Clark Chen, MD, PhD - Neurosurgery
Dr. Clark Chen to lead University of Minnesota neurosurgery department — 9 things to know. 
Becker's Spine Review

William Frey, PhD - Neurology
To cry or not to cry: Women showing emotion in workforce are slowly changing gender stereotypes. 
The Columbia Chronicle

Bernadette Gillick, PhD, MS, PT - Rehabilitation Medicine
Gillick joins President Kaler at a press conference to share the impact of MnDRIVE supported research. 
YouTube

Andrew Grande, MD - Neurosurgery
Grande is interviewed about stroke awareness month. 
WCCO-Radio

Dori Henderson, PhD - MnDRIVE
1,681 UMN research projects are funded by federal money. Trump's proposed budget could change that. 
Minnesota Daily

Michael Howell, MD - Neurology
The Digital Human: Subconscious. BBC Radio

Matthew Hunt, MD - Neurosurgery
Treating brain cancer with a laser? Experts hope innovative technique will help patients. 
MHealth Blog

Suma Jacob, MD, PhD - Psychiatry
SPARK study looks to expand the scope of autism research. 
WCCO-TV

Kelvin Lim, MD - Psychiatry
Addiction Research. Prairie Public Radio

Walter Low, PhD - Neurosurgery
Regenerative Medicine Minnesota Biobusiness Award winners named. Twin Cities Business

Colum MacKinnon, PhD - Neurology
MacKinnon presented, "Neurophysiology and Implications of Impaired Muscle Activation in Parkinson’s Disease," at the May 5th Neurology Grand Rounds.

Corey McGee, PhD, MS, OTR/L - Rehabilitation Medicine
Get to know a hand therapy researcher. ASHT Blog

Piper Meyer-Kalos, PhD, LP and Scott Curran, LGS - Psychiatry
New approach to detecting and treating early psychosis gains a foothold in Minnesota. Star Tribune

Gregory Molnar, PhD - Neurology
Molnar organized an Emerging Technology Forum on “Personalized Medical Devices and Care” at the Design of Medical Devices Conference on April 13.

Katharine (Kaz) Nelson, MD - Psychiatry
Chad Hartman Show: Mental Health Awareness. WCCO-Radio [Interview begins at 16:45]

The risks and benefits of new Netflix show “13 Reasons Why”. Health Talk

Michael Park, MD, PhD - Neurosurgery
Park gave a surgical procedure tutorial on Deep Brain Stimulator Implantation at the Design of Medical Devices Conference on April 12. He also participated in a panel discussion on “Personalized Medical Devices and Care” on April 13.

University of Minnesota Health first in state to offer new Infinity Deep Brain Stimulation system. MHealth Blog

Uzma Samadani, MD, PhD - Neurosurgery
At Mayo, pioneering steps toward helping paralyzed patients. Star Tribune

Neurosurgeon working with NFL develops novel eye-tracking device to diagnose injury following a concussion. Huffington Post

Tevlin: Neurosurgeon and her teen patient are put to a marathon test. Star Tribune

Ezgi Tiryaki, MD - Neurology
Runners celebrate ALS medical breakthrough. KARE-TV

Ann Van de Winckel, PhD, PT - Rehabilitation Medicine
The Brain Plasticity Lab at the University of Minnesota. YouTube

Jerry Vitek, MD, PhD - Neurology
Abbott’s Infinity Deep Brain Stimulation System is rare technology advance. Star Tribune

University of Minnesota Health first in state to offer new Infinity Deep Brain Stimulation system. MHealth Blog

David Walk, MD - Neurology
Walk discussed a new ALS drug from Japan and the latest ALS research focus in the U.S. on the FOX 9 morning show Sunday. KMSP-TV [link unavailable]

Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS) and Hand Therapy YouTube

University of Minnesota Stroke Research Center
Pets can help improve mental and physical health. Aiken Standard
RECENT EVENTS

The Department of Neurology held the inaugural Annual Updates in Neurology for Primary Care conference March 11, 2017, in Bloomington, Minnesota with 71 providers in attendance. The conference provided an annual update to primary care providers who are the first contact for patients with neurological conditions; tools for early recognition and updated guidelines for diagnosis and treatment were presented and discussed. Drs. R.A. Reshi, MD and Jerrold Vitek, MD, PhD, served as course directors. The 2nd Annual Updates in Neurology for Primary Care conference is planned for spring 2018.

On April 18th, the Udall Center, the MnDRIVE program, and Government Relations met with Senator Al Franken and his staff to discuss the importance of NIH funding to the University and its effect on biomedical research in the State of Minnesota.

Minnesota Stroke Association held their annual Strides for Stroke walk on May 20 at Long Lake Regional Park. A 30-member University of Minnesota Health team from the Departments of Neurosurgery and Rehabilitation Medicine participated in the walk and helped raise money for stroke research and victim/caregiver/family support in the state of Minnesota.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Turtle Derby
Date: Thursday, June 22, 2017
Time: 10:00 am - 1:30 pm
Location: Front Lawn, U of M Masonic Children’s Hospital

For 31 years, the Turtle Derby at University of Minnesota Masonic Children’s Hospital has been a popular tradition for patients, families and staff. Attendees can cheer on real turtles from the sidelines, play games, indulge in a turtle sundae and much more. The fundraiser provides many of the extras that make the children’s hospital a healing place with a heart. Sponsor one or more turtles and watch your reptile compete for the coveted title: The Grandest Turtle of All, 2017.

Registration will be held June 5 - June 16. The cost is $40 for an individual or family; $80 for a work team or department. Learn more & register.

NeuroSafe 2017
Time Out to Reflect on Quality & Safety in Neurosurgery

Date(s): July 20-21, 2017
Location: McNamara Alumni Center, University of Minnesota

The two-day symposium will provide access to national experts and organizations sharing strategies, studies and ideas via interactive case-based presentations, case reviews and discussions.

This symposium is ideal for specialty physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, quality and safety professionals and others with a neurosurgery specialty interest. This includes professionals interested in offering patients the benefit of the most advanced quality & safety treatment options for neurosurgery care. Learn more & register.

SPA DEADLINE REMINDER

Sponsored Projects Administration Deadline

A reminder that the internal deadline policy for proposal submissions to SPA must be submitted for SPA's review by 9:00 am three business days prior to the time the proposal must be submitted to the sponsor (e.g. an electronic proposal that must be received by the sponsor on Friday will be due at SPA by 9:00 am on Wednesday.)

Please also keep in mind that prior to the SPA deadline, CNC research accountants and department admin staff need five days prior to the SPA deadline in order to complete grant applications, budgets and for PRF forms to be routed and signed.

More details on this updated policy are available from your departmental/center staff, SPA staff, and online at the SPA website.
University of Minnesota Health Expanding Telemedicine Offering in Coming Months

University of Minnesota Health is in the process of adding telemedicine as a service across clinic locations, increasing convenience for patients and families. Telemedicine, a subcategory of virtual health, involves medical staff providing consultation or diagnosis via telecommunication such as a mobile phone or video chat app, improving the efficiency of clinics and allowing rural communities lacking specialty clinics direct access to provider expertise. University of Minnesota Health is currently conducting pilot programs within teledermatology, teleurology and telestroke, with plans to expand and roll out new pilot programs within the next year.

“As the medical industry continues to become more digitalized, adding telemedicine as a service offering is critical,” said Badrinath Konety, MD. “Allowing providers and patients to connect more easily increases the efficiency and convenience for everyone, and is an excellent option for many scenarios.”

Minnesota is one of four states in the U.S. currently rated by Advisory Board as “Excellent” in reimbursement for telehealth, with nearly all telemedicine activities being covered by a majority of Minnesota insurance plans. The United States Senate also just passed the CHRONIC Care Act, which seeks to expand telehealth services to Medicaid populations. Telemedicine services are billed using evaluation and management (E/M) codes, with providers billing telemedicine interactions in the same manner as if the patients were physically at the clinic.

University of Minnesota Health is partnering with technology teams to ensure all providers will be equipped with the proper tools to ensure they are able to provide care to patients via telemedicine.

A FAQ document with more information regarding billing and telemedicine in general is available here.

First published in M Health E3 Update: 6.1.2017

LOW LABORATORY HARNESSING THE ZIKA VIRUS TO FIGHT BRAIN TUMORS

Neurosurgery Department's Low Laboratory harnessing the Zika virus to fight brain tumors

The latest cancer-fighting weapon in a researcher’s arsenal might just be, of all things, a virus. The unique properties that enable the adenovirus to cause the common cold and other more malicious viruses to cause AIDS or polio make them near-perfect cancer treatment delivery mechanisms. And now it’s Zika’s turn.

U of M Neurosurgery Department Professor and Associate Head for Research Walter Low, PhD, (pictured at right) recently applied for and was awarded a year-long research grant by the Minneapolis, MN-based Randy Shaver Cancer Research and Community Fund. The grant focuses on helping Low’s lab continue work they had been doing on the Zika virus and how it affects brain cells of a developing human embryo.

“When we looked at neural cell development, there were certain receptors expressed in these cells,” said Low. The lab team found these receptors, called AXL, DC-Sign, Tim-1, and Tyro3, to be expressed abundantly in developing neural-progenitor cells that eventually become neurons and in developing astrocytes, star-shaped glial cells in the brain most closely associated with neuronal synapses.

Low added that astrocytes can give rise to gliomas – a type of tumor that can form in the brain and spinal cord – and that neuro-progenitor cells can produce a type of childhood brain cancer called medulloblastoma.

Interestingly, Low’s team began to recognize similarities between developing neural stem cells and brain tumor stem cells. “We discovered that brain tumor cells expressed the same kind of receptors that are found in developing neural cells,” Low said. “We felt that maybe that could be used as a potential source of therapy for treating brain tumors that aren’t good candidates for surgery.”

Why does that make sense? Read the full article here.

First published on the Department of Neurosurgery website on 6.6.2017
Important Changes to H-1B Visa Processing

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) announced they were suspending “Premium Processing” for all H-1B petitions for up to 6 months (effective April 3). Premium Processing is the expedited processing service of an H-1B petition within 15 calendar days of submission for an extra $1,225 fee (as opposed to the standard processing that currently takes 7-8 months).

For at least the next 6 months, this suspension will impact all NEW job offers requiring an H-1B visa. All department H-1B application requests/cases that International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) has already received or will receive over the next 4-6 months, will need to be triaged according to case type, job start date and first in/first out (FIFO).

ISSS will first examine all cases for alternative work visa options, such as F-1 OPT, J-1 Research Scholar or Visiting Professor, TN, O-1, etc. If you have hired or will be hiring a tenure-track faculty member with an August 2017 start date, please contact ISSS immediately to discuss the available options.

H-1B Transfers and Extensions

H-1B transfers and extensions allow an H-1B employee to transfer or continue working as long as a new H-1B petition is submitted before the individual’s current H-1B validity expires.

ALERT: It is not possible for an individual with an expired H-1B petition to return to the U.S. after traveling internationally unless their new H-1B extension/transfer petition is approved.

New H-1B Cases

If your application request was submitted to ISSS on March 7 or later, it is estimated that the earliest possible H-1B visa job start date for new non-transfer cases may be November 2017 or later. To estimate an H-1B visa job start date, add 8 months to the date you supply all documents to ISSS. This estimate includes the 6-10 weeks needed to process the ISSS application and the additional 6-7 month wait for USCIS’s approval.

ISSS understands that this change has significant negative implications for many, and will do their best to work with you in the face of this unprecedented hurdle to the hiring of H-1B employees.

If you wish to discuss your specific situation, please contact one of the Employment-Based Visa Staff Members with ISSS.

CONQUERING DEBT

U Employees Find Success in Conquering Debt

$853,456.70! That is the amount of credit card debt paid off by University employees who worked with LSS Financial Counseling since the program was introduced in January 2014. Through 2016, LSS certified financial counselors provided 862 individual, confidential counseling sessions and conducted 51 education workshops reaching 1,361 employees.

University employees and their immediate family members can schedule up to six counseling sessions a year for free. Counseling services include budgeting and debt reduction, repaying student loans, home mortgages and financing, and reviewing credit reports. Call 800-528-2926 to make an appointment, or visit the LSS Financial Counseling website to learn more.

SUPERVISORY DEVELOPMENT COURSE

New! Online Supervisory Development Course

Supervisors want to bring out the best in their team, but it’s tough to find the time for professional development. “Supervisory Development”, is a new webinar and online program series from Leadership and Talent Development for University faculty and staff who oversee the work of others. Videos, handouts, and other research-based resources are available to use anytime. Learn more about “Feedback and Coaching”, “Managing and Evaluating Performance” and “Managing Conflict”. New webinars and online resources will launch through the fall.