR can be accessed from the **RePORT International Website.**

Contributed by Alex Benns, Sue Siminski, and Tim Tilbe, Frontier Science

BOOLEAN SEARCHES ON PUBMED

Keeping in Touch and Leaving Your Mark: A Quick How-To for Boolean Searches on PubMed

For tuberculosis (TB) researchers who want to strengthen their literature reviews or stay abreast of new developments, drafting a Boolean search on PubMed (and other research indexes) allows for more precise and relevant results. This is also a way to create to a link to your work that is automatically updated.

Three basic operators are central to a Boolean search: **AND, OR,** and **NOT**. These define relationships between keywords. **AND** limits your results to those that include all the specified terms. For example, a search on "tuberculosis AND Brazil" will find only studies that are described using both terms. **OR** broadens a search so that outcomes containing at least one term are included. For example, "tuberculosis OR TB" will find articles that use one or the other term. **NOT** excludes words, so that irrelevant subjects can be excluded, such as "active tuberculosis NOT latent tuberculosis."

You can also search for a specific person or entity, such as **"RePORT India"** to find the publications tagged with that term. The URL in the browser can then be copy/pasted as a live link. This **link** can automatically direct people to the most recent publications associated with the search term.

Quotation marks are necessary when searching for exact words or phrases. A search on "drug-resistant tuberculosis" will have the words together, not anywhere apart in the text. **Parentheses** are also important because they ensure items are grouped logically. Without them, indexes might apply the items in an unintended order, leading to incorrect results. PubMed automatically treats quoted phrases as a single search term, so they are not required when Boolean logic (OR/AND/NOT) is not being used together inside a field.

Field tags, always enclosed in brackets, narrow results even further. For example, using the search term "Bhavaraju, Rajita"[Author] returns only publications written by that author, and "extrapulmonary tuberculosis" [Title] searches only titles containing the term. Tags such as [Affiliation] can filter by institution or country, such as **"Rutgers"[Affiliation]**.

Researchers in TB can leverage MeSH (Medical Subject Headings) as well. "Tuberculosis"[MeSH Terms] makes sure articles that are indexed under the standardized term, regardless of language variations. These tools can be combined in a more complex search: ("Bhavaraju, Rajita"[Author] OR "Ellner, Jerrold"[Author]) AND (Indonesia OR India) AND "tuberculosis"[MeSH Terms] AND "Rutgers" [Affiliation].

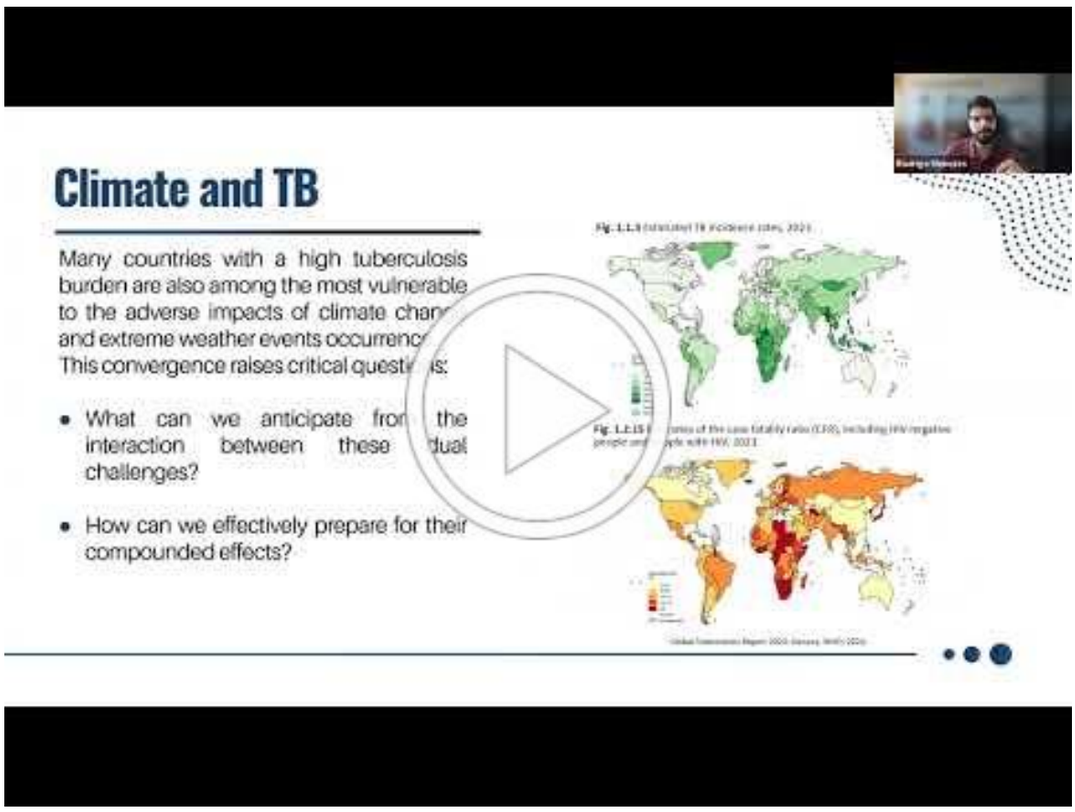
For a more detailed exploration of PubMed search functionality and comprehensive list of field tags, visit their **User Guide**.

Contributed by Colter Billings

RESOURCES

RePORT Investigators Meeting Series

RePORT Investigators Meeting Series, Presentation by Dr. Rodrigo Menezes, Intensive Care physician, and Intensive Care supervisor of the residency Program at University Center of Espírito Santo - UNESC in Colatina - Brazil.



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