

Neurology News & Notes

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Message from the Chair

I want to thank all departmental faculty and staff for providing high-quality patient care and advancing research and education in neurologic diseases. I'd like to take a moment to especially thank all the advanced practice providers in our department for their passion and dedication when it comes to patient care. Even though UPMC APPreciation Week was October 23-27, we are grateful for their contributions to our department and patients every day of the year.



Neurology News & Notes is an excellent way for everyone to stay up to date on different accomplishments and future events in our department. Staff members and APPs are also encouraged to reach out to Lauren Stanick (Communications Coordinator) if they have information they would like featured.

Cheers,

Page B. Pennell, MD, FAES

Chair and Henry B. Higman Professor of Neurology

Save The Date!

Holiday Party

We are excited to invite all UPMC and University of Pittsburgh employees in the Department of Neurology to our annual holiday party! Each employee will have the opportunity to bring one guest to share in the holiday celebration. We request that you RSVP for both yourself and your guest by Monday, November 27.

A valet will be provided. Jacket and tie or equivalent attire suggested.

Date: Friday, December 8, 2023

Cocktails & Hors d'Oeuvres: 6:30 p.m.

Dinner: 7:00 p.m.

Location: The Pittsburgh Golf Club (5280 Northumberland Street)

Please reply to the email that was sent out on Tuesday, November 7, to confirm your attendance and provide the name of your guest if you are bringing one.

Awards

Olsen and Suski Receive Grant for New MSA Center



Olsen



Suski

Drs. Abby Olsen and Valerie Suski have received a grant from the Multiple System Atrophy Coalition to create a new MSA Center of Excellence. Dr. Olsen will serve as the medical director of the Center of Excellence, which will be an interdisciplinary clinic, with sub-specialty neurology expertise as well as dedicated physical therapy, speech therapy, and social work on site. Additionally, they are building relationships for expedited referrals to psychiatry, neuro-urology, palliative care, sleep medicine, and ENT providers. The clinic will involve education, outreach, and research opportunities for MSA patients, care partners, and family members.

Nogueira Receives Presidential Award from WSO

Congratulations to Raul Nogueira on being the recipient of the 2023 Presidential Award from the World Stroke Organization! This is a prestigious award that recognizes his global contributions to the field of stroke. We are grateful to have a stroke expert such as Dr. Nogueira leading the UPMC Stroke Institute; this is an outstanding and well-deserved recognition of his dedication to stroke care.



Matthews is Recipient of UPMC Physician Excellence Award

Congratulations to Michael K. Matthews, MD, who is the recipient of a UPMC Physician Excellence award. Sponsored by Physician THRIVE, the UPMC Physician Excellence Awards recognize UPMC employed clinicians who exhibit a passion for medicine and consistently achieve clinical excellence.

The awards honor physicians who are highly engaged, display exceptional teamwork, embrace UPMC values, make noteworthy innovations, and work to advance UPMC's clinical mission.



Matthews (right)

Procirca Neurodiagnostic Program Awarded Formal Recognition

Dr. Rajasekaran and Dr. Bagić are proud to share:

The UPMC Procirca Neurodiagnostic Training Program has earned the ABRET's formal recognition and joins the UPMC Children's on the list of only 28 similar programs in the world. R. EEG T. credential remains the gold-standard for EEG technologists. The ABRET (American Board of Registration of Electroencephalographic Technologists) offers advanced credentials for technologists, long-term monitoring, and analysts. Unlike others who need three years, the students who complete the UPMC program, regardless of degree status, can become R. EEG T. board-eligible in just one year. Credentialed technologists are in a great demand as there are currently under 9,000 R. EEG T.s, less than one-hundredth the number of staffed hospital beds, and this training program is one component of Procirca's multi-point strategy to address staff shortages

Clinical Trials, Studies & Research

Department of Neurology Clinical Trials Committee

The University of Pittsburgh and UPMC Department of Neurology have established a clinical research committee. Its mission is to create a resource that will support clinical research in the department through shared guidance, training and assistance with high-level issues with general benefits. They will address issues as they arise in the conduct of human clinical research within the department; they will also serve as a liaison to the University of Pittsburgh Clinical Trialist Community.

Paula R. Clemens, MD, currently serves as the committee chair; other members include Drs. Sarah Berman, Zongqi Xia, James Castellano, and Ingrid Loma-Miller, as well as Kerry Oddis, Jackie Jones, and Denise McCarthy. Ex-officio members are Emily Stayshich, Jessica Saunders, and Page Pennell.

The committee meets on a monthly basis; if there are any questions, please direct them to any committee member or Kerry Oddis.

Kerr Publishes Two Reviews

Neurology Clinics

"Using Verbally Reported and Video Observed Semiology to Identify Functional Seizures"

This review aims to be practically helpful for clinicians using ictal behavior alone to make a diagnosis, in addition to understanding the limitations in certainty when considering seizures.

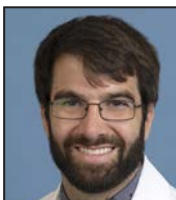
Current Neurology & Neuroscience Reports

"Machine learning and artificial intelligence applications to epilepsy: a review for the practicing epileptologist"

As part of one of the special issues, Dr. Kerr published a review with Jacob Pellinen. It focuses on how the non-technical practicing epileptologist should think about machine learning & AI within the context of their clinical practice.



Clemens



Kerr



Gogniat

Gogniat Receives Pilot Funding from ADRC

Marissa Gogniat received \$50K in pilot funding from the Weigand Family Fund under the ADRC Donation Program for her proposal “Examining Sedentary Behavior, Cognition, and Brain Health in Older Adults”. Dr. Gogniat plans to use this funding in coordination with funds from the department to start collecting pilot data for her K submission.

Milestones & Recognition

UPMC Al-Bayati and Kenmuir Elected to SVIN Board of Directors

We are extremely proud that Alhamza R. Al-Bayati, MD, and Cynthia Kenmuir, MD, PhD, have been chosen to sit on the Society of Vascular and Interventional Board of Directors. We’re grateful for their leadership, dedication, and commitment to our patients and academic excellence.



Al-Bayati

Thirumala Presents is Co-Course Director for IONM Conference

Congratulations to Partha Thirumala, who was a course director for the successful 2023 Principles and Practice of intraoperative Neuromonitoring course, Nov. 3-4.

This workshop was designed for advanced professionals performing or involved in IONM; it highlighted specifications, multimodality protocols, recent advances in the field, pre- and post-operative neurological evaluation and management, and telemedicine.



Kenmuir



Tewari Completes AIHM Fellowship

Jigyasa Tewari, MD, AIHM, has completed the two-year fellowship course offered through The Academy of Integrative Health and Medicine (AIHM).

AIHM is a global interprofessional organization advancing healthcare by empowering and educating health professionals in the practices and principles that support whole health.

“Integrative medicine involves bringing conventional and complementary approaches together in a coordinated way. Emphasis is put on the relationship between practitioner and patient through seeking out scientific evidence, and working with a range of healthcare professionals, disciplines, and therapeutic techniques to achieve health and well-being.”



Tewari



'Students Interested in Going into Neurology' Hold Event

The University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine 'Students Interested in Neurology' (SIGN) group recently held a successful event with members of the division of cerebrovascular medicine. Each year SIGN organizes several education sessions with neurology faculty members to generate interest in the subspecialties.

This event, which was organized by Jack Waters - one of SIGN's leaders - and Dr. Al-hamza R. Al-Bayati, had fifteen medical students participating in the opportunity to individually work on neuroanatomy simulators as well as cerebrovascular ischemic and hemorrhagic flow models. Dr. Al-Bayati introduced the neuroendovascular field to the students with an excellent presentation.



Community Engagement

Pascoal Lab Participates in Alzheimer's Association Walk

Tharick A. Pascoal, MD, PhD, and members of his lab enjoyed participating in the 2023 Alzheimer's Association® Walk to End Alzheimer's on Saturday, October 14, in Pittsburgh, PA.



This event is a unique opportunity for Dr. Pascoal and his lab members to have thoughtful discussions with non-scientists and other stakeholders in the Alzheimer's community. The walk is held annually in more than 600 communities nationwide and is the world's largest fundraiser for Alzheimer's care, support, research and advocacy.

Staff Section

Shoutout to EEG Staff Members

Drs. Rajasekaran and Bagić would like to congratulate three members of the EEG staff for the great work they're doing! Maisie Ruble had a great presentation at the Midatlantic conference; Deux Priore continues to play a vital role in education and ABERT approval; and Lauren Doak is excelling in management and representation in the first pilot group in DXN. Keep up the great work!

Service Anniversaries

Thank you to all who celebrate a service anniversary this month! Your hard work and dedication to helping innovate and provide the best possible care is what helps our department shine. Congratulations on another year of hard work!

Faculty

- Thandar Aung - 11/1/2020
- Valerie Arias - 11/1/2021
- J. Timothy Greenamyre - 11/4/2004

Staff

- Jessica Kunkel - 11/2/2015

- Stephany Brooks - 11/2/2015
- Tamiko Hanner - 11/5/2001
- Rebecca Patterson - 11/8/2010
- Rhonda Temple - 11/8/2021
- Kira Fields - 11/14/2022
- Kaitlan Kunkel - 11/16/202
- Denise Lehman - 11/18/2019
- Scott Maniglia - 11/20/2017
- Jessica Rossi - 11/21/2022
- Kerri Tucci - 11/21/2022
- Zachary Cename - 11/22/2021
- Sarah Bulloch - 11/22/2021
- Christy Somerville - 11/28/2022
- Chelsea Wilt - 11/29/2021
- Candie Wisenor - 11/30/2020

Funding & Career Development Opportunities

Neurology Philanthropy Partner

Why should you partner with philanthropy?

1. Philanthropy can result in direct funds for your research, equipment, training, and patient care needs
2. Learn more about how our partners can engage your patients, families, and department alumni to express gratitude to support our mission
3. Work with Justin to create a customized approach that works best for you
4. Justin is available to meet with you virtually or in-person at your convenience



Justin Meyer

Grateful Patients and Families

jrm233@pitt.edu

(412) 482-4319 (call or text)

New Faculty & Staff

Three new faculty members will start in 2024. We look forward to welcoming them to the Department of Neurology!



Lauren Middleton-Hoang, DO

Teleneurology

Start Date: 1/1/2024

Previous Institution: Blue Sky Neurology

Residency: UPMC Hamot

Fellowship: Academy of Integrative Health and Medicine, La Jolla



Marina Zaretskaya, MD

Epilepsy Division

Start Date: 1/1/2024

Previous Institution: UPMC

Residency: Clinical Emergency Hospital (Moscow, Russia), UPMC

Fellowship: UPMC



Jussie Correia Lima, MD

Division of Cerebrovascular Medicine

Start Date: 7/1/2024

Previous Institution: Chattanooga Center for Neurologic Research

Residency: University of Connecticut

Fellowship: University of Connecticut

Upcoming Events

A Comprehensive Update on Alzheimer's Disease

Join Oscar L. Lopez, MD, and Pitt Health Academy as they provide a unique platform to showcase groundbreaking research and advancements in the health sciences. Hear from expert Oscar Lopez, MD, FAAN, on risk factors for cognitive decline in adults during this installment of the Pitt Health Academy series.

Dr. Lopez focuses primarily on the distribution (e.g., incidence and prevalence), behavioral manifestations, risks and long-term outcomes of dementia, especially Alzheimer's disease (AD). His key objectives have been to identify clinical or genetic factors that modify the natural history of dementing illnesses. Over the course of his career, he has published classic papers examining the patterns of progression of all clinical forms of AD.

Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2023

Time: 1 - 2 p.m.

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Registration: [Click here](#)

Contact Alex Rigby at amr276@pitt.edu for more information.



Lopez

November Neurology Grand Rounds Information

Upcoming Speakers and Topics

Please email Audrey at rohea@upmc.edu with any questions.

Thursday, November 2, 2023

Tracey Milligan, MD, MS, FAAN, FAES, FANA

Overcoming Neurophobia: The Latest Updates in Innovative Neurology Education

12:00-1:00 p.m.

BST S100 and online (Check email the week of the lecture for the invite link)

Thursday, November 9, 2023

Rani A. Sarkis, MD, MSc (Outside Speaker)

Late Onset Epilepsy: Lessons from the Clinic

Time: 12:00-1:00 p.m

Scaife 1105ABC and online (Check email the week of the lecture for the invite link)

Thursday, November 16, 2023

Neurology Faculty Meeting (Bi-monthly)

12:00-1:00 p.m.

No Grand Rounds

BST S120 and online (Check email for the invite link)

Thursday, November 23, 2023

No Grand Rounds (Holiday)

Thursday, November 30, 2023

Howard Aizenstein, MD, PhD

Deep Learning in Geriatric Mental Health

12:00-1:00 p.m.

Scaife 1105ABC and online (Check email the week of the lecture for the invite link)