



Director's Report



Frederick Wenzel,
Interim Executive
Director

On March 14th, I had the opportunity to make a presentation to the Marshfield Clinic Board of Directors. Included was a brief history of the Institute, beginning with its founding in 1958 with Dr. Stefan Epstein as its first President and myself as Executive Director. I had the honor of serving as Co-investigator on our first two projects receiving R01 NIH grants, awarded to Dr. Epstein and Dr. Emanuel. The growth of the Institute was traced over the years, ending with a more detailed description of our research activities in 2016. This included receiving awards for 27 projects totaling \$10.4 million as well as the authoring of 146 publications by members of the Clinic and the research group.

Also reviewed during this presentation was the MCRI strategic plan with the upcoming focus on precision medicine, cancer, clinical and health services research along with the projection that all Centers within the Institute will continue to grow and expand during the next several years. Implementation of the new financial model for FY 2017, which was designed and adopted to provide a more precise method of forecasting revenue and expenses utilizing an allocation methodology, was discussed.

The first two months of calendar 2017 featured a record number of grant proposal submissions. During January and February, 15 grants were submitted, most of which were destined for federal and state agencies. The total requested funding was \$8.6 million.

With this backdrop, it is necessary to recognize what is happening in Washington, DC and voice concern. The president's budget proposes what would amount to a nearly 20% cut to the NIH budget, which would mean that very few new grants would be funded since 75 to 80% of NIH's budget is pre-allocated every year. This would have a profound effect on young investigators in particular. The United States can ill afford such a drastic cut at a time when it is struggling with the effectiveness and efficiency of the healthcare system which needs both fundamental and translational research to survive. The hope is that champions will emerge in the House and Senate to carry the message about the importance of research. At this point it appears that the White House has no such resident champion.

We were saddened this week by the death of a longtime retired staff member Russell Jacobson. Russell joined the research group many years ago and served faithfully for 37 years caring for the animal population. He took his responsibilities very seriously with a 24/7 approach to his work. He was kind and gentle and one of the most faithful individuals I have ever had an opportunity to work with. I had the privilege along with other members of the staff to bid goodbye to Russell at a service in his honor on March 22, 2017.

Associate Director's Report



Steve Ziemba,
Associate Director

Hello all. I'm just returning from the Health Care Systems Research Network (HCSRN) conference held in San Diego. As it has been in the past, this was a well-organized and informative meeting highlighting the ongoing research efforts of the network's member organizations. Needless to say, MCRI was well represented. First, I would like to thank Deb Multerer for her work in organizing coordinating MCRI's involvement in the conference. Dr. Bob Greenlee, who serves on the HCSRN Governing Board, moderated and took part in a panel discussion/workshop focusing on stakeholder involvement and patient engagement in research. Dr. Jeff Van VanWormer and Brian Hoch, co-authored by Tenisha Hill, presented a poster on behavior therapy for obese adults. A poster was also presented by Dr. Scott Hebring, on the utility of the HCSRN twin cohort. Finally, Rob Strenn, whose work as a programmer has been vital on the HCSRN projects we have been engaged in, attended to share ideas with colleagues in this area.

The presentations and discussions of the conference were impactful and interesting in many ways. Health services research is a broad field, and the work of the HCSRN members reflects that. Aside from the presentation and posters on specific research topics, the plenary sessions were led by representatives of PCORI, AHRQ, NCI, as well as a former member of the Obama healthcare administration. Needless to say, with the current federal environment, their discussions and perspectives were insightful.

I want to thank those from MCRI who were able to attend the conference and provided our strong representation. Also, thank you to those who contribute to the lead role MCRI has in the HCSRN. Be sure to take care of yourself as well. Thank you again for all you do.

MCRI On The Move

"MCRI On The Move" is a recurring section of *Research Matters* where you can find information about the new roles, new locations, and new opportunities for MCRI staff.

Tonia Carter, Ph.D. was recently promoted to **Project Scientist II**. Dr. Carter has been with the **Center for Human Genetics** since January 2012 and received her doctorate from the University at Albany, State University of New York. Dr. Carter's research interests include genetic risk factors for birth defects, projects on genes associated with Type 2 Diabetes and Influenza using the Personalized Medicine Research Project biobank, and creation of a study cohort for glioblastoma multiforme, a rare cancer which affects the brain and/or spine.

BIRC currently has the following positions available: **Associate Research Scientist-Biomedical Informatics (TTS Position)**, **Project Scientist, PhD (Temporary Position)**, and **Applications Analyst**. All three positions are eligible for ERP bonus if your referred candidate is selected.

Potential candidates interested in applying should visit HR's [Career Opportunities](#) webpage.

Recent Publications, Grants, and Awards

This column is to highlight recent accomplishments of MCRI researchers and MC clinical investigators.

Please select the hyperlink to view recent [publications](#) and [grants](#).

If you have recently published an article or received a grant or an award and want it included in the next issue of *Research Matters*, please contact Patti Baer at baer.patricia@mcrf.mfldclin.edu

CRC Research Coordinators Receive Shining Stars

“On the morning of Tuesday, February 7th, one of our colleagues was experiencing a heart attack without knowing it. Chery and Pam were at this individual’s side most of the morning encouraging this individual to go to ER. I believe this intervention saved this individual’s life.”

Pam Mundt and Chery Revels were recently honored with Shining Stars for their exceptional care and attentiveness.

Marshfield Clinic's Shining Star program offers the opportunity to recognize Clinic employees who have made a meaningful difference in a patient’s experience at Marshfield Clinic.

[Read more](#) about the program.



MCRI Staff Member Becomes Second United Way Sweepstakes Winner

Lori Fellenz, an oncology research nurse in MCRI’s Clinical Research Center, is the second lucky \$1,000 United Way Sweepstakes winner from Marshfield Center during this year’s campaign. United Way surprised her with a big check, along with the real check.

Anyone giving a qualifying donation (\$52 or more) is entered 50 times into a spreadsheet. If someone gave \$1 or more over last year’s donation, they were entered 100 times into the spreadsheet. United Way utilizes a computer number generator program that is witnessed by United Way Board members, and whatever number was selected that corresponds to a name on the spreadsheet is the winner.



Lori Fellenz (right), was shocked to find out she was the winner upon receiving her check from Paula Jero, Marshfield Area United Way executive director.

CCEPH Director Discusses Participation in the Flu VE Network with WSAW News



Earlier this month Dr. Edward Belongia discussed MCRI's participation in the US Flu VE network with Channel 7 News – WSAW. In the interview, Dr. Belongia informed viewers that by being one of five sites in the U.S. funded to conduct vaccine effectiveness each year, Marshfield Clinic contributes research results which assist the World Health Organization (WHO) in selecting flu strains for the following year's vaccine. The interview is [available for viewing](#) on WSAW's website.

Center for Human Genetics Director Invited Speaker at National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine



Murray Brilliant, Ph.D. was invited to speak to the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, Board on Health Sciences Policy, March 9th at the Keck Center in Washington, DC. The topic was Genomics and Precision Health. Dr. Brilliant is currently leading precision medicine efforts with the goal of implementing pharmacogenomic testing as part of clinical care in the future.

Research Compliance to Hold Education Event

Bring your own lunch and questions for this informal education event on **Clinical Trial Billing Compliance and MCRI Practices**. Office of Research Compliance staff members will discuss the regulatory background and compliance implications of clinical trial-related billing and charging, define terms related to research billing, review institutional process for billing research-related charges to patient and third party payers.

Where: Laird Building, Conference Room 50

When: Tuesday, April 11th, 12 pm - 1 pm; with time for questions

IOSH Scientists and Staff Present at the International Association of Dental Research Conference in San Francisco

Dr. Amit Acharya, Dr. Ingrid Glurich, Dr. Katie Overmyer, Dr. Adham Abdelrahim, Neel Shimpi, Harshad Hegde and Annie Steinmetz presented their research from Marshfield Clinic at the 9th Annual meeting of International Association of Dental Research (IADR) General Session & Exhibition in San Francisco, California, on March 22 – 25, 2017. This cutting edge international dental research conference was organized around exciting and diverse themes representing the major scientific topics in current dental, oral and craniofacial research findings from around the world. The conference attracted over 5000 health care and research professionals globally.

Presentations by the IOSH Scientists/Researchers included:

- Dr. Amit Acharya gave an oral presentation on the topic, “Patient Characteristics Readily Identified in Dental Clinics Can Detect Diabetes.” His presentation was co-authored by Dr. Bin Cheng, Rajesh Koralkar, Brent Olson, Dr. Carol Kunzel, Dr. Rachel Ramoni and Dr. Evanthia Lalla.
- Dr. Ingrid Glurich gave a poster presentation on the topic, “Interdisciplinary Diabetes Management: Qualitative assessment of Medical/Dental Practitioners.” Her presentation was co-authored by Dr. Kelsey Schwei, Dr. Sara Lindberg, Neel Shimpi, Dixie Schroeder and Dr. Amit Acharya.
- Dr. Katherine (Katie) Overmyer gave a poster presentation on the topic of “Multi-omic Analysis of Dental Plaque in Non-diabetic and Diabetic Patients.” Her presentation was co-authored by Dr. Timothy Rhoads, Dr. Anna Merrill, Dr. Michael Westphal, Dr. Sanjay Shukla, Dr. Amit Acharya and Dr. Joshua Coon.
- Ms. Neel Shimpi gave a poster presentation on the topic, “Survey of Primary Care Providers’ Oral Health Knowledge/Attitude/Practices.” Her presentation was co-authored by Dr. Ingrid Glurich, Dixie Schroeder, Harshad Hegde, Dr. Po-Huang Chyou and Dr. Amit Acharya.
- Mr. Harshad Hegde gave a poster presentation on the topic, “Community Awareness Towards Association of Diabetes and Oral Health.” His presentation was co-authored by Neel Shimpi, Dr. Ingrid Glurich, Dixie Schroeder, Dr. Po-Huang Chyou and Dr. Amit Acharya.
- Ms. Annie Steinmetz gave a poster presentation on the topic, “Dental Quality Analytics: Dental Measures and Provider Performance Dashboard.” Her presentation was co-authored by Harshad Hegde, Josh Theisen, Rajesh Koralkar, Joe Finamore, Shawn Halstead, Sheri Leege, Dr. John O’Brien, Neel Shimpi and Dr. Amit Acharya.
- Dr. Adham Abdelrahim gave a poster presentation on the topic, “Feasibility assessment of Tele-Dental approach to address emergency department non-traumatic dental conditions visits,” during a special event for Research Trainees at the 2017 IADR Annual Meeting on March 22nd, which was sponsored by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR).



The abstracts from this meeting will be published online as Special Issues of the Journal of Dental Research (JDR).

Volunteering Plays An Important Role

Part of the MCHS mission is to “Enrich Lives”. The Institute does this through compassionate health care and responsible human subject research. This should also involve good stewardship of our communities. With this in mind, the MCRI strategic plan has included as part of its Community Engagement goals the promotion of volunteerism and the celebration of those staff members who currently are engaged in volunteering with local organizations.

To begin our work on this goal, a survey was distributed in February to assess MCRI staff’s current level of volunteer activity. While Institute leadership has been aware of some activities such as STEM scouts and Center-initiated food drives, this survey was the first attempt to formally collect data on participation.

209 MCRI staff members received the survey request. Of the 89 respondents, 55 staff members reported volunteering within the last year for a total of more than 2,800 hours. 15 survey participants stated they each had contributed more than 100 hours to local organizations. In its most recent data, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) reported that the median number of hours contributed by rural Wisconsin residents was 52 hours. MCRI was not too far off from this number at a median of 40 hours.

Wisconsin overall participates at an impressive rate of 35.3% of residents reporting volunteer activities, ranking the state 3rd in the nation. A total of 1.6 million Wisconsin volunteers contributed hours valued at \$4.6 billion. These “donated hours” non-profit and community groups receive are sometimes the difference between whether an organization can accomplish its mission or must discontinue services.

In the coming months, we hope to promote volunteer opportunities and encourage MCRI staff to further participate in these activities. We also look forward to spotlighting volunteers and Centers in celebration of the work they do.



At left: CCEPH collects donations annually for Soup or Socks (SOS), often through a friendly team competition within the Center. Below: 2016 saw the initiation of STEM Scouts at Marshfield area schools.



IOSH to Host 2017 Oral-Systemic Health Conference

The Institute for Oral and Systemic Health (IOSH) will be hosting the 2017 Oral-Systemic Health Conference "Importance of Integrating Medical and Dental Care for Patients with Diabetes," June 2nd (with an evening reception on June 1st) at the Kalahari Resorts & Conventions in Wisconsin Dells, WI.

Topics chosen have appeal and applicability for providers in a variety of practice environments, with activity intended for physicians, dentists, residents, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, dental hygienists and other allied health care professionals. Please visit the [OSH Conference webpage](#) for additional details or [download the conference brochure](#).

Upcoming Talks and Presentations

Scientific Seminars (Froehlke Auditorium)

Wednesday, April 5th

12:05pm-1:00pm

"One hour proteomes and deep sequencing"

Joshua J Coon, PhD, Professor of Chemistry and Biomolecular Chemistry, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Wednesday, May 3rd

12:05pm-1:00pm

"The Early Life Environment and Childhood Asthma"

James Gern, MD, Principal Investigator for the University of Wisconsin Asthma and Allergic Diseases Clinical Research Center (AADCRC)

Wednesday, June 1st

12:05pm-1:00pm

"Periodontal Therapy and Medical Care Costs in Patients with Diabetes"

George Taylor, DMD, MPH, Professor and Chair of Preventive and Restorative Dental Sciences at the University of California-San Francisco

Research Compliance (Laird Bldg, Conference Room 50)

Tuesday, April 11th

12:00pm-1:00pm

"Clinical Trial Billing Compliance and MCRI Practices"

Office of Research Compliance staff

Grand Rounds (12:15 - 1:00 p.m. in the Froehlke Auditorium)

Friday, April 14th

Oral Health: What Primary Care Providers Need to Know

Deepak K. Neelagiri, DDS; Kristie Virden, RDH; Srinivas Challa, DMD, MPH; and Deann Hanson, RDH - Marshfield Clinic & Neillsville Dental Care

Friday, April 24th

Health Literacy: Finding the Right Words for Better Health Outcomes

Brandon Parkhurst MD & Corporate Education team member

In Addition:

- The next MCRI Full Staff meeting is scheduled for May 24, 2017 at 10:30AM in the Froehlike Auditorium. Questions can be routed or emailed to Jeanette Normington at 1R3 or normington.jeanette@mcrf.mfldclin.edu.
- The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on May 18, 2017 at 6PM in the Laird 50 conference room.
- For the latest UW-ICTR news, please visit: <https://ictr.wisc.edu/news/>.
- For updates on the Wisconsin Network for Health Research (WiNHR), please visit: <https://ictr.wisc.edu/winhr>
- The Marshfield Clinic Research Institute website can be accessed through this link: <http://marshfieldresearch.org/>.
- Archived issues of *Research Matters* are [available online](#).

Contributors to this issue: Patti Baer, Molly Dowden, Jeffrey Joyce, Stephanie Karl, Alyssa Meyer, Bonnie Ohlsson, Dixie Schroeder, Melissa Slager, Amanda Vandehey, Michelle Wellsandt, Frederick Wenzel, Dr. Steve Ziemba

Edited by: Patti Baer, baer.patricia@mcrf.mfldclin.edu, ext. 1-8840.