

IU GERIATRICS e-news for DECEMBER 2007

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

IU Geriatrics and the IU Center for Aging Research thank you -- our faculty, staff and program partners -- for the service and care you provided in support of Indiana's older adults in 2007.

JAMA Publishes Outcomes from Local GRACE Study

Most older adults obtain their health care in the offices of busy primary care physicians or in the case of those without physicians in even busier hospital emergency departments. In either location seniors often don't receive the recommended care for preventive services, chronic disease management, and geriatric syndromes.

A study published in the December 12, 2007 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association reports on [GRACE, the largest ever randomized clinical trial](#) of a health system and home-based geriatrics care concept designed to improve healthcare for community-dwelling low-income older adults.



Dr. Counsell

“Rather than concentrating on individual diseases, we focused on the many issues faced by aging low-income adults – access to needed services, medications, mobility, depression, transportation, diet, as well as other health issues of aging,” said study leader **Steven R. Counsell, MD**, Mary Elizabeth Mitchell Professor in Geriatrics at the Indiana University School of Medicine.

GRACE, short for Geriatric Resources for Assessment and Care of Elders, was developed by researchers from IU Geriatrics of the Indiana University School of Medicine, the Indiana University Center for Aging Research and the Regenstrief Institute, Inc.

In addition to Dr. Counsell, co-authors of the JAMA study are **Christopher M. Callahan, MD**, **Daniel O. Clark, PhD**, and **Wanzhu Tu, PhD**, Amna B. Buttar, MD, MS, Timothy E. Stump, MS and Gretchen D. Ricketts, BSW.



Dawn Butler, MSW, LCSW, provides social work services during a GRACE home visit

Links:

[JAMA abstract](#)

[The JAMA Report](#)
Video and interview with Dr. Counsell.

[IUSM news release.](#)

GRANT

Alzheimer's Disease and Access to Palliative Care

Alzheimer's disease is not simply a memory disorder. It's a progressive, irreversible and ultimately fatal condition. While most experts in the field understand this, many health care providers, organizations and much of the public do not. How does this affect provision of health care?

People with Alzheimer's do not receive hospice and palliative care at the same rate as people with other fatal diseases. For example, in 2005 nearly half of all hospice patients in the country had cancer, but less than 10 percent had dementia. While in the past ten years, palliative care has served more people who are terminally ill but are not imminently dying, little is known about palliative care models for people with dementia.

Greg A. Sachs, MD, is leading "Alzheimer's Disease and Access to Palliative Care," a two-year study funded by the Alzheimer's Association in 2007. The project was awarded \$193,027 through the Association's annual grant competition. **Alexia Torke, MD** is a co-investigator on the project.

Dr. Sachs's research team will conduct a survey of a nationally representative sample of palliative care and hospice programs to learn the services they provide to people with dementia, perceived educational and other needs of these programs, and persistent barriers to expanding services to the population of patients with Alzheimer's disease.

The overall goals are to show which programs work best, bringing their efforts to national attention as best practice standards, and to identify targets for educational and policy changes for overcoming barriers to palliative care for this population. These steps will make the next decade a much better one for patients and families.



Dr. Greg A. Sachs

**Alzheimer's Association
Funding and Grants**

[View page](#)

PUBLICATIONS

Counsell SR, Callahan CM, Clark DO, Tu W, Stump TE, Ricketts G. [Geriatric care management for low-income seniors: A randomized controlled trial.](#) JAMA. 2007 Dec 12;298(12):2623-33.

Boustani M, Munger S, Beck R, Campbell N, Weiner M. [A gero-informatics tool to enhance the care of hospitalized older adults with cognitive impairment.](#) Clin Interv Aging. 2007;2(2):247-53.

Arling G, Kane RL, Mueller C, Bershady J, Degenholtz HB. [Nursing effort and quality of care for nursing home residents.](#) Gerontologist. 2007 Oct;47(5):672-82.

Szwast SJ, Hendrie HC, Lane KA, Gao S, Taylor SE, Unverzagt F, Murrell J, Deeg M, Ogunniyi A, Farlow MR, Hall KS. [Association of statin use with cognitive decline in elderly African Americans.](#) Neurology. 2007 Nov 6;69(19):1873-80.

Li J, Waugh LJ, Hui SL, Burr DB, Warden SJ. [Low-intensity pulsed ultrasound and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs have opposing effects during stress fracture repair.](#) J Orthop Res. 2007 Dec;25(12):1559-67.

Unverzagt FW, Sujuan Gao, Lane KA, Callahan C, Ogunniyi A, Baiyewu O, Gureje O, Hall KS, Hendrie HC. [Mild cognitive dysfunction: an epidemiological perspective with an emphasis on african americans.](#) J Geriatr Psychiatry Neurol. 2007 Dec;20(4):215-26.

PRESENTATIONS

Yansheng Du, PhD, presented "Human anti-prion protein antibodies block A117V PrP peptide fibril formation and prevent A117V PrP peptide-induced neurotoxicity," at the Dementia: Prion Disease, Pathophysiology, and Treatment" at the [Society for Neuroscience](#) 37th Annual Meeting held in San Diego, CA, on November 3-7, 2007. The Society is a nonprofit membership organization of basic scientists and physicians who study the brain and nervous system. Dr. Du and co-author **Martin Farlow, MD,** are IU Center for Aging Research Affiliated Scientists.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Gene Lammers, MD, MPH, was elected vice president of Clarian Health's medical staff for 2008 at the annual medical staff meeting held December 6, 2007. Dr. Lammers is a geriatrician at the Senior Health Center at Methodist Hospital and is medical director for Senior Patient Safety and Quality at Clarian Health.

Douglas K. Miller, MD, and Steve Counsell, MD, were selected to [Best Doctors in America®](#) for 2007-2008. Dr. Counsell was also elected by his peers for inclusion in Best Doctors from 1996-2000 and 2005-2008.

Steve Counsell, MD presented "Clinical Research Update – IU Geriatrics: The GRACE Model of Primary Care" at the Fall Conference of the Center for Geriatric Medicine, St. Francis Hospital, Indianapolis on November 30, 2007. IU Geriatric Medicine fellows, Sara Hamadi, MD, and Vijaya Sudanagunta, MD participated in the conference along with approximately 200 local geriatrics healthcare professionals representing the full spectrum of aging care.



Tamilyn Bakas, DNS, RN, an associate professor in the IU School of Nursing, was inducted into the [American Academy of Nursing](#) on November 10, 2007, in Washington, DC. Dr. Bakas is an IU Center for Aging Research Affiliated Scientist who conducts research aimed at improving the quality of life of family caregivers of stroke survivors. She has contributed to effective nursing practice through the development of clinical assessment tools and measurement instruments in the area of stroke caregiving, and most recently developed an individualized telephone intervention program to assist families in providing care.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The IU Geriatrics Conference on Wednesday, January 2, 2008, from 7:30-8:30am is canceled due to the holiday.

Daniel E. Rusyniak, MD, will present "Toxic Etiologies of Memory Impairment and Change in Mental Status," at the IU Geriatrics Conference on Wednesday, January 16, 2008, from 7:30-8:30am in Wishard's T2008 A&B. Dr. Rusyniak is Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine and director of the Medical Toxicology Fellowship in the Department of Emergency Medicine, Division of Medical Toxicology, Indiana University School of Medicine.