Welcome to the second edition of the Duke Clinical Research Institute (DCRI) Neurosciences quarterly newsletter. This newsletter is designed to help you - our sponsors and colleagues - stay up-to-date on our exciting research news, publications, events, and faculty.

About DCRI Neurosciences Medicine

DCRI Neurosciences Medicine conducts psychiatry- and neurology-focused phase I-IV clinical trials. The thought leadership and guidance of our Duke faculty, who are also practicing physicians, set us apart.

Our leadership team brings to our work a depth of knowledge in therapeutic areas spanning autism, neurocritical care, early-phase neurology studies, neuromuscular and neurodegenerative diseases, ADHD and SUD, mood and anxiety disorders, stroke, sleep, and cognition. The team works directly with clinical operations, biostatistics, and data management specialists to design and conduct right-sized, clinically meaningful trials for biotech and pharmaceutical companies. Learn more about our faculty and expertise.

Meet Our Director
Daniel Laskowitz, MD, MHS  
Director of Neurosciences Medicine, Duke Clinical Research Institute  
Professor and Vice Chair of Neurology  
Professor of Anesthesiology and Neurobiology  
Director, Neurovascular Laboratories

Our director's research focuses on the identification of new therapies for the treatment of stroke and acute brain injury. He operates a neuroscience translational laboratory, which uses molecular biology and transgenic technology to evaluate cellular mechanism of brain injury and secondary neuronal injury. These results are translated to clinically-relevant small animal models with the ultimate goal of exploring new therapeutic interventions in the clinical setting of cerebral ischemia, intracranial hemorrhage, and closed head injury. Dr. Laskowitz's translational research also focuses on the use of biomarkers, both to investigate cellular mechanisms of post-traumatic neurodegeneration and to provide diagnostic and clinical information in the setting of ischemic and traumatic brain injury.

Dr. Laskowitz has also been the DCRI global PI on SOCRATES - a phase III stroke trial - and currently serves as the co-PI on COBIS, which evaluates the use of umbilical cord blood transfusion in patients with acute stroke. He designed one of the first multicenter trials evaluating the role of serum biomarkers in stroke (the BRAIN study, published in *Stroke*, 2009), and the first translational study evaluating the use of statins in subarachnoid hemorrhage (published in *Stroke*, 2005). He has served as the site PI for a number of trials in stroke and acute brain injury, include SyNAPSe, evaluating the use of progesterone in TBI; ALIAS, an NIH study evaluating the role of albumin in acute stroke; and ACTION, evaluating the role of the monoclonal antibody natiluzimab in acute stroke. He serves as the PI for an NIH grant establishing a training collaboration with stroke neurologists in China. He is a fellow of the American Heart Association, American Academy of Neurology, and the American Neurological Association, and has authored and co-authored more than 170 peer-reviewed articles.

His role at the DCRI has him overseeing both psychiatry and neurology. This group consists of trials and research in the phase I-IV space in devices, drugs, and, lately, games. As director, each trial and sponsor is in his hands.

"The success of Neurosciences Medicine at the DCRI is attributed to the deep commitment and expertise of our faculty in a wide range of research areas," Laskowitz said. "It is really just an honor to have a chance to work with our faculty, and help them leverage knowledge in psychiatry, psychology, neurology, neurosurgery, and anesthesiology to help sponsors design and conduct clinically meaningful and efficient trials."

**Digital Health Clinical Trials Symposium**

The DCRI hosted an inaugural Neurosciences Medicine Digital Health Clinical Trials Symposium in San Francisco this February. The agenda included a wide-ranging discussion of the current state of clinical trials for games, apps, and
electronic medical devices to diagnose or alleviate symptoms of psychiatric and neurological disorders.

"There are unique challenges in digital health applications for neurosciences medicine, and the genesis of this meeting was the concept of bringing together experts to identify and develop solutions to move the field forward," said Dr. Andrew Krystal in opening remarks. Read more about the presentations and key takeaways.

Upcoming Conferences, Meetings, and Speaking Engagements

American Academy of Neurology
Please join our team at this year’s AAN annual meeting, April 21-27. We will be at booth #971, and many of our faculty will be there to answer questions and participate in meetings. Hope to see you in Boston!

Dr. Jeff Guptill
Neuromuscular and Clinical Neurophysiology
Treatment of Autoimmune Myasthenia Gravis: Evidence-based and New Developments
11:25 a.m.-12:15 p.m. Saturday, April 22

Dr. Aatif Husain
Clinical Neurophysiology Section Chair
Noon-1:00 p.m. Monday, April 24
Faculty, Neurophysiologic Intraoperative Monitoring Course
1:00-5:00 p.m. Monday, April 24
Course Director, Continuous EEG Monitoring
1:00-3:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 25

World Intracranial Hemorrhage Conference
Dr. Luke James, Jennifer Hart and Dr. Daniel Laskowitz
"A proof-of-concept study to evaluate the administration of CN-105 in participants with acute supratentorial intracerebral hemorrhage (CATCH Trial)"
May 2 in Baltimore, Maryland

International Conference on Myasthenia Gravis and Related Disorders
Dr. Jeff Guptill
Planning committee and session chair for upcoming meeting: Future Clinical Trials in Myasthenia Gravis
May 16 in New York City

Autism Webinar
Dr. LinMarie Sikich
Webinar: TEACCH on Autism Spectrum Disorders and Psychosis
May 24 and May 31 in Chapel Hill, N.C.
New Publications


New Award

**Dr. LinMarie Sikich** is co-investigator on R01 HD088007-01A1 "Characterizing the (epi)genetics of oxytocin response in clinical and animal models." With Simon G. Gregory (Duke Neurology contact PI), co-PIs Yong-Hui Jiang (Duke Pediatrics) and Sheryl S. Moy (UNC). Began February 14, 2017.
In Uganda, where about 700,000 people are living with untreated epilepsy due to traumatic brain injuries and birth defects, there are only four neurologists who can treat the disease with medication. The capacity to monitor epilepsy with electroencephalogram (EEG) or perform epilepsy surgery—which can cure up to 75 percent of epilepsy patients—is currently nonexistent.

Michael Haglund, distinguished professor of neurosurgery at Duke, neurobiology and global health, is determined to change the game for Ugandan epilepsy patients, and he’s laying the groundwork with a new grant from the UCB Societal Responsibility Fund to establish the Uganda Epilepsy Centers of Excellence.

With the help of Brad Kolls and Danny Laskowitz of the DCRI Neurosciences Team and a partnership with Cadwell Industries, Haglund said they’ll be able to extend epilepsy monitoring beyond the hospital setting. Read more about this global health initiative.