

IU GERIATRICS e-news September 2008

A newsletter from [IU Geriatrics](#) and the [IU Center for Aging Research](#)

OPTIMAL to Explore Potential Benefits and Harms of Preventive Interventions

Principal Investigator **Greg A. Sachs, MD** has begun research on "Optimal Prevention & Treatment In Medically Complex Alzheimer Patients - OPTIMAL." The R21 is funded for two years by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

OPTIMAL is an analytic epidemiologic study using an existing patient cohort consisting of 3,954 patients aged 60 and older who, as part of an earlier study, completed cognitive screening during office visits to their primary care physicians in 1991-93. Comprehensive follow-up information on these patients is available from the [Regenstrief Medical Record System](#) (RMRS), including data on provision of preventive health measures, cancer incidence, and vital status.



This project represents a long-standing interest of mine that I would characterize as examining the ethical issues in the ongoing, primary care of patients with dementia. I have explored and written about these issues primarily from a conceptual or analytic viewpoint. OPTIMAL is a terrific opportunity for me to harness that line of work to the research infrastructure of the RMRS and IUCAR.

Greg A. Sachs, MD

The specific aims of the study are to:

- 1) describe the 15-year mortality trajectories for these older adults with cognitive impairment, with and without the additional co-morbid conditions of depression and cardiovascular disease;
- 2) describe the incidence of and outcome for preventive health services (breast, colon and prostate cancer screening and influenza vaccination) and;
- 3) determine the extent to which temporal trends of increasing utilization of preventive health services extend to this study population.

The study team will explore the potential benefits and harms of preventive interventions among the older adults with cognitive impairment and also examine

health status with regard to late life depression and cardiovascular disease. This work seeks to optimize decisions about preventive care and management of dementia among complex primary care patients. These data form the foundation for future work to determine which treatments and combinations of treatment offer the most benefit and the highest quality care.

Joining Dr. Sachs on the study team are **Chris Callahan, MD, Wanzhu Tu, PhD**, and **Laura Holtz, BS** from IUCAR, **Tim Stump, MA**, from the Division of Biostatistics, and **Faye Smith, MAS**, from Regenstrief Institute. Dr. Sachs notes that the OPTIMAL grant submission wouldn't have been possible without the hard work of Chris Callahan, Wanzhu Tu and **Dennis Benge** around Thanksgiving of 2007.

Dr. Frank Honored at IUPUI Chancellor's Convocation

IUPUI revealed one of the secrets behind the success of IU Geriatrics during the September 23, 2008 Chancellor's Employee Recognition Convocation. Geriatrics administrator **Kathy Frank, RN, DNS**, was recognized by the university not only for her 30 years of service but for her dedication and energetic leadership to the IU Geriatrics Program.

Kathy has done an amazing amount of great work for IU Geriatrics. Her dedication and passion for what she does is awesome to see.

Robin Beck, MD

The following statement was read as Dr. Frank was honored for her service.

Dr. Kathy Frank has served as the IU Geriatrics Program Administrator for nearly its entire history, over the past 8 years providing dedicated and energetic leadership in development of what

is now one of the largest geriatrics programs in the country, and one of only 24 designated Hartford Foundation Centers of Excellence. Kathy served as program coordinator for the Reynolds Foundation-funded Geriatrics Education Network of Indiana (GENI) facilitating training in geriatric medicine to medical students, residents, and practicing physicians statewide. Most recently she played a foundational role in establishing the Indiana Geriatrics Society. Kathy is a delight to work with and a true visionary for better healthcare to older Hoosiers.

Dr. Robin Beck, medical director of Senior Care and House Calls for Seniors at Wishard added, "Kathy has done an amazing amount of great work for IU Geriatrics. Her dedication and passion for what she does is awesome to see. I know that I appreciate her every day for everything that she does."



IUPUI honors Dr. Frank, pictured at right, for 30 years of service (IUPUI Photo Gallery)

Publications

Boustani M, Perkins AJ, Monahan P, Fox C, Watson L, Hopkins J, **Fultz B**, Hui S, **Unverzagt FW**, **Callahan CM**, **Hendrie HC**. [Measuring primary care patients' attitudes about dementia screening](#). Int J Geriatr Psychiatry. 2008 Aug;23(8): 812-20. PMID: 18232061

Damush TM, Wu J, Bair MJ, Sutherland JM, Kroenke K. [Self-management practices among primary care patients with musculoskeletal pain and depression](#). J Behav Med. 2008 Aug;31(4):301-7. PMID: 18553130

Torke AM, Alexander GC, Lantos J. [Substituted judgment: the limitations of autonomy in surrogate decision making](#). J Gen Intern Med. 2008 Sep;23(9):1514-7. PMID: 18618201

Clark DO, Frankel RM, Morgan DL, Ricketts G, Bair MJ, Nyland KA, **Callahan CM**. [The meaning and significance of self-management among socioeconomically vulnerable older adults](#). J Gerontol B Psychol Sci Soc Sci. 2008 Sep;63(5):S312-9. PMID: 18818452

Cuenco KT, Green RC, Zhang J, Lunetta K, Erlich PM, Cupples LA, Farrer LA, DeCarli C; MIRAGE Study Group (**Farlow MR**). [Magnetic resonance imaging traits in siblings discordant for Alzheimer disease](#). J Neuroimaging. 2008 Jul;18(3):268-75. PMID: 18808654



Dr. Damush



Dr. Clark

Presentations and Professional Activities

Michael Weiner, MD, MPH, presented "The role of information systems in measuring and improving quality for older patients" at the University of New South Wales' [Centre for Health Informatics](#) in Sydney, Australia on July 10, 2008.

Chris Callahan, MD, presented "Assisting Primary Care Providers to Interact Effectively With Caregivers" at the 6th Annual Rocky Mountain Geriatric Conference held September 3-6, 2008 in Salt Lake City, Utah. The conference, titled The Science and Practice of Caregiving, brought together prominent caregiver researchers and expert clinicians with the goals of improving caregiver and patient outcomes and enhancing provider satisfaction and effectiveness.

Ella Bowman, MD, PhD, presented Medicine Grand Rounds entitled, "Pressure Ulcers: Strategies for Prevention, Evaluation and Management" at the La Porte Hospital in La Porte, Indiana on September 3, 2008.



Dr. Weiner

Steve Counsell, MD, presented "Geriatric Resources for Assessment and Care of Elders (GRACE): A New Model of Primary Care for Low-Income Seniors" at the Discipline of General Practice Research Meeting, The University of Queensland School of Medicine in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia on September 3, 2008.

Dr. Counsell attended the [Australia & New Zealand Society of Geriatric Medicine](#) Annual Scientific Meeting September 8-10, 2008, and provided the keynote address "Optimal Care Transitions from Hospital – A US Perspective" at the National Transition Care Forum held in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia on September 10-11, 2008. The forum included clinical, academic, and policy experts from across Australia.

As a grantee, **Greg Sachs, MD**, presented at the [National Palliative Care Research Center](#) Annual Retreat and Research Symposium held September 16-18, 2008 at the Salish Lodge in Snoqualmie, Washington. Dr. Sachs relates that it "was a neat opportunity to get early feedback from experts in palliative care for our just started [IN-PEACE](#) grant, as well as an excellent networking opportunity."

Ella Bowman, MD, PhD, made a site visit to the [Medical House Call Program](#) at [Washington Hospital Center](#) in Washington, DC, on September 22-24. The activity was part of the leadership building and networking activities for her Geriatrics Academic Career Award entitled "Creation of a Hospital-to-Home Clinical and Teaching Model."