



Portland PADRECC Welcomes Senator Gordon Smith

On Wednesday, August 27th, the Northwest Parkinson's Disease Research Education and Clinical Center (PADRECC), welcomed Senator Gordon Smith (R-OR) to our offices at the Portland VA Medical Center.

Senator Smith spent a few hours touring the facility and meeting with PADRECC physicians, administrators, and a veteran who had Deep Brain Stimulation surgery for advanced Parkinson's disease. "We are grateful for Senator Smith's history of support for Parkinson's disease clinical care and research, and we appreciate the opportunity to show him how we are serving veterans in the Portland VA PADRECC," said Joseph Quinn, M.D., who is the Co-Director of the Northwest PADRECC.

The Parkinson's Action Network (PAN) assisted in planning the event. "Senator Gordon Smith has long been a supporter of the Parkinson's community," said PAN CEO, Amy Comstock Rick. "We can always count on his support when issues important to our community come before the Senate. A critical example is his support of the PADRECC facilities and his work to make sure that veterans with Parkinson's disease, and their family members can continue to have access to the invaluable services provided by the PADRECCs."

In 2006 Senator Smith, who is the Senate Co-Chair of the Bi-Partisan Parkinson's Caucus, worked to permanently establish the PADRECCs, when they came up for re-statement. He supported legislation that formally established the centers, and with the strong support of PAN advocates, this was passed through Congress and was signed into law. This act ensures that these facilities would continue to provide critical care to veterans living with Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders.

"I am proud to partner with PAN and the PADRECC to bring awareness to issues affecting the Parkinson's community," said Senator Smith. "Because of these organizations, Parkinson's research and treatment have made ground breaking progress. With continued funding and advocacy, we can make great strides to finding a cure to this degenerative disease."

PADRECC In Progress

Two new Movement Disorder Fellows will be starting in July of 2009. **Jamie Steckley, MD** completed his residency at London Health Sciences Center in London Ontario Canada. **Lissa Brod, MD** completed her residency at Oregon Health & Science University in Portland, OR. We look forward to having them join our team.

PADRECC would also like to welcome **Tasha Carney** who has joined us as a Psychology Technician and will be performing neuropsychological testing.

National PADRECC Provider Education Calls

Please join us for the following Audio Conferences. You can participate by going to room 7D153 in building 100 at the Portland VA, or by calling 1-800-767-1750 x53353. All talks are held from 12:00 – 1:00 Pacific Time.

March 12, 2009: Medications used in PD Treatment - Bill Lipps, PharmD

May 14, 2009: Atypical Parkinsonian Disorders - Eugene Lai, MD

July 9, 2009: Caregiving and Psychological Issues in PD - Elaine Lanier

September 10, 2009: Diagnosis and Treatment of Parkinson's Disease - Jeff Bronstein, MD

PADRECC Nurse Coordinators for Cooperative Deep Brain Stimulation Study Publish DBS Guide

The American Association of Neuroscience Nurses Guideline, "Care of the Movement Disorder Patient with Deep Brain Stimulation" will be published this month. This 2-year work in progress was completed by the PADRECC Nurse Coordinators Susan O'Connor (Portland), Virginia Janovsky (LA), Susan Heath (San Francisco), Elaine Lanier (San Francisco), Romay Franks (Seattle) and Connie Ward (Houston). This publication will come with CEU's offered by the AANN. This is a very exciting, informative guide and a beginning to help standardize care for the DBS patient.

NW PADRECC CME: Diagnosing and Treating Complex Neurological Disease in Primary Care Setting: Alzheimer's Disease, Essential Tremor, and Parkinson's Disease

Friday, April 24, 2009
Portland VA Medical Center - Auditorium
3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Road
Portland, OR 97239

CME totaling 4 credit hours. DVDs of the NW PADRECC CME will be available by request.

Registration information and additional details may be obtained from Ryan Rieger, PADRECC Administrative Officer, by calling 503.220.8262 x55203 or emailing Ryan.Rieger@va.gov. Thank you.

TENTATIVE AGENDA

- 8:30 a.m. Registration and Check In
- 9:00 a.m. "Welcome and Introduction to the Course"
Jay Nutt, MD, NW PADRECC Co-Director
- 9:10 a.m. "Innovations in the Management of Parkinson's Disease" Jeff Kraakevik, MD, NW PADRECC Associate Director of Education
- 10:00 a.m. "Essential Tremor for the Primary Care Physician" Amie Peterson, MD, NW PADRECC Movement Disorder Fellow
- 10: 50 a.m. Break
- 11:00 a.m. "Improving the Quality of Life in Alzheimer's Disease" Joseph Quinn, MD, NW PADRECC Co-Director
- 11:50 a.m. Break
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch and "Question & Answer Panel"
- 1:00 p.m. Adjournment

Patient Education Talks

Portland

All talks listed will be held in the Portland VA Auditorium from 10:00 – 11:00 unless otherwise noted. Please arrive early for parking. For more information call 503-721-1091

Caregiver Resources

Friday, March 13, 2009
Jason Malcom, M.S.W. from the Parkinson's Center of Oregon at Oregon Health Sciences University

Genetics

Friday, May 8, 2009
Cyrus Zabetian, MD Staff Neurologist for the VA Puget Sound Health Care System Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center

Exercise and BBQ

Friday, July 10, 2009
Speaker to be announced

Study: Brain Pacemakers Help Parkinson's Sufferers, But Have Serious Side Effects.

The AP (1/7) reports, "Parkinson's sufferers who had electrodes implanted in their brains improved substantially more than those who took only medicine, according to the biggest test yet of deep brain stimulation." The study "offers the most hopeful news to date for Parkinson's sufferers," but the research "also revealed higher-than-expected risks. About 40 percent of the patients who received these 'brain pacemakers' suffered serious side effects, including a surprising number of falls with injuries." The study was co-funded "by the Department of Veterans Affairs."

Bloomberg News (1/7, Lopatto), which publishes a similar story, notes, "Deep brain stimulation began being used as a treatment in the 1990s and became more widespread after winning regulatory approval without a large scientific trial to compare it with drug therapy. This is the first major study to compare the two treatments, said the study's lead author, Frances Weaver," the "deputy director for policy research at Hines Veterans Affairs Hospital in Illinois, in a telephone interview."

USA Today (1/7, Marcus) reports the study, which "is published in today's Journal of the American Medical Association, was conducted at seven VA hospitals "and six university medical centers. The largest randomized clinical trial of its kind to date included 255 people who were in the advanced stages of Parkinson's."

The Columbus (OH) Dispatch (1/7, Crane) reports, "Other studies have shown improvements with surgery, but this is the first and the largest to look at how patients 70 or older fare compared with their younger counterparts, said...Weaver, the lead researcher." Patients "improved regardless of age, but older patients had more adverse side effects. Weaver said she would like to see more studies on the treatment in the elderly to see whether this study's findings are replicated."

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (1/7, Fauber) says the study, which was paid for by the VA, "the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, and Medtronic, the company that makes the device used in the study," comes at a "time when a growing number of people are reaching their late 50s and early 60s, when they are most likely to be diagnosed with the disease, which affects between 500,000 and 1.5million Americans."

Dow Jones Newswires (1/7, Kamp), the Chicago Tribune (1/7, Shelton), HealthDay (1/7, Gardner), Science Daily (1/7), WebMD (1/7, Hitti), and MedPage Today (1/7, Gever) note the study, as did many local TV stations in various parts of the country, including WEWS-TV Cleveland (1/6, 5:38 p.m. ET), which broadcast, "Phase 2 of this study will focus on the placement of a deep brain stimulation implant and compare which of...two different sites provides better control of Parkinson's symptoms." Other stations airing reports on this story included KEYC-TV Mankato, MN (1/6, 10:09 p.m. CT), KERO-TV Bakersfield, CA (1/6, 5:24 p.m. PT), and KTRK-TV Houston (1/6, 4:21 p.m. CT).

Research Opportunities at the VA

Memory and Movement Disorders Demonstration Project (VA IRB ID: 1585 VA IRB Grant Number: #02-2202)

Dr. Joseph Quinn, MD is conducting this research study in order to track the frequency and types of changes in mental functioning that occur over time in Parkinson's patients. Participants would be asked to attend one or more study visits. All study visits would take place at the Portland VA Medical Center. The first visit would take less than twenty minutes. If asked to continue in the study there would be a second 90 minute visit and then follow-up examinations once a year for the next 3 years. All patients in the Parkinson's Disease Research, Education and Clinic Center (PADRECC) are invited to participate in this study. You may or may not personally benefit from participating in this study. However, by serving as a subject, you may help us learn how to benefit patients in the future. For more information on how to participate, please contact Susan O'Connor, RN at (503) 721-1091.

Ability to Arise From the Floor in Persons with Parkinson's Disease (VA IRB ID: 1585 VA IRB Grant Number: #06-1405)

Dr. Jeff Krakkevik, MD is conducting this study to see how well people with Parkinson's Disease can get up from the floor after they experience a fall. Participation would require up to three 30 to 40 minute outpatient visits at the Portland VA Medical center. In order to participate you must be a Veteran treated in the PADRECC Clinic or by the PADRECC physical therapist, Diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease, and at least 30 years of age. You may not be able to participate if you are unable to stand or move without the help of a caregiver, you have other neurological or musculoskeletal abnormalities that might affect your ability to stand from a sitting position, or the investigators determine that you are not eligible for safety reasons. You may not benefit from this study, however if you are found to have difficulty in arising from the floor you may benefit from instruction and advice on how to do so. Study visits would take place at the Portland VA Medical center. For more information on how to participate, please contact Susan O'Connor, RN at (503) 721-1091.

Parkinson Associate Risk Study (PARS): Evaluating Potential Screening Tools for Parkinson Disease (VA IRB ID: 2021; VA IRB Grant Number: # 05-0307)

Dr. Penny Hogarth is conducting this research study to estimate the frequency of olfactory loss in first-degree relatives of Parkinson's patients. Participation by a first-degree relative of a Parkinson's patient would require 6 one hour annual visits to the Portland VA Medical Center and completion of 6 annual smell tests by mail. The sub-study would require travel to Connecticut for a brain imaging procedure. All costs for travel to Connecticut will be paid by the study sponsor. All first-degree relatives of PD patients above the age of 50 or within 10 years of the age of diagnosis of PD are invited to participate. This is a research study and not treatment or diagnosis of PD. You may not benefit from participating in this study. However, by serving as a subject, you may help us learn how to benefit patients in the future. For more information on how to participate, please contact Susan O'Connor, RN at (503) 721 – 1091.

Research Opportunities at OHSU

Fish Oil for Depression in Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and Parkinson's Disease (PD)

The Parkinson's Center of Oregon at Oregon Health & Science University is looking for people with a confirmed diagnosis of PD who are suffering from Depression. The purpose of the study is to determine if taking omega-3 fatty acids along with your current antidepressant helps with symptoms of depression in people with PD. In addition we will determine if omega-3 fatty acids decrease blood levels of substances that are associated with depression.

You may be eligible to participate in the study if you meet all of the following criteria.

- Have a definite diagnosis of PD
- On a stable dose of anti-depressant medication

Between 18-85 years of age

This is a three-month pilot study in which 60 participants with either PD or MS will be randomly assigned to receive either fish oil capsules (which have high amounts of omega-3 fatty acids) or placebo capsules. The study requires 5 visits to OHSU. The research study will pay for all costs associated with the participation in this study. You will be responsible for any expenses that have to do with other aspects of your participation such as childcare and transportation. If you meet the eligibility requirements described above and are interested in participating in this study please call Dr. Lynne Shinto at (503) 494-5035.