Osteogenesis Imperfecta Conference Largely Attended

By Melanie Schrack

In July, Omaha and Children’s Hospital played host to the Osteogenesis Imperfecta Foundation Biennial National Conference. Nearly 600 people gathered from around the country to learn more about their condition and to network with others with this disease and their families. The conference began with 48 medical consultations/private meetings with medical experts in genetics, rehabilitation, hearing loss, neurology, gynecology and family planning. More than 40 informational sessions followed over the next two days, everything from how to change a diaper, how to hug your baby so you don’t break a bone to selecting the proper wheelchair. The children were able to play and make friends with other youngsters with the same condition.

Many came to reconnect with friends made at previous conferences. Attendees were surprised at the Welcome Reception by the “just my size” buffet, at just over one foot tall. “I could serve myself for the first time in my life”, said one attendee, “It has been wonderful to be in an environment that adapted rather than me having to adapt to the environment”. Another said “Although the conference is highly organized and hosts many experts, perhaps the most helpful information doesn’t come from the sessions, but from the hallways, elevators, restaurants and restrooms of the hotel. There is always life experience information that can be gleaned from others who have already experienced your future”.

“Omaha has one of the largest OI clinics in the country,” said Dr. Horacio Plotkin, M.D., and organizer of this national conference. “Our protocol for treatment was adopted as the standard of care at this conference.” Dr. Plotkin was recognized as a “Hometown Hero” by Mayor Mike Fahey for his efforts to bring this group to Omaha. Osteogenesis Imperfecta (OI), or brittle bone disease, affects about one in every 20,000 births.
Pediatric Cardiologist Presents to National Audience

By Priscilla Phillips

The 2006 Pediatric & Adult Interventional Therapies for Congenital & Valvular Heart Disease (PICS-2006) was held September 10-13, 2006 in Las Vegas, Nevada. This prestigious meeting included didactic lectures from over 100 world experts in their fields and live case demonstrations from thirteen international sites. This was the first year that adult issues and cases were included in the program making this event the most comprehensive international meeting in the field of interventional congenital heart disease and, with approximately 1000 attendees from all over the globe, the most attended pediatric interventional meeting in the world.

Since the inception of PICS in 1997, Dr. Zahid Amin, Director of Catheterization Services in the UNMC/CUMC Joint Division of Pediatric Cardiology and at Children’s Hospital has had the honor of being selected to present live cases via satellite back to the sessions each year since he joined the Joint Division in 2000. Other sites this year were Milan, Italy; Frankfurt, Germany; Sao Paulo, Brazil; Toronto, Canada; Chicago, IL; Vancouver, Canada; Columbus, OH; New York, NY; Evanston, IL; Seattle, WA; and St. Louis, MO. Working from the Children’s Hospital Cardiac Catheterization Lab in Omaha NE, Zahid Amin MD, Professor of Pediatrics, and the dedicated cath lab team performed two pediatric cases and one adult case:

Case 1 – Stenting of the Left PA through the Right Internal Jugular Vein
Case 2 – Amplatzer Device closure of Atrial Septal Defect
Case 3 – Amplatzer septal occluder device closure of lateral tunnel fenestration in a patient who had previously undergone surgical Fontan procedure

On September 11th, the cath lab was extraordinarily crowded with additional cameras, video monitors, speakers, transmission equipment, and a technical crew of 4 people, but all involved with each case were focused on the patient. Simultaneously in Las Vegas, a panel of five world renowned discussants led an interactive discussion and decision forum with the session attendees. During the procedures, Dr. Amin skillfully fielded rigorous questions from his peers attending PICS and received continuous feedback on decisions made throughout each case.

Dr. Amin was a member of such a panel only the day before during the cases presented from sites abroad. In prior years, Dr. Amin transmitted live animal cases from the Joint Cardiac Research Lab in Eppley Science Hall at UNMC, and plans to participate from the new Children’s Hospital hybrid lab are already under way for PICS-2007.

CDC Assigns Senior Prevention Fellow to CityMatCH

by Maureen Fitzgerald

Brenda Thompson, MPH, a Senior Prevention Fellow at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Public Health Prevention Service (PHPS) Office of Workforce and Career Development has been assigned to CityMatCH, located within UNMC’s Department of Pediatrics, effective October 1, 2006. Thompson, a graduate of the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in Atlanta, GA, with a specialization in Global Health and Community Health and Development, has accepted a two-year assignment to Omaha.

CDC’s Public Health Prevention Service Office was initiated in 1997 to address gaps in the public health
Grant Awarded to CityMatCH for Adolescent Health Promotion

By Maureen Fitzgerald

In May 2006, the Division of Adolescent, Child and Family Health at the Health Resources and Services Administration’s Maternal and Child Health Bureau (HRSA/MCHB) released a request for proposals for the “Partners in Program Planning for Adolescent Health” (PIPPAH) Initiative. CityMatCH at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Department of Pediatrics, has recently been informed that their application is one of eight applications approved for funding. Each will be awarded $100,000 per year for a period of five years to support proposed activities, beginning September 1, 2006, with an anticipated project end date of August 31, 2011.

Magda G. Peck, ScD, CEO/Senior Advisor to CityMatCH, will serve as principal investigator on this grant. Acting Executive Director Patrick Simpson, MPH will be responsible for programmatic resources; Chad Abresch, MEd, CityMatCH Program and Policy Manager, will be assisted by Maureen Fitzgerald, MPA, Coordinator/Policy and Communication, on PIPPAH activities.

The intent of MCHB’s PIPPAH Initiative is to contribute to the improvement of adolescent health, safety and well being by promoting a multidisciplinary, comprehensive adolescent health agenda among professionals who work with adolescents and their families. As a “PIPPAH Partner,” CityMatCH will engage in national efforts to elevate and promote adolescent health and safety, and will build and enhance local capacity to address the 21 critical adolescent health objectives identified by Healthy People 2010. Finally, CityMatCH will provide national leadership regarding elimination of health disparities among adolescents.

The high number of proposals resulted in tough competition for the PIPPAH grants. CityMatCH at UNMC is pleased to be included in this partnership along with the following organizations: The American Academy of Pediatrics, The American Bar Association, American College of Preventive Medicine, Healthy Teen Network, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Association of County and City Health Officials, and the National Institute for Health Care Management.

CityMatCH is a freestanding national membership organization of city and county health department maternal and child health (MCH) programs and leaders representing U.S. urban communities. The University of Nebraska serves as its fiscal agent.

For more information, please contact CityMatCH at (402) 561-7500 or via E-mail at citymch@unmc.edu

(CityMatCH is funded in part through cooperative agreements with the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. Additional support is provided by UNMC)
APPOINTMENTS
Romero JRR, National Board of Medical Examiners/United States Medical Licensing Examination Step 1 Standard Setting Panel.

PRESENTATIONS

Beck GL, Cleppe V, McCurdy FA. Clerkship Coordinator Certificate Program. Invited workshop at the University of Iowa College of Medicine, Iowa City, IA, 10/11/06.


Bridge JA. Basic principles and applications of cytogenetic analysis. United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology, Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, 03/2006.

Bridge JA. Genetics of cardiac fibroma. Pediatric Pathology Conference, Childrens Hospital, Omaha, NE, 05/11/2006.


Ellis CR. Pediatric psychopharmacology. Loess Hills AEA #13 School Psychology Meeting, Council Bluffs, IA, 05/2006.

Ellis CR. Pediatric psychopharmacology. Case Managers’ Seminar, Omaha Home for Boys, Omaha, NE, 07/2006.

Erickson CC, Kugler JD, Houston K. Single catheter electrophysiology study to assess pre-excitation in pediatric patients with Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome. (Abstract) 10th Annual Cardiovascular Research Symposium. University of Nebraska Medical Center. Omaha, NE, 02/03/2006.


Kugler JD. Arrhythmias in the community: Giving advice to treat or refer. Invited Speaker, Meet-the-Experts-Luncheon Speaker at Heart Rhythm 2006, Boston, MA, 05/19/2006.

Kugler JD. Cardiology activities for the American Board of Pediatrics program for maintenance of certification in pediatrics – subspecialties.” Joint Council for Congenital Heart Disease (JCCHD) meeting, Dallas, TX, 01/09/2006.

Kugler JD. Congenital heart disease and arrhythmias. Presented at Electrophysiology Curriculum Conference, University of Nebraska Medical Center. Omaha, NE, 01/13/2006.

Kugler JD. Sudden death in athletes. Grand Rounds presentation at Rapid City Regional Hospital, Rapid City, SD, 03/24/2006.

Kugler JD. What’s new in pediatric cardiology? Presented at CME Program sponsored by Children’s Hospital, Hastings, NE, 03/01/2006.

Olson SC, Rohlk AM, Sheridan SM, Ellis CR. Roles and functions: School psychology within a pediatric setting. Poster presented at the National Association of School Psychology Annual Convention, Anaheim, CA, 03/2006.


Roberts HJ, Needelman H, Woods KE, Kapler SR. Neonatal intensive care unit graduates: School age outcomes and an analysis of infant characteristics. Poster presented at the Seventh Annual MMI Poster Session, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha, NE, 04/26/2006.

Schaefer GB. Genetic aspects of communication disorders. Inez Miller Conference on Communication Sciences and Disorders, University of Central Oklahoma, 04/01/2006.

“Real Time” Clinical Information on Patients

by Patty D. Davis

The Nebraska Medical Center has implemented a new tool for all caregivers on their patients’ care. The MercuryMD MData Desktop is sponsored by The Nebraska Medical Center, Physician Relations, and provides caregivers with the most up-to-date patient information available.

With this new system, you no longer have to wait for faxes, calls from other offices or mailed information. The data in this system is “real time” so you have the same information available as the care provider at TNMC. This web-based application offers clinicians real-time access to patient information from any laptop or desktop computer which will help with more informed decisions, faster treatment and more efficient care. Also, primary care providers have access to discharge notes, summaries, lab results, etc. when their patient returns to them for care. This also means that when a caregiver is consulting with an attending physician at TNMC, the caregiver can have the same information at their own office.

Anyone interested in obtaining more information on the MercuryMD MData Desktop can contact Bud Tice at 402-559-5030 or e-mail: btice@nebraskamed.com. To request a logon you can contact Bryce Strohbehn at bstrohbehn@nebraskamed.com or Mark Grote at mgrote@nebraskamed.com.

Newborn Screening Executive Summary Amends Regulation

On September 12, 2006, U.S. District Court Judge Richard Kopf granted a summary judgment of the State in the Spiering v. Heineman case. This case involved a religiously based constitutional challenge to state statutes and related HHS regulations pertaining to the timing of the performance of mandatory newborn metabolic disease screening. The Plaintiffs claimed to subscribe to at least some of what they believe to be tenets of the Church of Scientology including the so-called “silent birth” concept. Their position was that they should not be required to have their newborn child subjected to the testing before the passage of at least seven days from birth and that such a requirement violated their First Amendment freedom of religion.

Judge Kopf had begun the case with the entry of a TRO prohibiting the testing before the eighth day following the birth of the Spierings’ then about to be born fourth child. The Judge based his order on the fact that the regulations then in effect allowed a longer time frame for the testing if the baby was born somewhere other than a hospital. These regulations have been amended to eliminate the variance and that weighed heavily with the Court as did the expert input of Dr. Hobart Wiltse and Dr. Richard Lutz of UNMC who volunteered their time to assist the defense. The Court has now held that the statues and related regulations pass constitutional muster and that freedom of religion does not include the freedom for parents to expose their children to the risk of “ill health or death”.

AAG Mike Rumbaugh was lead counsel on the case. In commenting on the win, Attorney General Bruning said, “While we prevailed in the litigation, the real winners here are the newborn children of Nebraska.”

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workforce. PHPS offers participants a unique three-year service and training program, where they can gain practical experience in program planning, implementation, and evaluation through specialized hands-on training – such as this placement with CityMatCH – and through mentorship at CDC. The program provides formal instruction in program management, epidemiology, surveillance, emergency response, and project evaluation. Selection into PHPS is highly competitive. Candidates are aggressively recruited and highly qualified; Brenda Thompson comes to UNMC having completed her first year of formal instruction and as a direct result of her academic qualifications and potential.

While in Omaha, Thompson will divide her time between CityMatCH at UNMC and the Douglas County Health Department. At CityMatCH, Thompson will work under the tutelage of Magda G. Peck, ScD, CEO/Senior Advisor to CityMatCH. Thompson’s principal responsibility will be to facilitate the joint CityMatCH and Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP) Women’s Health Partnership and to co-lead the Partnership’s national Action Learning Collaborative (ALC).

The ALC, funded by CDC’s Division of Reproductive Health, aims to build state and local capacity to help women of reproductive age achieve healthy weight before, during, and after pregnancy. Seven teams were recently selected for an intensive year-long capacity and cohesion-building, transformative experience. Douglas County Health Department in Omaha will participate as an adjunct, non-traveling team. Thompson will coach these ALC teams, which are comprised of state and local MCH directors, analytic and research experts; data analysis, evaluation and community based-participatory research experts; chronic disease, nutrition and physical activity professionals; and consumers.