



iGIANT Roundtable
November 2, 2017
Houston, Texas

American Medical Women's Association

Eliza Lo Chin, MD, MPH - Executive Director

Founded in 1915, AMWA is an organization that works to advance women in medicine and improve women's health. AMWA's programs provide leadership, advocacy, education, mentoring and strategic alliances.

AT&T Foundry

Nadia Morris – Director, Connected Health Foundry, TX Medical Center Innovation Institute

The Foundry focuses on digital health technologies. Foundry entrepreneurs and startups have access to design, technical and business resources as they move their ideas from concept to commercialization in a collaborative, fast-paced environment.

Boston Scientific

Brooke Allocco, MD - Vice President, Clinical Communication and Education

Boston Scientific is a global medical device manufacturer. "We are committed to improving the representation of female patients in clinical trials, and we are currently piloting some innovative new methods for accomplishing this."

Center for Space Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine

Virginia Wotring, PhD - Associate Professor

Chief Scientist, Translational Research Institute for Space Health

The Center for Space Medicine is a collaborative enterprise involving multiple Baylor College of Medicine departments and centers, the National Space Biomedical Research Institute, NASA, Rice University, Texas Medical Center institutions, and other academic, industry and government organizations nationally and internationally. The center's mission is to be a world academic leader in space biomedical research and education and to translate the advances in knowledge and technology to benefit life on Earth.

Translational Research Institute for Space Health, Baylor College of Medicine

Dorit Donoviel, PhD - Director (Interim)

Associate Professor, Center for Space Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine

The Translational Research Institute for Space Health leads a national effort in translating cutting-edge terrestrial research into applied risk mitigation strategies for the human exploration of deep space.

iGIANT™

Saralyn Mark, MD – Founder and President

iGIANT (impact of Gender/Sex on Innovation and Novel Technologies) is a nonprofit accelerating the translation of research into gender/sex-specific design elements such as products, programs, policies and protocols across the health, IT, transport and retail sectors to improve the safety and quality of life, including work performance, for men and women.

KBRWyle

Genie Bopp -Vice President, Science and Space

KBRWyle is the primary contractor to NASA supporting human health and performance for over 50 years.

Discussion Highlights

1. Safety issues are important for policy and programs. There are differences based on sex/gender. Examples include equipment needs and workplace policies. An anecdote was shared regarding safety issues for medical providers in the emergency room and the additional vigilance required for female healthcare providers. What policies can be developed? How do we study this?
2. Hidden biases of sex and gender exist even in technology and computer coding. Examples include sexism in smartphone software, differences in technology performance based on sex/gender, ease of voice recognition software for men vs. women, and gendered voices in computerized dictations. Have companies tested devices in both genders? Is the device operator dependent? What should be added to the educational curriculum on this issue? It was suggested that a roundtable or symposium on sex and gender-based issues in artificial intelligence be held.
3. The movement for personalized/precision medicine is growing, and sex and gender-specific issues will play an important role. But caution should be made for overarching policy decisions that might be too limiting. For example, limits are imposed on female astronauts' overall time in space due to concerns of increased radiation sensitivity of female tissues. Yet, studies are showing that there is significant variability among individuals and there should not be overgeneralization.
4. In the pharmaceutical industry, new therapeutics are being developed in cancer, behavioral health, and cardiovascular medicine. The challenge has been getting enough women enrolled in clinical studies. Factors include: (1) Lack of awareness, (2) Protocol design – women are sometimes screened out, and (3) Better educational process needed between the investigation sites and patients. Women also tend to be more risk adverse. They might have the wrong perception. Physicians are not well trained in recruiting patients for clinical trials. They might not approach women as often because women are less likely to say "yes" or may be harder to convince. It may take more time to enroll women, so what is needed is a better design of the conversation. It was recommended that a video or use of social media may help expand outreach for these tailored messages.
5. A diverse workforce of both men and women increase productivity and will increase awareness of these issues. It was recommended that a compendium of articles including an overview of the iGIANT and the accomplishments of several iGIANT champions such as Boston Scientific and AMWA be published.

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