

SPRING 2024

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION

Improving health, function, and well-being.

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Our mission is to improve the health, function, and well-being of people across North Carolina and beyond through excellence in patient care, education, research, and innovation.





Greetings from the 50-yard line at the NOLA Super Dome! We touched-down at AAPMR this past November, and our resident and faculty participation was a win! We are grateful to have so much to celebrate and look forward to in the new year!

In this issue:

- We welcome our new APPs and introduce our new Cancer Rehabilitation Director, Dr Sasha E. Knowlton.
- We share highlights from our recent Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) conference that provided information specific to individuals with spinal cord injury to the primary care providers who attend to their needs.
- We share our current Research Highlights and 2023 Grand Rounds Presentations.
- We recognize residents who have led impressive community outreach campaigns including the 2023 Holiday Drive.
- We extend ongratulations to Dr's Joshua Alexander and Christine Cleveland on making the 2024 Castle Connolly Top Doctors List!



Match Day Celebration

New Faculty Announcement

We're thrilled to announce our latest new faculty hires and look forward to Drs. Patel and Paul joining our team in July 2024.



Dr. Chandni Patel, DO
Interventional Spine Physiatrist



Tracy Paul, MD
Inpatient Consult Physiatrist



UNC PM&R Residency Program Class of 2028



Camille Drouin-Allaire, DO
Campbell University
College of Osteopathic Medicine



Heather Lystad, MD
UC San Diego
School of Medicine



Ellet "Ellie" Stone, DO
Rocky Vista University
College of Osteopathic Medicine



Carli Williams, DO
Oklahoma State University
College of Osteopathic Medicine

THE ABCs of SCI Conference

On March 23, 2024, we hosted the **ABCs of SCI Conference** at the Friday Center in Chapel Hill, NC. Individuals with spinal cord injuries have unique needs that require collaboration along the continuum of care. This conference brought together practicing physicians to help demystify the medical challenges as well as provide education and outreach for providers in the community to aid in our goal of improving our patients' quality of life.

The conference agenda included:

Presenting the Sam E. Reeve Lectureship in PM&R

Keynote Address:

- **What I Wish My PCP Knew About Me**
Franzi Rokoske, MS
- **The Accessible SCI Clinician**
Lee James, MS, LCMHC

Basics of Spinal Cord Injury (SCI): Epidemiology, SCI Syndromes, and ASIA Classification

Kaitlyn DeHority, MD

Medical Management of Spasticity

William Filer, MD

Therapeutic Recommendations for Patients with Spinal Cord Injury

Raheleh Ghasseminia, MS, OT/L

Bryn M. Kennedy, PT, DPT

Courtney Matrunick, PT, DPT

Urological Needs and Sexuality

Kristy Borawski, MD

Neurogenic Bowel and GI Complications

Christine Cleveland, MD

Spinal Cord Injury Medical Complications

Christine Cleveland, MD

The Autonomic Nervous System and SCI

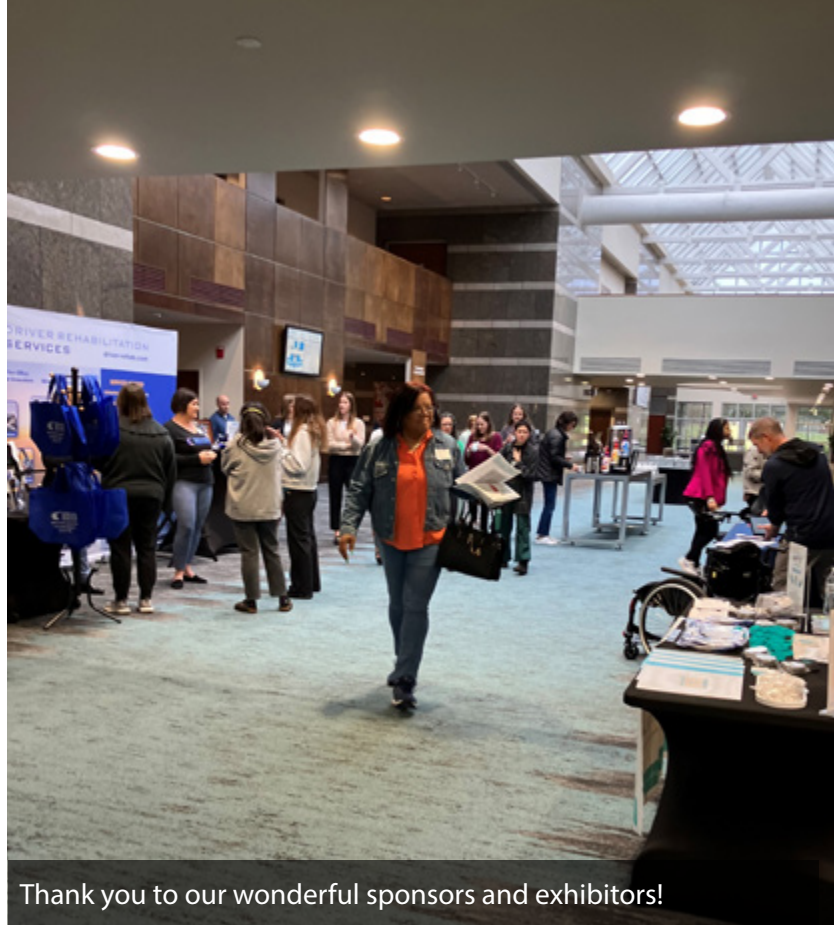
Lee Shuping, MD, MPT

Thanks to our sponsors and exhibitors for their support!

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- Merz - Silver Level Sponsor
- **Exhibitors**
- Allergan (Abbvie)
- Driver Rehabilitation Services
- Help Hope Live
- NC SCIA
- NextStep Raleigh
- Numotion
- Stalls Medical
- UNC Health Rehab Therapies
- WakeMed Rehabilitation



Keynote speakers: Franzi Rokoske and Lee James



Thank you to our wonderful sponsors and exhibitors!





Sasha E. Knowlton, MD

UNC PM&R Cancer Rehabilitation Medical Director

UNC PM&R's Cancer Rehabilitation Program

What is Cancer Rehabilitation?

Cancer rehabilitation is the unique subspecialty in PM&R that identifies and treats symptoms and functional impairments that occur before, during, and after a diagnosis of cancer. Cancer and cancer treatments such as systemic therapy (like chemotherapy and immunotherapy) along with radiation and surgery can result in pain, fatigue/deconditioning, weakness, impaired mobility, cognitive issues and neuropathy among other symptoms that we, as physiatrists, can uniquely identify and treat. I like to tell trainees that cancer rehab is like general PM&R but with a special “flavor” of cancer – some things are definitely unique, like aromatase-inhibitor induced arthralgia, dropped head syndrome and radiation fibrosis, but other impairments are treated very similarly to the non-cancer population.

How many years have you practiced cancer rehab?

I graduated from fellowship in 2017, so over 6 years! I am a recent transplant from the Boston area and could not be happier to be in NC with my family.

What do you like best about working patients at UNC?

The diversity! All of my patients here are unique and are inspirational to me, as I get to see a lot of different pathologies and am constantly learning to better serve the people of North Carolina. Being in a state medical system can have its challenges but the amount of support and interest from other medical specialties is exciting, both from a clinical and project perspective. In addition to my own research and QI projects, I am involved in a number of other oncology-initiated projects here at UNC, since so many of our colleagues are invested in improving patient care through multiple avenues.



Some of our fabulous Cancer Rehab teammates! Occupational therapists Lauren Winnix, OTR/L and Alexis Petteway, OTR/L, POrI-Certified Oncology Rehabilitation Therapist, Michelle LeBlanc PT, DPT, and Cancer Rehabilitation Medical Director, Dr Sasha E. Knowlton, MD.

What do we offer in our cancer rehab program at UNC?

Since starting here at UNC last year, we have exponentially grown the cancer rehabilitation services through a multi-disciplinary effort. I currently see outpatients at the NC Basnight Cancer Hospital/Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center at the main campus in Chapel Hill and also see inpatient cancer rehab consults at main campus. As part of my outpatient practice, I see both prehabilitation and survivorship patients, along with patients who may develop symptoms or functional impairments during treatment that I can help with. Outside of my clinical responsibilities, we now have a number of quality improvement initiatives that have been started within UNC in a collaborative effort with different services, including the therapy department and urology along with others. We have monthly program meetings between myself and the cancer rehabilitation therapists where we have case discussions, lectures, journal club and project “brainstorming”.

What are the department’s future plans and endeavors for the program?

In the next few years, I would love to be able to continue to expand the program clinically and developmentally. One of the critiques I often receive is that I am only at Chapel Hill; I’d love to have another physiatrist (or more!) join to offer services at Rex, for example, along with other locations like Hillsborough as we continue to grow. I want to hire more oncology therapists at UNC and expand the network of therapists across the state, since many patients live two or more hours away and cannot access a lymphedema or a pelvic floor therapist locally, which is a giant patient access barrier. I also want to continue to expand the research and quality improvement projects we are doing, as there is a lot of interest in collaboration from our oncology colleagues, in addition to the educational opportunities for trainees to learn more about cancer rehabilitation.



Winter Emergency Kits

The Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Residency program led an interdepartmental effort alongside the Departments of Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine and Preventative Medicine in creating 200 Winter Kit Essentials for our community members experiencing homelessness. They were able to raise over \$4,000 within a matter of a few weeks to supply winter kits. The kits were donated to New Hope of Durham and the Community Empowerment Fund of both Chapel Hill and Durham.



Research Roundup

We are excited to share that our faculty have been involved in new and innovative research over the past few months. New projects funded through our Departmental Innovation Awards include investigations into the health of eSports competitors (Dr. Katie Bartolo), symptom trajectories among children with concussion (Dr. Pete Duquette in collaboration with Duke), and self-compassion for parents/caregivers of children with physical disabilities (Dr. Christine Lathren).

Other notable investigations include three studies in cancer populations (Dr. Sasha Knowlton): 1) assessing the impact of physical and occupational therapy for patients admitted for bone marrow transplant; 2) assessing the impact of physical therapy pre-cystectomy for patients with bladder cancer; and 3) assessing pre-treatment needs for patients with metastatic breast cancer. Dr. William Filer has also started collaborating with biomedical engineering on the neural control of a powered prosthetic ankle.

Our ongoing research remains robust and includes a multi-site pragmatic study with Boston Medical Center and the University of Pittsburgh (OPTIMUM) that is testing a mindfulness intervention delivered via a telehealth-based Integrative Medicine Group Visit for people with chronic low back pain. The study is part of the National Institutes of Health's Helping to End Addiction Long-term (HEAL) Initiative that is funding over 1000 studies aimed at understanding and managing pain and improving the prevention and treatment of opioid addiction. UNC-based leadership includes Dr. Susan Gaylord and Dr. Kim Fautot (Site PIs for the main study), Dr. Jessica Barnhill (PI for the Chronic Overlapping Pain

Conditions Supplement), and Dr. Isabel Roth (PI for the Community Engagement Supplement).

Dr. Roth is also working on an NIH-K01-funded study of implementing Integrative Medicine Group Visits in federally-qualified health centers across North Carolina.

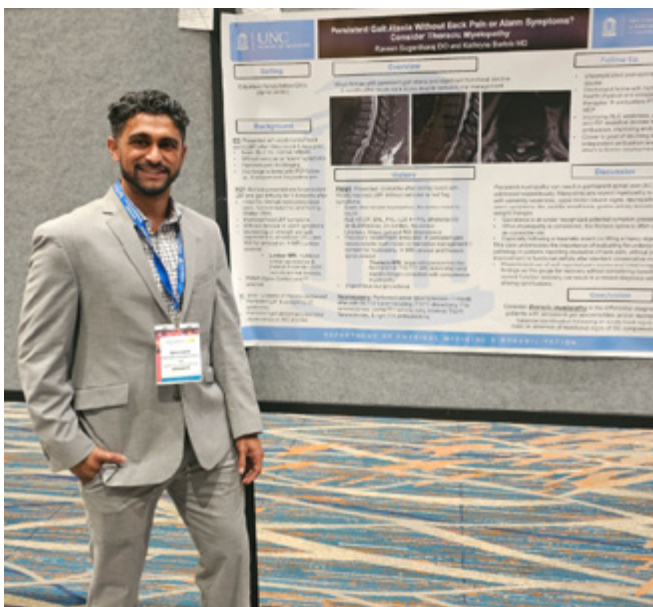
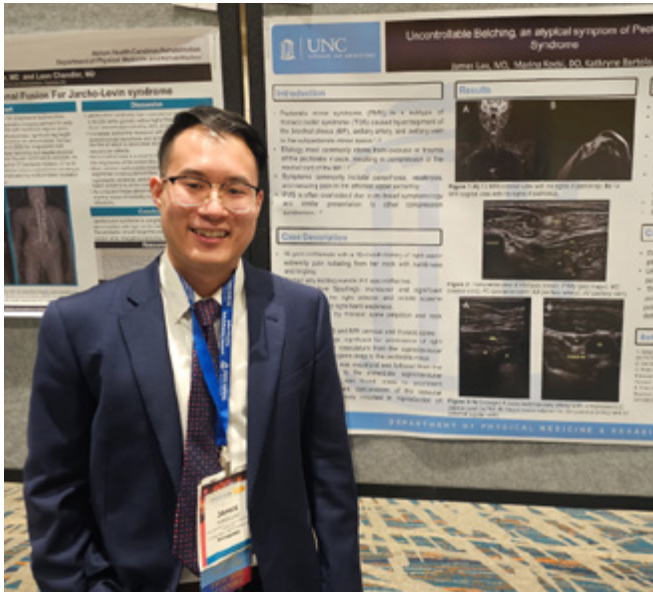
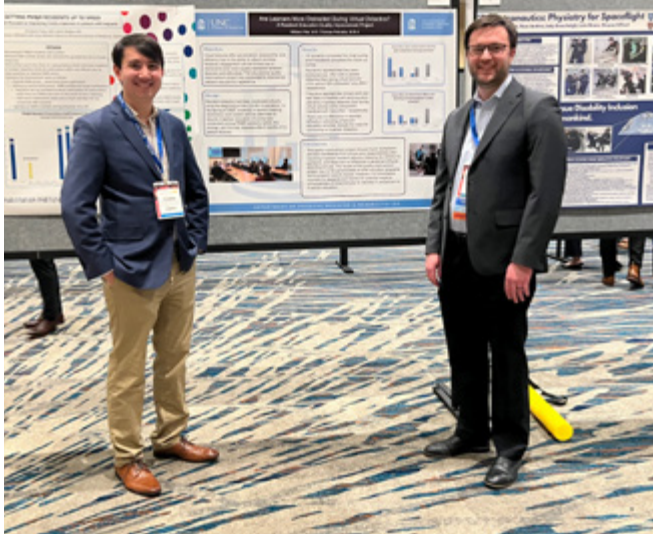
The NIH funded SMILE study, an R01 led by Dr. Gaylord with collaborators from the Department of Psychiatry and the Research Triangle Institute (Fautot, Co-I) seeks to test synchronous group online mindfulness training compared with a mindfulness app and a waitlist control for Hispanics/Latinos and Blacks/African Americans with anxiety.

Project BrEAtHe (Brothers, Reclaiming, Emotional, Awareness, Tranquility, Healing & Existence), an NIH funded R34 trial co-led by Dr. Gaylord, is developing a mindfulness intervention for young Black men at risk for substance use disorders.

Dr. Gaylord is also Co-PI with Dr. Cheryl Giscombe (Lead PI) in the School of Nursing, and Co-I Dr. Fautot on the HARMONY study, an NIH funded R01 clinical trial investigating a culturally tailored diet, exercise, and mindfulness intervention for African-American women with metabolic syndrome.

Finally, the Wheelchair CHAMPS study, a collaborative effort with NC State engineers (Dr. Filer with Drs. Fautot and Barnhill), is developing user-centered powered mobility device charging stations and infrastructure.

Highlights from PHYSIATRY '24



UNC PM&R Posters

A Rare Presentation of Necrotizing Immune-Mediated Myositis Triggered by Statin Medication: A Case Report

Jennifer Ling, BS, William Filer, MD, Taylor Baker, DO

Uncontrollable Belching, an Atypical Symptom of Pectoralis Minor Syndrome

James H. Lau, MD, Marina Kodsi, DO; Kathryn Bartolo, MD*

Persistent Gait Ataxia Without Back Pain or Alarm Symptoms? Consider Thoracic Myelopathy

Raveen Sugantharaj, MD, Kathryn Bartolo, MD

Leukocytosis in a SCI patient with a significant stool burden: A case report

Anthony Reedy, MD, Marina Kodsi, DO; Christine A. Cleveland, MD

Total Hip Arthroplasty in a Patient with Hereditary Spastic Paraparesis

Jennifer Ling, BS, William Filer, MD

Are Learners More Distracted During Virtual Didactics? A Resident Education Quality Improvement Project

William Filer, MD, Thomas A. Petruska, MBA

AAPMR HIGHLIGHTS



UNC PM&R Posters and Presentations

Dr John Baratta

- Essential Updates in the Physiatric Management of Post COVID Conditions: Autonomic, Neurologic, Cognitive and Pediatric Disorders

Dr Katie Bartolo

- Next Level Physiatry: Esports Medicine
- Sideline Medicine: Assessment and Management of Acute On-Field Injuries

Dr Taylor Baker

- Myasthenia Gravis Induced by Concussion: A Case Report
- An Uncommon Cause of Chronic Knee Pain and Swelling after a Traumatic Patellar Fracture: A Case Report

Dr Sierra McLean

- Impacts of Morphine Milligram Equivalents in the 5 Days Prior to Acute Inpatient Rehab
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Diagnosis with Ultrasound Despite Negative Electromyography

Dr Michael Melson

- Bilateral Common Fibular Neuropathy secondary to rapid, intentional weight loss: A Case Report

Dr Raveen Sugantharaj

- Baclofen as an Adjunct Therapy to Improve Motor Control in Post-Hypoxic Cortical Myoclonus: A Case Report

2023 Grand Rounds Presentations

January

Pediatric Movement Disorders

Dr. Rebecca Traub, MD
Associate Professor
UNC Department of Neurology
UNC School of Medicine

February

Imaging of Common Spinal Tumors

Dr. Kassie McCullagh, MD
Assistant Professor
Department of Radiology
UNC School of Medicine

March

Emerging trends in Tendinopathy

Dr. David Berkoff, MD
Associate Professor
Department of Orthopaedic Surgery
UNC School of Medicine

April

Imaging Evaluation of Occult Fractures

Dr. John Tobben, MD
Assistant Professor
Department of Radiology
UNC School of Medicine

May

Functional MRI and Brain Injury

Dr. Varina Boerwinkle, MD
Division Chief – Child Neurology
Associate Professor
UNC Department of Neurology
UNC School of Medicine

June

Updates in Diagnosis and Treatment of Charcot Marie Tooth Disease

Dr. Rebecca Traub, MD
Associate Professor
UNC Department of Neurology
UNC School of Medicine

July

Becoming an Upstander: Annual DEI Training

Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
UNC School of Medicine

August

Extradural Spinal Tumors

Dr. Sheng-Che Hung, MD, PhD
Assistant Professor
Department of Radiology
UNC School of Medicine

September

Spine Anatomy and Clinical Correlates

Dr. Michael Galgano, MD
Assistant Professor
Department of Neurosurgery
UNC School of Medicine

October

Behavioral and Non-pharmacologic strategies for pain management

Dr. Jessica Barnhill, MD, MPH
Assistant Professor
Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
UNC School of Medicine

November

Opioid Pain Management

Dr. Steven Prakken, MD
Chief of Avance Care Medical Pain Service
Affiliate of UNC Rex Hospital

December

Autonomic Testing

Dr. Miriam Sklerov, MD, MS
Assistant Professor
Department of Neurology
UNC School of Medicine



2024 TOP DOCTORS®



Joshua Alexander, MD

Department Chair
Sidna Chockley Rizzo Distinguished Professor
Medical Director, UNC Center for Rehabilitation
Care Director of Pediatric Rehabilitation



Christine Cleveland, MD

Assistant Professor
Spinal Cord Injury Medical Director

SAVE
The
DATE

OCTOBER 4, 2024

UNC DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION

30th
Anniversary
Celebration



We're hiring!

**Interventional Spine Physiatrist
Neuromuscular Physiatrist
Vice Chair for Research**

For more information: go.unc.edu/UNCPMRCareers



Make a Gift

For more information on how to support the Hillsborough Hospital project and the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, please contact **Matt Cain**, (919) 445-6696 or email matt_cain@med.unc.edu.

You may also make a gift online here: go.unc.edu/dpmr

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