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Upcoming Conferences

June 6-8, 2004
Academy for Health Services Research and Health Policy (AHSR) Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA

July 12 - 14, 2004
Translating Research Into Practice, hosted by Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ), Washington, DC

September 9-12, 2004
American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL

October 7-10, 2004
American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (AAPM&R) 65th Annual Assembly, Phoenix, Arizona

October 17-20, 2004
Annual Meeting of the Society for Medical Decision Making (SMDM) Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA

November 6-10, 2004
American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting, Washington, DC

December 1-3, 2004
Quality Enhancement Research Initiative (QUERI) National Meeting, location TBA

A MESSAGE FROM THE RORC DIRECTOR



Dear RORC Staff,

I want to share with you the accomplishments of our doctoral students and give you some feedback. I had the opportunity to attend graduation and the subsequent parties

over graduation weekend. Each one of you should be proud of the tremendous accomplishments of our doctoral students. These accomplishments were possible due to the tremendous spirit of interdisciplinary research and the leadership of the faculty at the University of Florida and the RORC.

First of all, 3 of our pre-doctoral candidates received their PhDs. Marieke VanPuymbroeck, Lisa Hannold, and Soo Yeon Kwon. Lisa Hannold and Soo Yeon received awards for their research in the previous weeks. Marieke has attained a very prestigious and highly competitive faculty position at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. She told me that she was successful in attaining this position due to her pre-doctoral training in an interdisciplinary research program at the RORC. She reported that she was selected over other candidates with post-doc experience due to her experience in our VA center.

Most importantly, I had the opportunity to talk to the parents of these graduates. The parents knew about each one of you and the roles you played in assuring the success of the candidates. They were so laudatory about the UF faculty and the RORC support. Of course, they all think Maude Rittman is the

best and I was so touched as Lisa Hannold's parents talked about the energy of Andrea Behrman and the inspiration Andrea has been for Lisa. Of course they were so appreciative of the VA priority in facilitation of the research careers of individuals with disability.

In addition, Britta Neugaard received a research award for work on Telehealth with mentorship from Dr. Neale Chumbler. At the PHHP graduation, Charles Ellis whose RORC mentors are Maude Rittman and Jay Rosenbek, and Jamie Pomeranz whose RORC and faculty mentor is Craig Velozo, won research awards. In all, 5 of the doctoral students affiliated with the RORC have won top research awards from the University.

Our hats go off to Mary Ellen Young of Rehab Counseling who was chair of Lisa and Marieke's Dissertation Committees and to Abraham Hartzema of Pharmacy, Chair of Soo Yeon's committee. Doug Ried of the RORC and the School of Pharmacy was also on Soo Yeon's committee.

Every day we plug along facing the many challenges of academics, research and education. Graduation and the success of our students make our journeys purposeful. The greatest sense of pride occurs when we have help prepare the next generation of rehabilitation and health services researchers. Thanks to each of you for a job well done.

Pamela W. Duncan, Ph.D.

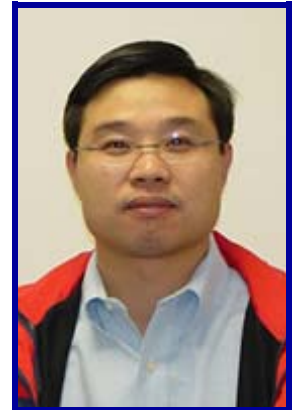
STROKE QUERI ESTABLISHED

The new Stroke QUERI was established in March 2004 with leadership from Dr. Pamela Duncan, PhD, PT (Research Coordinator) in Gainesville, FL and Dr. Linda S. Williams, MD (Clinical Coordinator), in Indianapolis, IN and stroke experts around the country including Lawrence M. Brass, MD, who will Chair the Stroke Executive Committee, David Matchar, MD, Dean Reker, PhD to name a few.

(continued on page 3)

FEATURED INVESTIGATOR

Samuel S. Wu, PhD, Biostatistician, is a Research Health Scientist at the VA Rehabilitation Outcomes Research Center (RORC) and at the Brain Rehabilitation Research Center (BRRC). He is also an Assistant Professor in the College of Medicine, Department of Statistics at the University of Florida. Dr. Wu is an expert in clinical trial design and analyses. He has developed analytic strategies and supervises statistical modeling for several stroke rehabilitation projects. Dr. Wu's research interests include: Survival Analysis, Bayesian Statistics, and Non-parametric Statistics.



At the RORC, Dr. Wu directs the Statistical Group within the Methodology Core. In addition, he serves as an investigator on numerous VA grants. Dr. Wu is also a member of the Methodology core of the newly funded Stroke QUERI.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Wu, S. S., Wu, R. L., Ma, C-X., Zeng, Z. B., Yang, M. C. K. and Casella, G. (2001). A Multivalent Pairing Model of Linkage Analysis in Autotetraploids, *Genetics*, Vol. 159(3): 1339-50.

Liu, R., Yang, S., Perez, E., Yi, S., Wu, S. S., Eberst, K., Prokai, L., Yun, Z. Covey, D.F., Day, A. L. and Simpkins, J. W. (2002). Neuroprotective Effects Of A Novel Non-Receptor Binding Estrogen Analogue: In Vitro And In Vivo Analysis. *Stroke*, 33:2485-2491.

Wu, S. S., Wells, M. T. (2003). Nonparametric Hazard Estimation Wavelet Methods, *J. Nonpar. Stat.*, Vol. 15(2), 187-203.

Wu, S. S., Yang M. C. K. (2004) "Evaluation of Current Rule in Figure Skating and Possible Improvements," *The American Statistician*, Vol. 58:1-9.

CHUMBLER RECEIVES TOP HONORS

RORC Investigator, **Dr. Neale Chumbler** presented a poster at the Annual Meeting of the Department of Veteran's Affairs National Care Coordination and Telehealth Leadership Forum, in St. Petersburg, FL, in February 2004. The poster: Chumbler, N.R., R. Kobb, L. Richardson, C. Todd, C. McCarthy, R. Lodge, L. Demanuel, K. Morris, J. Bradley. "Advancing Cancer Care Through Technology & Care Coordination" won a first place prize in a competition among a finalist of 14 posters. The posters were voted on by the conference attendees for content and for emerging developments for innovative use of technology, policy and clinical practice).



RORC MOVES TO NEW LOCATION

On May 11, 2004, the Rehabilitation Outcomes Research Center moved to new space at the Commerce Building located at 300 East University Avenue, Suite 350. The new Center is approximately 8,900 square feet, which is a significantly larger space than the old trailer "T-9." The leadership from the North Florida/South Georgia, Gainesville Division, were instrumental in obtaining the space and their efforts are appreciated by the entire RORC staff.

Our mailing address and main phone number will remain the same:

**RORC/Research Service (151B)
VA Medical Center
1601 SW Archer Road
Gainesville, FL 32608
(352) 376-1611 x 6843**

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES: SAMUEL WU, PHD

Statistics is appealing to Dr. Wu because, in his own words, “the same theory is equally relevant to widely different groups of subject-matter.”

Dr. Wu is interested in both the development of the underlying statistical theory and the application of the theory to specific fields, such as genetics, neuroscience, public health, sports and political science. Currently, he serves as co-investigator on the following RORC stroke-related research projects:

- *VA and Non-VA Rehabilitation Utilization by Veterans with Acute Stroke (Jia, H., PI).*

The objective of this study is to understand the processes and outcomes of stroke rehabilitation services by veterans who use a single source of care (VA only) versus those who received medical care from multiple sources.

- *Quality of Care Indicators for Veterans with Stroke in Community Nursing Homes (Johnson, C. PI).*

This study is examining the utilization and quality of care for veterans diagnosed with stroke whose care was paid by the VA in community nursing homes from 1999-2002.

- *Linking Measures Across the Continuum of Care (Veloza, C., PI)*

The objective of this work is to develop and validate cross-walks or score conversion tables that link the Functional Independence Measure (FIM™) with scores obtained on the functional component of the Minimum Data Set (MDS).

- *The Processes and Outcomes of Stroke Care in the VHA. (Reker, D., PI)*

The aim of this research is to identify the key processes of care in post-acute stroke rehabilitation provided in acute and sub-acute rehabilitation units.

STROKE QUERI

The Stroke QUERI has four major goals: (1) To improve overall compliance with the Department of Veteran Affairs and the Department of Defense (VA/DoD) clinical practice guidelines for the management of stroke rehabilitation; (2) To ensure that a plan for rehabilitation is considered for all stroke patients; (3) To reduce the risk of stroke recurrence by assuring appropriate anticoagulation of stroke patients with atrial fibrillation; and (4) To reduce the physical, emotional, and social burden of depression after stroke.

Here are a few of the exciting new areas of Stroke QUERI research: (1) The discrepancy between current and recommended practice results for anticoagulation of patients with atrial fibrillation may be attributable to a number of factors, among them the demanding nature of warfarin dosing and monitoring. Due to the complexities of warfarin dosing and monitoring, barriers to appropriate anticoagulation are multifaceted and may include organizational, provider, and patient factors. At this time we do not have a clear picture of the patterns of post-stroke anticoagulation use in VA or the quality of anticoagulation use (as measured by time spent in target range for INR). The Stroke QUERI will measure and diagnose quality and performance gaps in anticoagulation of veterans with atrial fibrillation and stroke. Specifically we will describe existing practice patterns in VA and variations from best practices for anticoagulation. (2) Several community-based studies have demonstrated that Post Stroke Depression (PSD) is under-diagnosed and under-treated, but the patterns of PSD diagnosis and treatment in the VA are largely unknown. The Stroke QUERI will facilitate the measurement and diagnosis of quality and performance gaps for detecting and managing PSD. Led by Dr. Linda Williams, a group of Stroke QUERI investigators from Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN) 8 and 11 recently received funding for an Implementation Planning Grant “Implementing Evidence in the Detection and Treatment of Post-stroke Depression.” The eventual goal of this project is to extend the implementation of the existing primary care depression performance measure to improve the screening, diagnosis, and appropriate treatment of depression in veterans with recent stroke.

A long-term goal of the Stroke QUERI will be to expand the scope of the research portfolio to include other secondary prevention measures and early phases of stroke care.

For more information about the Stroke QUERI or the national QUERI program, contact: Amber Larsen, QUERI Administrative Coordinator, at Amber.Larsen@med.va.gov.

RORC MISSION

*To enhance access, quality,
and efficiency of
rehabilitation services
through interdisciplinary
research and
dissemination activities.*

CONTACT US

Rehab Outcomes Research Center
Research Service (151B)
VA Medical Center
1601 SW Archer Road
Gainesville, FL 32608

Phone: (352) 376-1611, x 6843
Fax: (352) 271-4540
Email: rorc@med.va.gov

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Editorial Credits

Editor-in-Chief:
Pamela W. Duncan

Managing Editor:
Diane C. Cowper

Editorial Assistants:
Ellen Esparolini, Elizabeth Cope,
and Amber Larsen

Layout and Design:
Kristen Wing

RORC PRESENCE AT ACRM

The 81st Annual Meeting of the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine is being held in conjunction with the 11th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Neurorehabilitation, September 9-12, 2004, at the Sawgrass Marriott in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida. The **American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine (ACRM)** is a multidisciplinary organization dedicated to rehabilitation research. On Thursday, September 9 there will be also be a Pre-Conference sponsored by the Brooks Center for Rehabilitation Studies, University of Florida - *Looking to the Future of Rehabilitation*. Several RORC staff members are presenting at both the pre-conference and the conference itself, including:

Size and Maturation of the Rehabilitation Industry

Gerben DeJong, Ph.D.

Using Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: An Interdisciplinary Approach

Maude Rittman, PhD, RN, Christopher Faircloth, PhD, Craig Boylstein, PhD and Marieke VanPuymbroeck, Ph.D., CTRS

Locomotor Training Post SCI & Stroke: Bridging Basic Science with Clinical Research and Practice

Pamela Duncan, PhD, FAPTA, Floyd Thompson, PhD, Steven Kautz, PhD, Andrea L. Behrman, PhD, PT, Elizabeth Hannold, Ph.D.

Neurally Motivated Behavior Treatments

Steven E. Nadeau, MD, Cynthia K. Thompson, PhD, Diane L. Kendall, PhD, CCC-SLP, Lynn M. Maher, PhD

Building a Measure of Functional Status in Rehabilitation from Conceptual Model to Computerized Adaptive Test

Craig A. Velozo, PhD, OTR/L, Amanda Johnson, MS, OTR/L, Leigh Lehman, BS

Additionally, *Dean Reker, Ph.D., Soo Yeon Kwon, Ph.D.* and *Charlie Jia, Ph.D.* will be presenting their respective work at the ACRM poster session

STAFF NEWS

Congratulations to all of our pre-doctoral students who graduated this year: [Soo Yeon Kwon](#), [Lisa Hannold](#), and [Marieke VanPuymbroeck](#).

Kudos to [Philip Haley](#), Project Coordinator, who completed his Master's degree from the University of Virginia. Way to go Philip!

[Marieke VanPuymbroeck](#), Ph.D. will be leaving the RORC to take a faculty position at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. We wish her good luck in her new environs. We'll miss you Marieke!

A big "Welcome!" from the RORC is extended to [Kate McKuhen](#) who joined us last month. Kate will be working with the Administrative Core of the RORC.

[Helena Chapman](#) had not one but two abstracts accepted at the American Public Health Association in November.... Congratulations Helena!